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EXPERT FRAMEWORK FOR MEASURING THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPABILITIES TO COUNTER HYBRID THREATS: EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS

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Abstract: This article presents results of the analysis of the institutional capabilities to counter hybrid threats. The results are based on assessments made by Bulgarian experts and provide a perspective on the development of institutional capabilities to execute national security system's functions. The analysis leads to a conclusion that the country is capable to effectively counteract the potential hybrid threats, provided that the identification of the threats happens at an early stage and the strategy of counteracting is built on a realistic assessment of existing institutional capabilities, possibilities for their flexible use, and offsetting their deficits.

Keywords: expert assessment, institutional capabilities, hybrid threats, national security system, national security functions, empirical analysis, data analysis.

The term "hybrid threats" or "hybrid war" has recently been used to capture the seemingly increased complexity of threats and war, the multiplicity of actors involved, and the blurring between traditional categories of conflict. The hybrid threats translated strategic intent into unrestricted distributed operations.[3] How can societies be defended against hybrid threats? The analysis of challenges posed by hybrid threats led to the emergence of a comprehensive approach blending all actors and available instruments. Society's security does not rest on traditional security providers such as police and military alone, but all the key sectors of society have been included in the security planning and implementation process.[2]

In the European Union's own comprehensive approach which was adopted in December 2013 the institutional trends were considered to be one of the main avenues for building social capacity to counter these kinds of untraditional, complex and coordinated attacks.[5] Interagency cooperation by exchange of information and resources was examined as an irreplaceable prerequisite for effectiveness of the distributed response to the threats.

The widely held view asserted that the key targets of hybrid operations were the identified vulnerabilities or weaknesses in the target country.[2] These vulnerabilities could be identified from any of the vital parts of a society. The greatest asymmetries available were found, the targets were easiest to attack, and the attacks were orchestrated so that maximum impact to be achieved. Thus, the comprehensive security approach required clearheaded vulnerability analysis to understand the potential pressure points in one's own society, which in turn exacted strong measures and a need to conduct a national threat and risk assessment to define the vital functions of the society and to find out the vulnerabilities in them.

In light of this conceptual understanding of hybrid threats' proceeding, the Defence Advanced Research Institute (DARI), one of the main units of "G. S. Rakovski" National Defence College (NDC) conducted an expert assessment on the topic "Interagency and Interoperability to Counter Hybrid Threats." DARI was tasked to provide an assessment model on the degree of development of national capabilities through 20 major national security system's functions. This model was originally developed by Prof. D.Sc. M. Stoykov. The possibilities for the overall performance of each national security system's function were estimated by the available institutional capabilities or by the need for institutional capabilities building. We believe that the study's methodology is a genuine innovation by DARI and, after its further development and validation, it could be used as a tool for measuring national institutional capabilities.

The fundamental results of the expert assessment were presented in this edition by the report of Prof. Stoykov.[6] The purpose of the current report is to provide an additional perspective to the analysis and interpretation of the study data.

It should be borne in mind that the study results summarize the experts 'mental framework' which represents various institutions, and outline the final picture, and could not truly project the real status of available capabilities and needs for capabilities building of the rated institutions.

Study Methodology

Purpose

The study intends to determine the level of institutions available capabilities and shortages in the National Security System functions' implementation.

Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the *average level* of institutions' available capabilities and capabilities building needs in implementing each national security system function according to the roles (primary or secondary) performed by the institution.

2. To determine the *difference* between the *average levels* of institutions' available capabilities and capabilities building needs in each national security system function's implementation according to institutions' performing role (primary or secondary).

3. To determine the *average level* of the *factors* of institutions' available capabilities and capabilities building needs in each national security system function's implementation according to institutions' performing role (primary or secondary).

4. To determine the *difference* between the *average levels* of *factors* of institutions' available capabilities and capabilities building needs in each national security system function's implementation according to institutions' performing role (primary or secondary).

Working Hypotheses

High average level and low *difference* between the *average levels* of institutions' available capabilities performing primary or secondary role in the national security system function's implementation show the strengths to effectively counteract the hybrid threat.

Low average level and high *difference* between the *average levels* of institutions' available capabilities performing primary or secondary role in the national security system function's implementation demonstrate deficits (risk areas) in effectively countering hybrid threats.

