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CENTRAL EUROPEAN GEOSTRATEGIC REGION'S IMPORTANCE FOR EUROPE AND WORLD

SUMMARY

This article presents the concept of a Central European Geostrategic Region (CEGR) covering a belt of states located between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea, and the Baltic Sea and the Adriatic Sea. This region is important for both NATO and the EU, as some of the countries constitute the Eastern wing (border) of these organisations. On the other hand, the states of this region are significant players for Russian Federation's external policy, which was visible in the previous years. The Central European Geostrategic Region is, therefore, essential for both Central Eastern Europe's and whole Europe's security and is of a major importance for Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian Space. This is why the author presents power of CEGR states calculated with rank-weighting method, which partially reflects regional balance of power. As it results from the calculation, the region is characterised with vast diversity of power distribution between individual political units, which in turn impacts foreign and security policies of the states.

Central European Geostrategic Region definition

Researchers are still divided in their views on Europe's regionalisation[2]. In particular those from the territory of Poland and its neighbouring countries present multiple approaches to the nomenclature. There is a concept of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) covering all countries located between Oder and the Ural Mountains. Another approach suggests that CEE covers territory of the Visegrad Group and CEFTA member states. Polish scientific literature uses the concept of Central Europe

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[2] J. Skrzyp, *Środkowoeuropejski region strategiczny jako element przestrzeni euroatlantyckiej* [*Central European Strategic Region as an element of Euro-Atlantic Space*], Warszawa 2001, s. 10.

(Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary). This term includes both historic and political as well as geographic context. However, physico-geographical division of Europe functioning in Poland covers only Northern, Southern, Western and Eastern Europe. It should be highlighted that the concept of Central Europe territory will be different if one takes into account historic, political or geographic criteria, or if the criteria applied were of a geostrategic nature[3]. It is worth noticing that geostrategic space could be considered at either global or regional level. This applies mostly to political and military regionalisation[4]. Geostrategic regions are identified as part of the regionalisation process[5]. Geostrategic as well as geopolitical regions[6] are determined "based on military criteria and other strategic conditions for state(s) security in a regional aspect: political, economic, cultural, integrational, demographic, geographic, historical, also in the context of spatial integrity"[7]. It is equally important to identify geostrategic region, which is usually determined by the essential feature of a region itself. Therefore, each geostrategic region can be treated as:

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[3] Tamże, s. 10–14.

[4] Z. Lach, *Geopolityczne aspekty kształtowania przestrzeni bezpieczeństwa państw*, „Przegląd Geopolityczny", 2012/5 [*Geopolitical aspects of states space creation and security*, "Geopolitical Review", nr 2012/5], Częstochowa 2012, s. 17.

[5] Geostrategic region – a land, sea or land and sea area including airspace where political, economic or military events influence the world situation. In contrast to geopolitical regions, geostrategic regions most frequently do not cover regions divided in terms of politics (administration), e.g. according to state borders and territories, so Western or Central Europe are geopolitical regions, while Central European Geostrategic Region is a geostrategic region. Geostrategic regions borders are blurred, as they depend on action strategy, potential military activity, zones of responsibility, zones of influence, economic potential, geostrategic location, influence on events in the global context etc.; based on: Z. Lach, *Geopolityczne aspekty kształtowania przestrzeni bezpieczeństwa państw*, „Przegląd Geopolityczny", 2012/5 [*Geopolitical aspects of states space creation and security*, "Geopolitical Review", nr 2012/5], Częstochowa 2012, s. 17.

[6] Geopolitical region – category of world territory division for the purposes of scientific research or for the following geopolitical aims (concepts): 1) determination of areas based on cultural and political criteria, associated with regional organisations activities; 2) geographic identification of areas with potential for conflict; 3) determination of areas resulting from hierarchical integration of states of different development levels; 4) stress of significant strategic, political, resource and communication role of a given area; based on: Z. Lach, *Geopolityczne aspekty kształtowania przestrzeni bezpieczeństwa państw*, „Przegląd Geopolityczny", 2012/5 [*Geopolitical aspects of states space creation and security*, "Geopolitical Review", nr 012/5], Częstochowa 2012, s. 17.

