

THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SEPARATIST TERRORISM IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND SPAIN

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Summary: Nowadays more than 3,600 ethnic groups around the world seek to obtain a high degree of autonomy or to separate from the countries in which they are currently situated. The subject of analysis in this paper covers various similarities and differences between separatist terrorism in Northern Ireland and Spain. The paper aims to examine to what extent the assumptions about uniformity or dissimilarity of separatist terrorism in Europe are founded, especially in Northern Ireland and Spain as the countries where separatist terrorism persists for the longest period of time and where there are serious social and political problems. Using the content analysis and historically comparative methods, the paper determines that there is a series of similarities, but also differences between the separatist terrorism in Northern Ireland and Spain, whose main representatives are the IRA and ETA. Special focus is on those dimensions of separatist terrorism in these areas that turn them into a wider security challenge. The author concludes that, based on the use of adequate methods, as well as review of recent materials, the separatist terrorism in Spain and in Great Britain pose serious security challenge for these countries and Europe as a whole, not only in terms of current or increased danger of terrorism, but also because of the possibility of regional conflicts, especially in Spain. Therefore, no matter what differences there are between phenomenal forms of separatist terrorism in Spain and Great Britain, they have enough similar characteristics, and based on those the common European solution can be found for combating them.

Keywords: Northern Ireland, Spain, Basque Country, separatism, terrorism, IRA, ETA.

Pages 169-181