Sample

The sample consists of 56 experts representing 16 national institutions, organizations or agency. Various directorates, offices, senior military schools directly subordinated to the Ministry of Defence and headquarters of the Bulgarian Army are represented by 27 servicemen with expertise in the relevant areas. The experts from the Ministry of Defence were instructed to refer their estimates for global mode. Besides them, experts from the following institutions were attended at: the National Assembly (1), Ministry of Interior (1), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1), Ministry of Energy (2) Ministry of Economy (1) Ministry of Justice (1), Ministry of Education and Science (1), Ministry of Health (2) Bulgarian National Bank (2), the Executive Agency "Electronic Communication Networks and Information Systems" (1), State Agency "National Security" (2) State Commission on Information Security (2), State Agency for Refugees (1), Sofia Municipality (1) Crisis Management and Disaster Response Centre of Excellence (10).

The sample covers a wide range of experts from public institutions, organizations or agencies providing a relatively good basis for further valid conclusions.

The Expert Assessment Procedure

The expert assessment was organised in two stages – filling in the Expert Assessment Card and the group discussions. For the purposes of the current analysis we should represent only the results of the experts' empirical data study. The process of assessment took place in Aula "Rakovski" at the "G.S. Rakovski" NDC on 20 and 21 April 2016. Immediately after the event's official opening and a brief explanation about study objectives, the experts were instructed how to fill in the Expert Assessment Card. Subsequently, to this sample were attached additionally completed Expert Assessment Cards by 20 senior officers attending the "Strategic course" at the "G. S. Rakovski" NDC, as well as seven participants from the Crisis Management and Disaster Response Centre of Excellence. Subsequently, the conducted statistical analysis showed that there were no significant differences between most of variables among samples from the experts who were present on the day of expert assessment and the second studied groups.

The procedure of the study sought to ensure the respondents anonymity. The only identification of the experts was in the direction of their belonging to the institution, organization or agency that they had to assess.

Method

Expert Assessment Card

The Expert Assessment Card's content, along with a complete description of its design, has been presented in Prof. Stoykov' report of the study.[6] In short, the Expert Assessment Cards are based on the institutional role and contribution to the execution of 20 basic functions of the national security system, identified through analysis of national and institutional legal basis. The possibilities for the overall national security system functions' implementation were assessed by the institutions' available capabilities or capabilities building needs. The assessment of the particular institutional role—primary, secondary or insignificant—and contribution to each of the national security system function was accomplished through three-point scale options: "primary," "secondary" and "missing." The assessment of institutions' available capabilities and capabilities building needs was performed through five-degree Likert scales: number 1 indicating "*very low"*, 2 – "*low*," 3 – "*middle*," 4 – "*high*," 5 – "*very high*" degree of availability or needs.

Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the institutions' available capabilities or capabilities building needs in each functional area were higher than 0.70 allowing their aggregation into scales. The same procedure was carried out according to the institutional capabilities building needs. In the final stage, 20 scales for institutional capabilities

availability and 20 scales for the institutional capabilities building needs were formed.

Statistical Data Processing

Software package IBM SPSS Statistics 22 was used for statistical data processing. The analyses were accomplished through the following statistical methods: reliability coefficient Cronbach's alpha, percentage analysis, average means, and exploratory factor analysis.

The difference from the DARI report is the way of data processing. The initial percentage analysis displayed a particular institution's position according to its performing role (primary or secondary) in each national security system function's implementation. Institutions playing *insignificant* role were excluded by the subsequent analyses. Then, two separate files for each function were created – the first one consisted of the institutions playing a *primary* role in the national security system function' implementation (other institutions were removed from the data set) and the second one involved only institutions performing a *secondary* role (as a final result: 40 files were created for 20 functions). Thus, the subsequently calculated means were processed only on the relevant data for any given national security system's function and according to institutions' role performed in its implementation.

Distribution according to institutions' performing roles to each national security system function's implementation is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution according to institutions' performing roles to each national security system function's implementation.

