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Introduction

This volume aims to summarise the demographic and migration processes of nine Central and Eastern European countries (including Austria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia and Ukraine) from the collapse of the bipolar world order until 2018. The book is part of the ten volumes series, which was edited and coordinated by the Budapest based Centre for Strategic and Defence Studies and the National University of Public Service, within the PADOP-2.1.2-CCHOP-15-2016-00001 “Public Service Development Establishing Good Governance” project funding framework in an overarching research project “Strategic Analyses for Supporting Governmental Decision-making in the Field of Foreign and Security Policy”. These ten volumes analysed comparatively the different security policy processes of Central and Eastern European countries concerning the fields of security perception; economic integration and interdependence; defence policy role in NATO and EU; foreign and security policy institutions and decision-making; regional cooperation; relations with the United States; relations with Russia; relations with Germany; relations with China as well as demography and migration that is introduced by this book.

There is a general consensus among security policy experts that demographic processes, trends and characteristics decisively influence the strategic position and the security of a state. Central and Eastern European countries belong to a region, where demographic prospects are less and less favourable, while there are several demographic macro processes that have influenced them similarly (but not to the same degree) during the past 28 years. With regards to fertility, these are the trends in the decline in the ratio of women in childbearing age; the decline in the absolute number of abortions; and the advancing of maternal age. With regards to relationships, the most influential macro trends include the declining number of marriages; the increasing number of divorces and the increase of children born out of wedlock. Finally, each of the analysed countries had to experience the general ageing of their societies with a declining ratio of the youth and a significant increase of the average life expectancy. In parallel to the introduction of these most influential demographic processes, the chapters in this volume also aim to answer whether these processes affect the security as well as the security perceptions of the given societies; whether the societies and the political elites interpret them as security issues; and whether these countries prepared the proper plans and strategies to solve or at least to mitigate their problems?

International migration became a global phenomenon for the second half of the 20th century and it also started to gain attention on the field of security studies in this period. The security studies literature analysed migration from two main aspects. Firstly, with regards to the security of the state, it emphasises that national sovereignty might be

challenged due to the loss of control over migration processes. Secondly, the framework of human security, and the security of the individual has become more and more influential on the field, especially owing to the increasing number of refugees. The 2015 migrant and refugee crisis in the European Union led to the emergence of a strong and divisive migration discourse that clearly characterised the phenomenon as a security issue. This was extremely visible concerning the question of immigration which has become openly criticised and significantly restricted in most of the analysed countries. However, this volume also reveals, that besides immigration, the phenomena of emigration, brain drain and skill drain are also heavily affecting the analysed countries. For this reason, our goal was also to answer, whether these countries and their political elites are prepared to handle these issues?

At the end we decided to analyse the two, seemingly different issues of demography and migration together, because of the convincing arguments that the complex demographic problems of the region can only be mitigated in the future through a comprehensive demographic policy that encourages childbirth, supports health preservation and builds on an effective migration policy as well.

We suggest this book for security policy experts, demographers and students who are interested in Central and Eastern Europe and we do hope that this work will serve as a useful tool for further comparative research on the demographic and migration processes of the region.