[7] Z. Lach, *Geopolityczne aspekty…*, dz. cyt., s. 20.

a) research instrument,
b) subject of cognition,
c) activity instrument[8].

       Considering the area, including especially geostrategic criteria, one should take into account i.a. "role and meaning of a country within global and regional system of economic, political and military relations". Following the a.m. quotation, Europe is divided into four geostrategic regions:
1. Mediterranean Region;
2. Northwestern European Region;
3. Central European Region;
4. Eastern European Region.
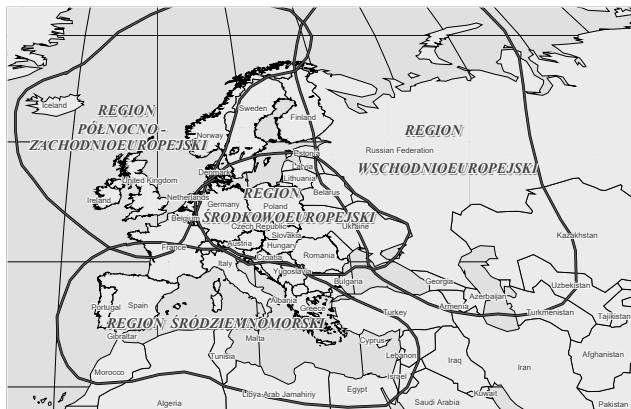
Figure 1. Geostrategic Regions in Europe

Source: Z. Lach, *Geopolityczne aspekty kształtowania przestrzeni bezpieczeństwa państw*, „Przegląd Geopolityczny", 2012/5 [*Geopolitical aspects of states space creation and security*, "Geopolitical Review", nr 2012/5], Częstochowa 2012, s. 21.

Key:

POLISH	ENGLISH
REGION PÓŁNOCNO-ZACHODNIOEUROPEJSKI	NORTHWESTERN EUROPEAN REGION
REGION ŚRODKOWOEUROPEJSKI	CENTRAL EUROPEAN REGION
REGION ŚRÓDZIEMNOMORSKI	MEDITERRANEAN REGION
REGION WSCHODNIOEUROPEJSKI	EASTERN EUROPEAN REGION

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[8] Ibidem p. 20.

Central European Region covers the area located between the Baltic and Black Sea on the East, and the Baltic and Adriatic Sea on the West. This region includes Poland with its neighbouring countries, Denmark, Hungary, Romania, and Moldova. According to this approach, Central and Eastern Europe constitutes geopolitical region that includes: Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania. The Central European Region, especially Polish territory, covers the area located within the North European Plain and the East European Plain. Such a near-border location of Poland makes this country easily accessible for other states.

This can be supported by the fact that transport corridors crossing Poland refer to the old historic military roads (Lubuska Gate and Luzycka Gate, Morawska Gate on the South, Wolynska, Przemyska, Bialoruska and Podlaska Gates on the East, and Warminska Gate on the North)[9].
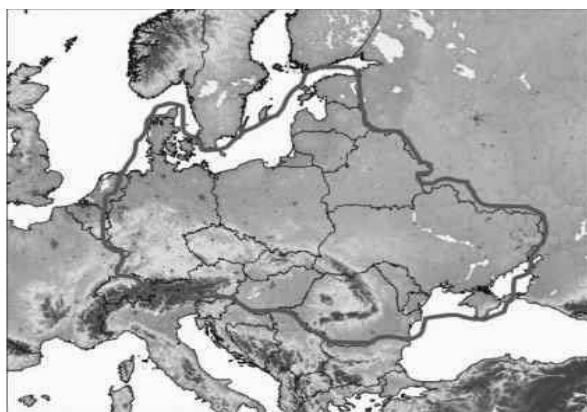
Figure 2. Central European Geostrategic Region – states