#	National Security System's Functions	Institutions with a Primary Role	Institutions with a Secondary Role
1	Surveillance, detection, recognition, identification and analysis of development challenges, risks and threats to national security	MoD, DC, MFA, EA „ECN&IS," SANS, SCIS	MoI, ME, MJ, MA&S, MH, BNB, SAR, SM, CMDRCoE
2	Intelligence sharing, provision of information and knowledge	MoD, DC, MFA, SANS, SCIS	MoI, ME, MA&S, MH, BNB, SAR, SM, CMDRCoE
3	Scanning the horizon, long-term forecasting, risk assessment, modeling and simulation of development and manifestation of threats	DC, MFA, ME, SANS, SCIS	MoD, MoI, MJ, MH, BNB, EA „ECN&IS," SAR, CMDRCoE
4	Monitoring system, command, control and coordination	MoD, DC, MFA, EA „ECN&IS," SANS, SCIS, SAR	MoI, MJ, MH, BNB, SM, CMDRCoE

5	Border security, border control and migration	MoI, SANS	MoD, DC, MFA, ME, MH
6	Surveillance, control and protection of air and sea space, protection of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity	MoD, DC, MFA, SANS	MoI, ME, SAR
7	Implementation of international and coalition commitments for participation in NATO and the EU operations and missions	MoD, DC, MoI, MFA	ME, MH, SANS, SAR, CMDRCoE
8	Participation in the UN and the OSCE operations for crisis management and conflict resolution, and for humanitarian aid	DC, MoI	MoD, ME, MH, SANS, SAR, CMDRCoE
9	Combat terrorism, counterterrorism, managing the consequences of terrorist acts	MoI, SANS	MoD, DC, ME, ME_C, MJ, MH, BNB, SAR, SM
10	Implementation of allied and bilateral commitments for operations` management of the consequences of crises, disasters and accidents	DC, MoI, MFA	MoD, ME, MH, BNB, SANS, SCIS, SAR, SM, CMDRCoE
11	Public information, strategic communication, media and warning systems	DC, MoI, MFA, ME, EA „ECN&IS," SAR	MoD, ME_C, MJ, BNB, SANS, SCIS, SM, CMDRCoE
12	Information policy, security and protection of information systems and networks	DC, MFA, EA „ECN&IS," SANS, SCIS	MoD, MoI, ME, MEc, MJ, MH, BNB, SAR, SM, CMDRCoE
13	Protection of public order, combating organized crime, law enforcement, investigation and court	MoI, SAR	DC, MJ, SANS, SCIS, SM
14	Health, quarantine, limiting the spread of epidemics; securing and disposal	DC, MH, SAR	MoD, MoI, SANS, SM
15	Protection of population and critical infrastructure	DC, MoI, ME, EA „ECN&IS," SAR	MoD, ME_C, MA&S, MH, SANS, SCIS, SM, CMDRCoE
16	Policy, state governance and national security system capacity building	DC, MoI, MFA, EA „ECN&IS," SANS, SCIS	MoD, ME, ME_C, MJ, MH, BNB, SAR, CMDRCoE
17	Economy, public finances, banks, stock exchanges	MEC, BNB, SANS	ME, SAR
18	Research, education, innovation, training, exercises	MoI, MA&S	MoD, ME, MH, EA „ECN&IS," SCIS, SAR, CMDRCoE

19	Managing the consequences of natural disasters, large industrial accidents and catastrophes	MoI, ME, EA „ECN&IS"	MoD, DC, ME_C, MA&S, MH, BNB, SANS, SAR, SM, CMDRCoE
20	Crisis and wartime planning, state reserve and logistics	MoD, DC, MFA, ME, EA „ECN&IS," SAR	MoI, ME_C, MJ, MA&S, MH, BNB, SANS, SCIS, SM, CMDRCoE

Abbreviations: Ministry of Defence (MoD), Defence Committee (DC), Ministry of Interior (MoI), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Ministry of Energy (ME), Ministry of Economy (MEc), Ministry of Justice (MJ), Ministry of Education and Science (ME&S), Ministry of Health (MH), Bulgarian National Bank (BNB), Executive Agency "Electronic Communication Networks and Information Systems" (EA „ECN&IS"), State Agency of National Security (SANS), State Commission on Information Security (SCIS), State Agency for Refugees (SAR), Sofia Municipality (SM), Crisis Management and Disaster Response Centre of Excellence (CMDRCoE).

The arithmetic means were calculated for three factor variables – institutional capabilities availability in relation to each national security system's function, the needs for institutional capabilities building in relation to each national security system's function and the difference between the needs for institutional capabilities building and the available institutional capabilities for each national security system's function. All of these summed averages were reduced to the scale of measurement (i.e., divided by the number of items included).

Analysis of the Results

1. Availability and Shortages of Institutional Capabilities for Implementation of the National Security System's Functions

Several arbitrary criteria were applied for interpretation of the level of availability and shortages of institutional capabilities in implementation of the national security system's functions.

The first presumed criterion of *shortages* in the national security system functions' implementation was an aggregate level of institutional capabilities *lower* than the *high* level on the measurement scale for institutions playing a *primary* role.

A conditionally accepted pre-assumption was that institutions, playing a *primary* role in the any national security system functions' implementation, should possess highly developed institutional capabilities, i.e. they had to cover the scale degree defined as *high* (about 4). Provided that any particular national security system's function was covered by institutional capabilities developed to a *high* degree, we assumed that the obvious insufficiencies or shortages on that function did not exist. In the case when the experts viewed their institutions' available capabilities as *lower* than *high* scale

level, although the institution is playing a *primary* role in the particular national security system function's implementation, we assumed that certain deficiencies in the implementation of that function existed. If the arithmetic means were less than *average* value of the scale, i.e. 3, we accepted that these shortages were serious.

Applying this criterion to the results illustrated on Figure 1, it could be seen that most institutions playing a *primary* role in each national security system function's implementation owned capabilities around and above the *high* level on the scale. The least covered by institutional capabilities (with an average level of development) was the function: "*Scanning the horizon, long-term forecasting, risk assessment, modelling and simulation of development and manifestation of threats*" (3.26).

Institutional capabilities' deficits could be expected in the following national security system functions' implementation: "*Surveillance, control and protection of air and sea space, preservation of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity*" (3.42), "*Border security, border control and migration*" (3.44), "*Monitoring system, command, control and coordination*" (3.47), "*Surveillance, detection, recognition, identification and analysis of development challenges, risks and threats to national security*" (3.47), "*Protection of public order, combating organized crime, law enforcement, investigation and court*" (3.5), and "*Intelligence sharing, provision of information and knowledge*" (3.51).

Second, we applied a double criterion to identify the national security system's functions, whose implementation was covered by *forceful institutional capabilities*: a level of institutional capabilities about *high* degree on the measurement scale for the institutions that performed a *primary* role in the national security system functions' implementation and *medium* for the institutions that were assessed by experts as performing a *secondary* role in the national security system functions' implementation.

Figure 1 demonstrates that the number of the national security system's functions which covered this double criterion was significantly fewer: "*Implementation of allied and bilateral commitments for operations` management of the consequences of crises, disasters and accidents*" [primary (4.5), secondary (3.08)], "*Research, education, innovation, training, exercises*" [primary (4), secondary (3.39)], "*Participation in the UN and the OSCE operations for crisis management and conflict resolution, and for humanitarian aid*" [primary (4), secondary (3.12)], "*Information policy, security and protection of information systems and networks*" [primary (4), secondary (3.11)], "*Managing the consequences of natural disasters, large industrial accidents and catastrophes*" [primary (4), secondary (3.1)].