Source: Z. Lach, A. Łaszczuk, J. Skrzyp, *Odporność układu polskiej przestrzeni na zakłócenia zewnętrzne – przestrzenne i terytorialne uwarunkowania obronności i bezpieczeństwa państwa* [*Resistance of the Polish space on the external disturbance – spatial and territorial conditions of state's defence and security*], [w:] K. Saganowski, M. Zagrzejewska-Fiedorowicz, P. Żuber (red.), Ekspertyzy do Koncepcji Przestrzennego Zagospodarowania Kraju [*Expert opinions for the State Spatial Development Concept 2008–2033*], Warszawa 2008.

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[9] J. Skrzyp, *Geostrategiczne położenie Polski [Geostrategic location of Poland]*, Warszawa 1998, s. 17–18.

Characteristics determining the significance of the Central European Region are as follows: location in a central part of the continent between the Baltic Sea and the Adriatic Sea and the Black Sea, physical and geographical conditions, demographic and economic potential, good transport and military infrastructure. This region can be divided into two sub-areas: Northern and Southern area. The former one covers the area of plains, highlands and lower mountains between the Baltic Sea, the Alps and the Carpathians. The latter one covers the Pannonian Basin, which is limited by higher mountains (Eastern Alps, Western, Eastern and Southern Carpathians, Dinaric Alps). The Northern area connects the Western and the Eastern Europe and it is the so-called "main strategic axe of Europe". The Pannonian Basin is also important strategically as the following communication roads cross here: the Western Europe-Balkans and the Middle East, and the Northern Europe-Mediterranean countries. It is worth mentioning that the two main European strategic axes cross within the Central European Strategic Region:

– longitudinal axe, connecting Western and Eastern Europe;
– latitudinal axe, connecting Scandinavia, Germany and Poland with the Southern Europe and Middle East.

The Central European Geostrategic Region borders with the region indicated by Zbigniew Brzezinski as the Global Zone of Percolating Violence (Fig. 1.5)[10]. Due to this fact, its location and significance are important in terms of NATO and EU politics. Also, Robert Kagan describing geopolitical fault lines states that "one of those fault lines runs along western and southwestern frontiers of Russia. In Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova, in the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, in Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic (...) a contest for influence is under way (...). Instead of an anticipated zone of peace, western Eurasia has once again become a zone of competition (…)". Thus, the Central European Geostrategic Region is important for both NATO and EU.

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[10] Z. Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard*, New York 1997, s. 53.

Figure 3. Central European Geostrategic Region and the Global Zone of percolating violence

Source: Z. Lach, A. Łaszczuk, J. Skrzyp, *Odporność układu polskiej przestrzeni na zakłócenia zewnętrzne – przestrzenne i terytorialne uwarunkowania obronności i bezpieczeństwa państwa* [*Resistance of the Polish space on the external disturbance – spatial and territorial conditions of state's defence and security*], https://www.mir.gov.pl/rozwoj_regionalny/poziom_krajowy/polska_polityka_przestrzenna/ prace_nad_KPZK_2008_2033/Documents/Lach2.pdf, s. 634 (10.05.2015).

Key:

POLISH	ENGLISH
Rejony, gdzie dochodzi do niepokojów, konfliktów, i rozlewu krwi	Areas of unrest, conflict and bloodshed
Część świata stale grożąca wybuchem przemocy	The global zone of Percolating Violence
Środkowoeuropejski region geostrategiczny	The Central European Geostrategic Region

Power of Central European Geostrategic Region states calculated with rank-weighting method

A multivariate analysis, also known as rank-weighting method has been developed by academic workers of the National Defence University, Warsaw, Poland. The authors state that the developed method "seems to be the most universal tool for measuring the power of states (power centers)"[11]. According to

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[11] For further details on this method please see: Z. Lach, J. Skrzyp, A. Łaszczuk, *Potęga państw współczesnego świata w ujęciu geopolitycznym* [*Power of the modern world states from the geopolitical perspective*], research study, Warszawa 2011.

the authors, key advantages of rank-weighting method include but are not limited to:
– no necessity to apply fixed indices or limit their number;
– possibility to freely change indices, as well as possibility to add new ones or remove redundant ones;
– flexibility of power analysis – possibility to verify indices, adjust their number and type depending on views on power;
– no fixed determinants, which enables not to apply the same indices, due to their variable weighting in time;
– possibility to carry out an analysis pertaining to the validity of indices with respect to power, which enables to select material indices, correlated with actual power determinants, variable in different periods[12].