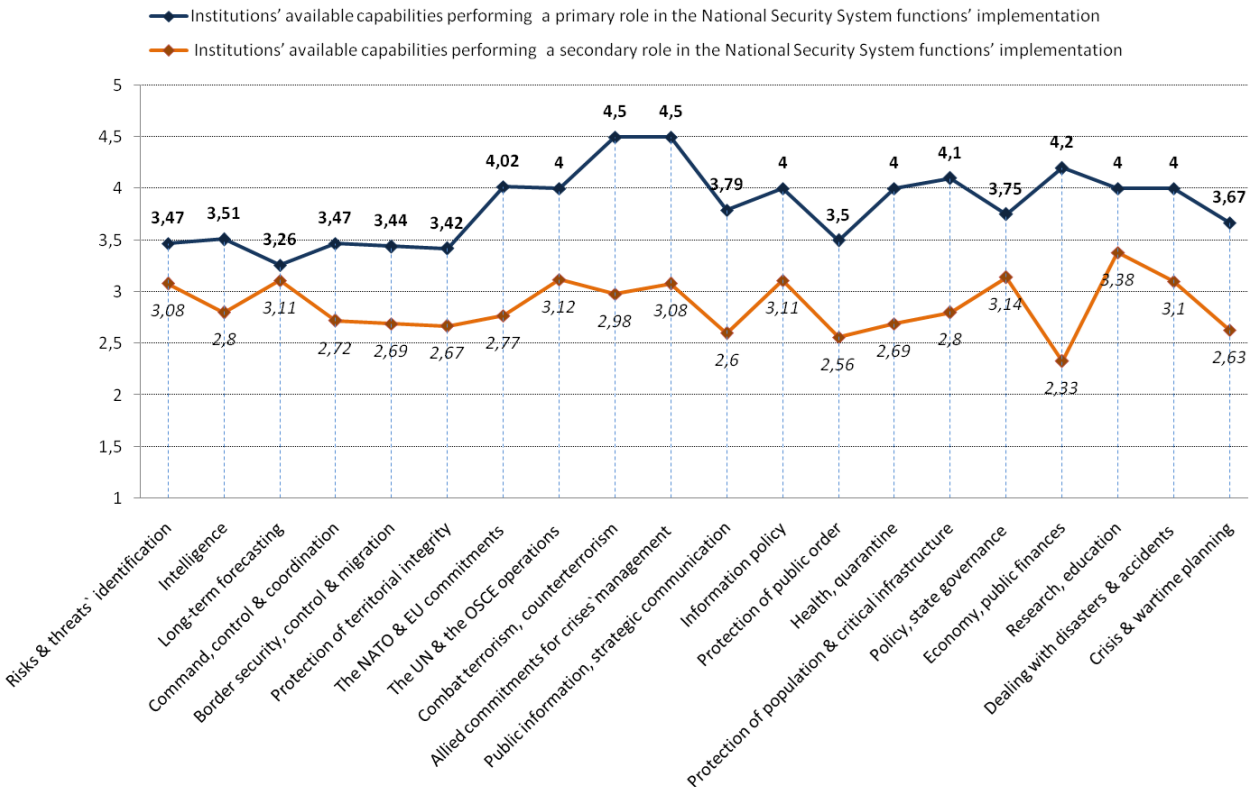

Figure 1: Institutions' available capabilities for performing primary and secondary roles in the national security system's functions implementation.

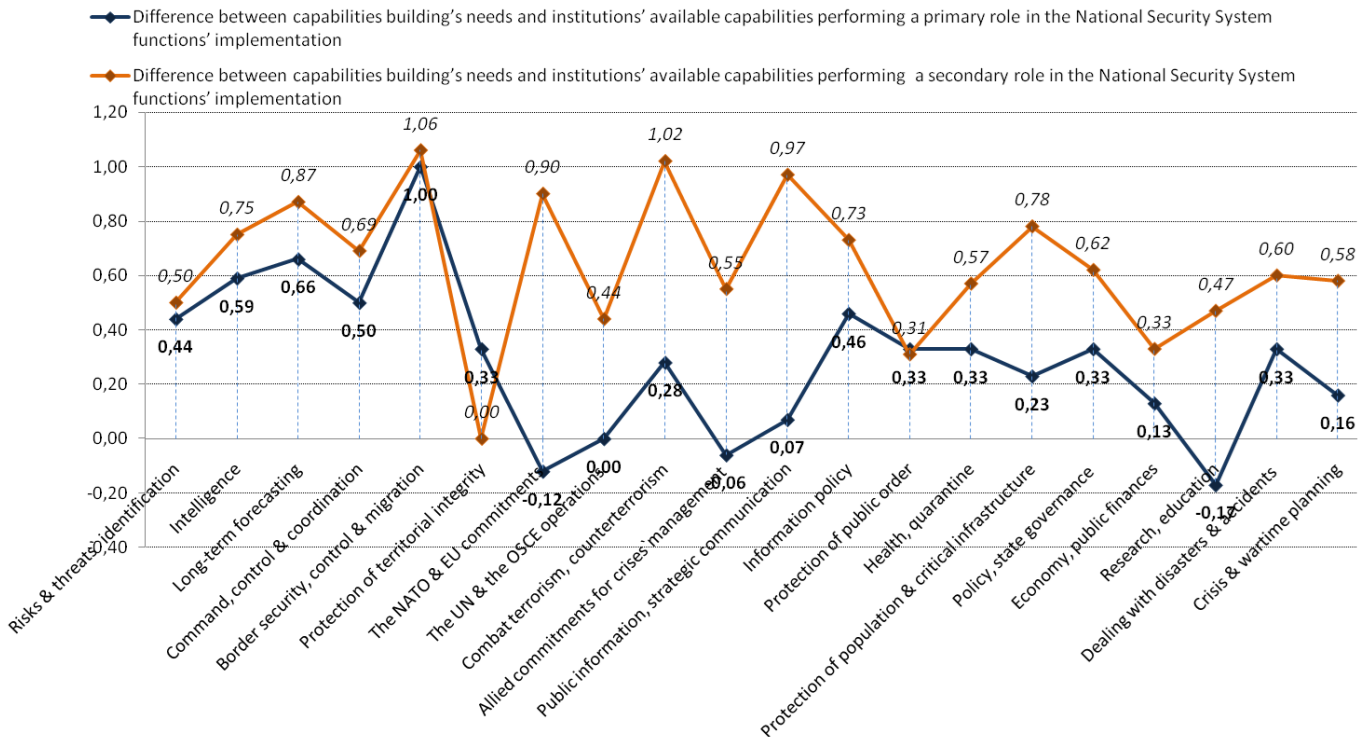

Figure 2: Difference between capabilities building needs and institutions' available capabilities performing primary and secondary roles in the national security system functions' implementation.

Third, another criterion for determining forceful institutional capabilities and shortages in the national security system functions' implementation was the *difference* between capabilities building needs and institutions' available capabilities.

Figure 2 shows the *differences* between capabilities building needs and institutions' available capabilities performing a *primary* and a *secondary* role in the coverage of each national security system's function. We conditionally accepted that the difference between the capabilities building needs and institutions' available capabilities greater than 0.5 (i.e. half a point of the measuring scale) deserved attention and should be considered as essential. Figure 2 illustrates that the gaps between capabilities building needs and institutions' available capabilities were much bigger for the institutions performing a *secondary* role in the national security system functions' implementation.

Generally, the National Security System's function performing with *the highest shortages* in institutional capabilities combining both the institutions playing *primary* and *secondary* roles was "*Border security, border control and migration*" [primary (1), secondary (1.06)].

Smaller but also manifested deficits represented the following functions: "*Scanning the horizon, long-term forecasting, risk assessment, modelling and simulation of development and manifestation of threats*" [primary (0.66), secondary (0.87)], "*Intelligence sharing, provision of information and knowledge*" [primary (0.59), secondary (0.75)] and "*Monitoring system, command, control and coordination*" [primary (0.5), secondary (0.69)].

With the national security system's functions relatively well covered by institutional capabilities as well as the difference between capabilities building needs and institutions' available capabilities not exceeding 0.5 for both, the institutions playing *primary* and *secondary* roles were: "*Surveillance, control and protection of air and sea space, protection of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity*" [primary (0.33), secondary (0)], "*Participation in operations by the UN and the OSCE for crisis management and conflict for humanitarian assistance*" [primary (-0.12), secondary (0.44)], "*Protection of public order, combating organized crime, law enforcement, investigation and court*" [primary (0.33), secondary (0.31)], "*Economy, public finance, banks, stock exchanges*" [primary (0.13), secondary (0.33)], "*Research, education, innovation, training, exercises*" [primary (-0.17), secondary (0.47)].

The analysis of institutional capabilities for the execution of national security system' functions as separate variables allow the conclusion that the state is vulnerable generally from its borders and border control, under-developed institutional capabilities in the long-term scanning and intelligence.

2. Institutional Capabilities, Availability and Shortages for the Implementation of National Security System's Functions into Countering Hybrid Threats

In searching for the more complex factors organizing variations in respondents' answers, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis. Five factor decisions were extracted (eigenvalues > 1.0) (see Table 2). The model accounted for 75 % of the total variance.

The factors were labelled as "*Early risks and threats' identification*," "*Information policy, command, control and coordination*," "*Country protection*," "*Crises' management*," and "*Economy*."

Figure 3 represents a summary of institutions' *primary* role in the national security system functions' implementation. The lowest scores were assigned to the factor "*Early identification of risks and threats*," and the highest scores – to the factor "*Economy*." It is noteworthy that the lower values of the institutions' *primary* role were offset by elevated levels of development of capabilities of institutions' *secondary* role in the national security system functions' implementation.

Table 2: Factor model on institutions' available capabilities in the national security system functions' implementation.