The author has used the matrix in order to calculate the power of Central European Geostrategic Region states based on the following factors:
– demographic – population;
– spatial – size of the territory;
– economic – Gross Domestic Product, electricity production, value of export, natural gas and crude oil sufficiency rates;
– military – military expenditures, number of soldiers, aircraft carriers and submarines.

In case of power analysis using rank-weighting method, it is important to define weightings for selected power-inducing indices. By indicating that the sum of weighting has a certain value, preferably integers (e.g. 1, 10, 100 etc.), the authors leave an excessively large margin of manoeuvre. Table 4 includes calculations for researched states. "Considerations relating to the evaluation of power of states situated within this area are significant from the perspective of our security in various dimensions (military, economic, cultural, ecological, energy, etc.), which generally refers to international security, and moreover to international relations, bilateral contacts, diplomatic activity and other activity of the national security structures"[13]. Table 1 presents calculations of power using rank-weighting method for the European Geostrategic Region states. The Author has assumed own weighings, which refer to selected power-inducing variables (marked in yellow) while making calculations.

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[12] Tamże, s. 74.
[13] Tamże, s. 80.

Table 1. Power of Central European Geostrategic Region states calculated using rank-weighting method (2014)

POWER OF CENTRAL EUROPEAN GEOSTRATEGIC REGION STATES EVALUATION MATRIX 2014

Ref.	State		Territory (thousands of km²)	Population (m)	Gross domestic product total GDP (bn $)	Total power generation (bn kWh)	Total export value (goods and services) (bn $ – current price)	Natural gas sufficiency rate Production/consumption	Crude oil sufficiency rate Production/consumption	Defence budget (m $)	Armed forces headcount (in thousands)	Aircraft carriers and submarines (number)	State power index / class
			value / rank / weighting / value										class
1	Austria	value	83.879	8.534	436.888	65.000	231.320	0.161	0.103	3,257.000	22.500	0.000	**0.0723**
		rank	0.005	0.059	0.113	0.064	0.131	0.108	0.033	0.039	0.018	0.000	
		weighting	0.07	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.03	class VI
		value	0.000	0.006	0.034	0.003	0.016	0.004	0.001	0.006	0.002	0.000	
2	Belarus	value	207.60	9.47	76.14	29.00	43.56	0.01	0.18	979.00	158.00	0.00	**0.0346**
		rank	0.012	0.066	0.020	0.029	0.025	0.006	0.059	0.012	0.125	0.000	
		weighting	0.07	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.03	class VI
		value	0.001	0.007	0.006	0.001	0.003	0.000	0.002	0.002	0.013	0.000	
3	Czech Republic	value	78.87	10.51	205.27	82.00	171.92	0.03	0.06	2023.00	24.10	0.00	**0.0464**
		rank	0.005	0.073	0.053	0.081	0.097	0.022	0.018	0.024	0.019	0.000	
		weighting	0.07	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.03	class VI
		value	0.000	0.007	0.016	0.004	0.012	0.001	0.001	0.004	0.002	0.000	
4	Denmark	value	43.09	5.64	342.36	29.00	183.94	1.48	1.11	4457.00	17.20	0.00	**0.1083**
		rank	0.003	0.039	0.089	0.029	0.104	1.000	0.361	0.053	0.014	0.000	
		weighting	0.07	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.03	class VI
		value	0.000	0.004	0.027	0.001	0.012	0.040	0.014	0.008	0.001	0.000	

#	Country											
5	Estonia	45.23	1.31	26.49	11.00	21.96	0.00	0.42	509.00	5.75	0.00	**0.0120**
		0.003	0.009	0.007	0.011	0.012	0.000	0.136	0.006	0.005	0.000	class VI
		0.07	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.03	
		0.000	0.001	0.002	0.001	0.001	0.000	0.005	0.001	0.000	0.000	
6	Lithuania	65.30	2.93	48.35	3.90	39.37	0.00	0.16	377.00	21.95	0.00	**0.0134**
		0.004	0.020	0.013	0.004	0.022	0.000	0.052	0.004	0.017	0.000	class VI
		0.07	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.03	
		0.000	0.002	0.004	0.000	0.003	0.000	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.000	
7	Latvia	64.49	1.99	31.29	6.00	18.51	0.00	0.03	299.00	5.31	0.00	**0.0070**
		0.004	0.014	0.008	0.006	0.010	0.000	0.010	0.004	0.004	0.000	class VI
		0.07	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.03	
		0.000	0.001	0.002	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000	
8	Germany	357.17	80.89	3868.29	585.00	1769.76	0.14	0.07	46455.00	181.55	5.00	**0.6106**
		0.021	0.562	1.000	0.578	1.000	0.094	0.022	0.550	0.144	0.082	class II
		0.07	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.03	
		0.001	0.056	0.300	0.029	0.120	0.004	0.001	0.083	0.014	0.002	
9	Moldova	33.85	3.56	7.96	5.50	2.90	0.00	0.00	27.60	7.75	0.00	**0.0044**
		0.002	0.025	0.002	0.005	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.006	0.000	class VI
		0.07	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.03	
		0.000	0.002	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	
10	Poland	312.68	38.00	544.97	153.00	242.69	0.34	0.08	10499.00	172.70	5.00	**0.1390**
		0.018	0.264	0.141	0.151	0.137	0.231	0.025	0.124	0.137	0.082	class V
		0.07	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.03	
		0.001	0.026	0.042	0.008	0.016	0.009	0.001	0.019	0.014	0.002	
11	Romania	238.39	19.91	199.04	56.00	82.14	0.91	0.55	2543.00	151.30	0.00	**0.0869**
		0.014	0.138	0.051	0.055	0.046	0.615	0.180	0.030	0.120	0.000	class VI
		0.07	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.03	
		0.001	0.014	0.015	0.003	0.006	0.025	0.007	0.005	0.012	0.000	

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POWER OF CENTRAL EUROPEAN GEOSTRATEGIC REGION STATES EVALUATION MATRIX 2014

Ref.	State		Territory (thousands of km²)	Population (m)	Gross domestic product total GDP (bn $)	Total power generation (bn kWh)	Total export value (goods and services) (bn $ – current price)	Natural gas sufficiency rate Production/consumption	Crude oil sufficiency rate Production/consumption	Defence budget (m $)	Armed forces headcount (in thousands)	Aircraft carriers and submarines (number)	State power index
			rank	rank	rank	Rank	rank	rank	rank	rank	rank	rank	class
			weighting / value	weighting / value	weighting / value	Weighting / Value	weighting / value	weighting / value	weighting / value	weighting / value	weighting / value	weighting / value	
12	Slovakia	value	49.04	5.42	100.25	27.00	91.88	0.03	0.12	988.00	15.85	0.00	**0.0247**
		weighting	0.003	0.038	0.026	0.027	0.052	0.019	0.040	0.012	0.013	0.000	
		weighting	0.07	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.03	class VI
		value	0.000	0.004	0.008	0.001	0.006	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.001	0.000	
13	Ukraine	value	603.55	45.36	131.81	187.00	65.33	0.45	3.00	4024.00	121.50	0.00	**0.1258**
		weighting	0.035	0.315	0.034	0.185	0.037	0.303	0.974	0.048	0.096	0.000	
		weighting	0.07	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.03	class VI
		value	0.002	0.032	0.010	0.009	0.004	0.012	0.039	0.007	0.010	0.000	
14	Hungary	value	90.30	9.86	138.35	32.00	124.55	0.22	0.18	1164.00	38.50	0.00	**0.0414**
		weighting	0.005	0.069	0.036	0.032	0.070	0.149	0.058	0.014	0.031	0.000	
		weighting	0.07	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.03	class VI
		value	0.000	0.007	0.011	0.002	0.008	0.006	0.002	0.002	0.003	0.000	
15	Russia	value	17098.25	143.82	1860.60	1012.00	563.51	1.41	3.08	84462.00	1260.00	61.00	**0.7607**
		weighting	1.000	1.000	0.481	1.000	0.318	0.954	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	
		weighting	0.07	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.03	class I
		value	0.070	0.100	0.144	0.050	0.038	0.038	0.040	0.150	0.100	0.030	