CUMULATIVE % OF THE MODEL -75 % OF VARIANCE	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
% OF VARIANCE	26%	17%	15%	10%	7%
CRONBACH'S ALPHA	.87	.80	.82	.66	-
Early risks and threats' identification					
Surveillance, detection, recognition, identification and analysis of development challenges, risks and threats to national security		**.81**			
Intelligence sharing, provision of information and knowledge	.32	**.86**			
Scanning the horizon, long-term forecasting, risk assessment, modelling and simulation of development and manifestation of threats		**.88**			

Policy, state governance and national security system capacity building		**.59**	.40	
Information policy, command, control and coordination				
Monitoring system, command, control and coordination	.43	.46	**.58**	
Information policy, security and protection of information systems and networks			**.81**	
Country protection				
Border security, border control and migration	**.76**			
Surveillance, control and protection of air and sea space, protection of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity	**.81**			
Implementation of international and coalition commitments for participation in NATO and the EU operations and missions	**.88**			
Participation in the UN and the OSCE operations for crisis management and conflict resolution, and for humanitarian aid	**.82**			
Combat terrorism, counterterrorism, managing the consequences of terrorist acts	**.52**			.58
Protection of public order, combating organized crime, law enforcement, investigation and court	**.54**			
Health, quarantine, limiting the spread of epidemics; securing and disposal	**.74**			
Protection of population and critical infrastructure	**.59**		.50	
Crisis Management				
Implementation of allied and bilateral commitments for operations` management of the consequences of crises, disasters and accidents		.32	**.82**	

Public information, strategic communication, media and warning systems		**.72**	.37	
Managing the consequences of natural disasters, large industrial accidents and catastrophes	.44	**.78**		
Crisis and wartime planning, state reserve and logistics	.35	**.56**	.47	
Economy				
Economy, public finances, banks, stock exchanges				**.90**

* The function "*Research, education, innovation, training, exercises*" was removed from the model because of its very high inverse correlation with the function "*Economy, public finances, banks, stock exchanges*" (-.70) and low positive correlations with other factors. Based on theoretical considerations the function "*Combat terrorism, counterterrorism, managing the consequences of terrorist acts*" was allocated to the "*Country protection*" factor instead of to the "*Economy*" factor.

Both types of institutions' *primary* and *secondary* roles in the national security system functions' implementation on the first factor "*Early identification of risks and threats*" displayed capabilities building needs essentially higher than the institutions' available capabilities (Figure 4). Institutions' capabilities building needs on the other three factors "*Information policy, command, control and coordination*," "*Country protection*" and "*Crises' management*" were significantly higher than the available capabilities entirely for the institutions playing *secondary* role in the national security system functions' implementation. In regard to the factor "*Economy*," essential differences between institutions' available capabilities and capabilities building's needs were not observed for any type of institutions.

In accordance with the National Security System functionality in countering hybrid threats it could be concluded that National Security breakthroughs could be expected even at the earliest stage ("*Early risks and threats identifications*"), due to lower levels of available institutional capabilities to perform their *primary* role in the execution of the national security system, as well due to the big difference between the available capabilities and the capabilities building needs for institutions with both *primary* and *secondary* roles. Institutions playing a *primary* role stranded well on other factors, but institutions performing a *subordinate* role on factors "*Information policy, command, control and coordination*," "*Country protection*," and "*Crisis*

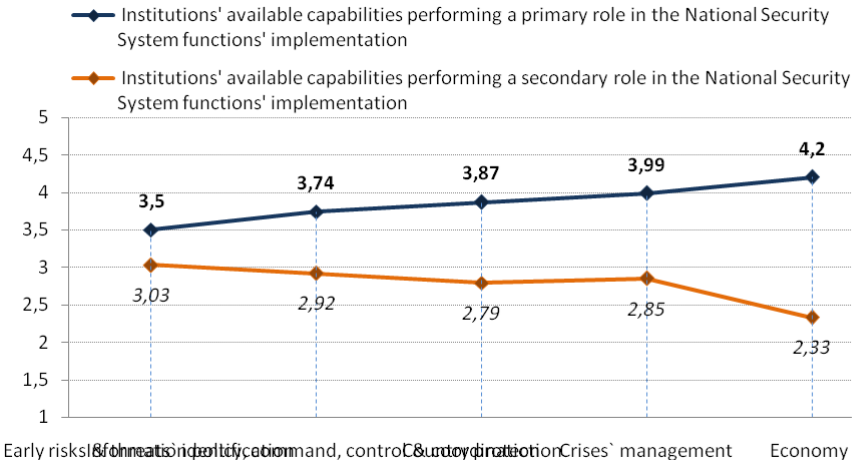

Figure 3: Institutions' available capabilities performing primary and secondary roles in the national security system functions' implementation, organized in factors.

management" displayed apparent deficits. This means that in situations of potential deployed consequences of hybrid threat, it would be possible that inter-institutional interaction between institutions performing a *subordinate* role on these factors would show low availability of institutional capabilities for supporting and compensating actions.