The following data served as a calculation input:

1. Surface area (2014) – The World Bank data, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/AG.SRF.TOTL.K2 (8.03.2016).
2. Population (2014) – The World Bank data, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL (8.03.2016).
3. GDP (2014) – The World Bank data, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD (8.03.2016).
4. Total Electricity Net Generation (2012) – the U.S. Energy Information Administration data https://www.eia.gov/cfapps/ipdbproject/iedindex3.cfm?tid=2&pid=2&aid=12&cid=regions&syid=2012&eyid=2012&unit=BKWH (8.03.2016).
5. Exports of goods and services (2014, Poland – 2013) – The World Bank data, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.GSR.GNFS.CD (8.03.2016).
6. Gross Natural Gas Production (2014; Romania 2013, Belarus 2013, Latvia 2013, Lithuania 2013, Moldova 2013, Ukraine 2013) the U.S. Energy Information Administration data https://www.eia.gov/cfapps/ipdbproject/iedindex3.cfm?tid=3&pid=3&aid=1&cid=regions&syid=2012&eyid=2014&unit=BCF (8.03.2016).
7. Dry Natural Gas Consumption (2014; Romania 2013, Belarus 2013, Latvia 2013, Lithuania 2013, Moldova 2013, Ukraine 2013) the U.S. Energy Information Administration data https://www.eia.gov/cfapps/ipdbproject/IEDIndex3.cfm?tid=3&pid=26&aid=2 (8.03.2016).
8. Gross Natural Gas Production (2014; Romania 2013, Belarus 2013, Latvia 2013, Lithuania 2013, Moldova 2013, Ukraine 2013) the U.S. Energy Information Administration data https://www.eia.gov/cfapps/ipdbproject/IEDIndex3.cfm?tid=5&pid=53&aid=1 (9.03.2016).
9. Total Oil Supply (2014; Belarus 2013, Lithuania 2013, Latvia 2013, Moldova 2013, Romania 2013, Ukraine 2013, Russia 2013) the U.S. Energy Information Administration data https://www.eia.gov/cfapps/ipdbproject/IEDIndex3.cfm?tid=5&pid=5&aid=2 (9.03.2016).
10. Military expenditure at current prices 2014) Stockholm International Peace Research Institute data, http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex/milex_database (9.03.2016).
11. Armed forces personnel (2013) – armed forces personnel are active duty military personnel, including paramilitary forces if the training, organization, equipment and control suggest they may be used to support or replace regular military forces, the World Bank data, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.TOTL.P1 (9.03.2016).

12. Aircraft carriers and submarines (2016) Global Firepower GFP, http://www. globalfirepower.com/navy-aircraft-carriers.asp, http://www.globalfirepower. com/navy-submarines.asp (9.03.2016).