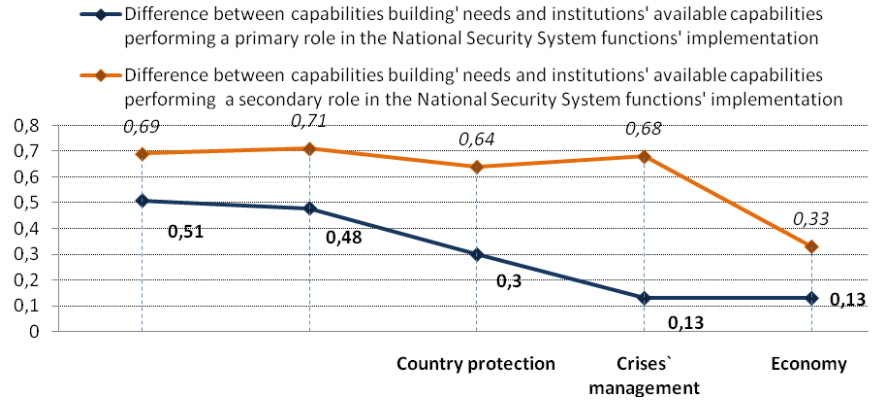

Figure 4: Difference between capabilities building's needs and institutions' available capabilities performing primary and secondary roles in the National Security System functions' implementation, organized in factors.

Specific Conclusions

1. The institutions' available capabilities for performing a *primary* role in the national security system functions showed elevated levels compared to those of the institutions playing a *secondary* role. There was a significant gap between the capabilities building needs and institutions' available capabilities for institutions performing a *secondary* role in the national security system functions' implementation.

2. According to the experts, Bulgaria has well-developed institutional capabilities in certain national security system's functions and shortages in others. Applying a complex criterion revealed best developed institutional capabilities in the national security system functions' implementation in the areas: "*Implementation of allied and bilateral commitments for operations' management of the consequences of crises, disasters and accidents*" and "*Research, education, innovation, training, exercises*." Uttermost shortages in institutions' capabilities or performing *primary* and *secondary* role in the national security system functions was "*Border security, border control and migration*." The national security system's functions holding less, but also well-expressed deficits were: "*Scanning the horizon, long-term forecasting, risk assessment, modelling and simulation of development and manifestation of threats*," "*Intelligence sharing and provision of information and knowledge*," and "*Monitoring system, command, control and coordination*."

3. The case of aggregated categories or factors revealed the largest shortages in the function "*Early identification of risks and threats*" making our county vulnerable to potential hybrid threats of any kind. Other factors, such as "*Information policy, command, control and coordination*," "*Country protection*," and "*Crisis management*" also involved some deficits, albeit at a lower level. Combining previous findings with the identification of significantly limited development of institutional capabilities performing a *secondary* role in the national security system allows to reduce vulnerabilities and strengthen the response to hybrid threats.

General Conclusion

The applied methodology provided for screening the information on the overall picture of institutional capabilities and shortages in the national security system functions' implementation, as reflected in the mental experts' framework. Being subjective in nature, it might substantially differ from the real picture of the national security institutional capabilities. Taking into account the difficulties in applying objective measures in this domain, the present study took its place and importance as a reference source of information on the topic. Experts' assessment raised the questions about the relations between institutions performing a *primary* role and those performing a *secondary* role in the national security system functions'

implementation. The general challenge of the first one might be to build upon their existing institutional capabilities availability having developed a clear mission; the second ones' roles in the national security system functions' implementation seemed completely vague and unsecured. The study raised requirement for further detailed analysis in already outlined framework.

Is the state capable of effective response to potential hybrid threats according to the institutional capabilities and deficits' outlined picture in the national security system functions' implementation? The answer is not definitive. According to the authors, the country is capable to effectively counteract the potential hybrid threats, provided that the identification of the threats happens at an early stage and the strategy of counteracting is based on existing institutional capabilities' realistic assessment and potential for their flexible use offsetting their deficits. The agenda for hybrid war's paradigm development, capable to evaluate the strategic underpinnings for offensive hybrid operations and listing suggestions for organizing national defences to cope with the spectrum of hybrid threats is urgent.[1]

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