There have been six different classes applied to power calculation. The higher the class is, the bigger the power of the state is. The calculation with rank-weighting method presents significant disproportions in power of Central European Geostrategic Region states. Most of the states in this region has been qualified as class VI, however even between those states there are significant differences in power. Russia – the most powerful state of the region – has the dominant positions in most cases, except for GDP and value of the export of goods and services. As far as these two indicators are concerned, the strongest position is held by Germany, which leads to conclusion that this country may be described as an economic power. Russia can be classified as a demographic, spatial, resource and military power. Table 1. presents only one state classified as the highest class I – Russia. Germany has been classified as class II. The difference of power between these two political units is significant. Next states have been classified as the lowest – VI class, except for Poland, which is class V. Moldova is the lowest power of all.
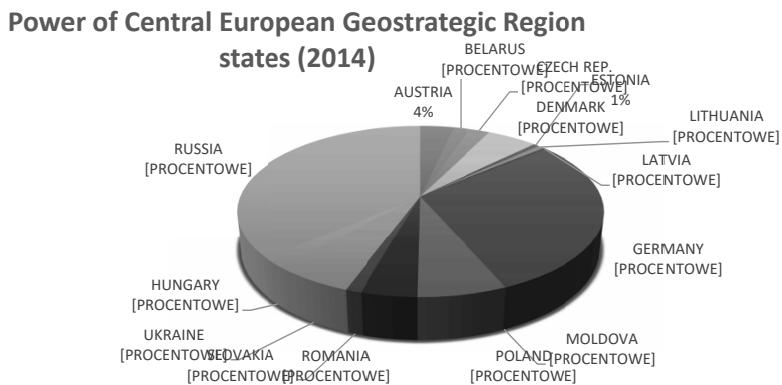

Figure 4. Input of the states in question to the power of the Central European Geostrategic Region.

Source: own study based on data from Table 1.

Power distribution in the Central European Geostrategic Region suggests that there are two strong poles (Fig. 4) – Russia and Germany. Their joint power constitutes 65% of the regional power. This power system may imply foreign policy

of the dominant units conducted from a position of power, in other words power relation.

Conclusions

The Central European Geostrategic Region, being a significant part of both Europe and the World, is characterised with a big disproportion of power of the states in the region. As one of four European Geostrategic Regions, located within its central part, it is very important for European security, especially for the EU and NATO. Numerous significant transportation routes run through this region and for centuries it has been the place of army marches (especially in the North). Two main European geostrategic axes intersect here, resulting in an increase of the importance of this part of the continent. Majority of routes go from the West to the East, while the rest run from the North (Scandinavia) to the South (the Balkans). Furthermore, the Eastern frontiers of the EU and NATO run through the Central European Geostrategic Region. Thanks to this, the region is of a key importance for both organisations. It is a great challenge, especially, that some of the states in the region (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova) are not members of either NATO or the EU. Moreover, conflict in the Eastern Ukraine has re-drawn the attention to this part of Europe, which most likely will be of a key importance for Europe's security and stability.

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Słowa kluczowe: *potęga, Środkowoeuropejski Region Geostrategiczny, metoda rangowo-wagowa*

STRESZCZENIE

W artykule przedstawiono koncepcję Środkowoeuropejskiego Regionu Geostrategicznego (ŚRG) obejmującego pas państw między przewężeniami bałtycko-czarnomorskim i bałtycko-adriatyc-kim. Region ten jest istotny z punktu widzenia interesów NATO I UE ponieważ część jego państw stanowi wschodnią flankę (granicę) tych organizacji. Z drugiej strony państwa tego regionu są istotne dla polityki zagranicznej prowadzonej przez Federację Rosyjską, co potwierdzają wyda-rzenia ostatnich lat. Środkowoeuropejski Region Geostrategiczny odgrywa więc kluczową rolę dla bezpieczeństwa, zarówno Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej jak i całej Europy, a także prze-strzeni euroatlantyckiej i euroazjatyckiej. Z tego też względu autor przedstawił potęgę państw ŚRG wyliczoną za pomocą metody rangowo-wagowej, która w pewnym stopniu odzwierciedla regionalny układ sił. Jak wynika z wyliczeń, region ten cechuje się ogromną różnicą w dystrybucji potęgi między poszczególne jednostki polityczne, co z kolei ma wpływ na kształtowanie polityki zagranicznej i bezpieczeństwo tychże państw.