
THE FUTURE OF SOUTHERN CAUCASUS IN THE LIGHT OF NEW GEOPOLITICAL RECONFIGURATIONS

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The past 15–20 years saw some major events that led to considerable geopolitical changes and reconfigurations in the world, such as the downfall of the USSR and the entire Socialist block, the rapid enlargement of the EU and NATO to the East, the beginning of a large-scale campaign against terrorism, the growing influence of market mechanisms on the global economy, etc.

The last four years were also rich in events, which in the next decade will undoubtedly have major impact both on global processes and the Southern Caucasus region, making this one of the most significant regions in the world:

- The rising of the new wave of democratic processes in the territory of the former USSR (the “colour revolutions” in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan);
- The tightening of Russia’s energy policies;
- The changes in the direction of Russia’s foreign policy, as set out in President Vladimir Putin’s speech given on February 10, 2007 at the Munich Conference on Security Policy;
- The suspension or withdrawal of Russia from international treaties signed during the period of warming of East-West relations;
- The attempts made by the EU and the US aimed at diversification of sources and manners of hydrocarbon supply;
- The qualitative and quantitative changes in the military and economic structure of Southern Caucasus;
- The transformation of Southern Caucasus into a transit region for transportation of energy resources, goods and provisions from East to West, and vice versa;

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- The change of leaders in Germany and France, which led to the strengthening of the emphasis on European integration and Euro-Atlantic aspects in the foreign policies of the above-mentioned states;
- The transformation of the GUAM into an actively developing regional organisation.

1. The aggravation of Russia-CIS relations

Russia did not manage to offer the CIS States any attractive cooperation model. As a result, the process of reorientation of the CIS States towards other countries, organisations, and security systems has begun.

There are numerous examples of this: the establishment in the CIS territory of regional organisations without the participation of Russia; the accession of Georgia, Moldova, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan to the World Trade Organisation; the construction of oil and gas pipelines bypassing Russia; the consent of Kazakhstan to transport some of its oil to Europe bypassing Russia, and the participation of Kazakhstan in the Baku-Tbilisi-Akhalkalaki-Kars railway project; the deployment of NATO and US military forces in the territories of some states of Central Asia; Georgia's appeal for NATO membership; the clear orientation of Moldova and Georgia towards European integration, etc.

In recent years, relations between Russia and some CIS States have become openly hostile. This can be seen in relations between Russia on the one hand, and Ukraine and Belarus on the other hand, due to issues of energy resource prices and transit of Russian gas and oil through the territory of the said states. In autumn of 2006, the "spy scandal" between Russia and Georgia flared up, whereby Tbilisi officially accused four Russian officers of spying and deported them from the country. Moscow responded by imposing a disproportionately strict large-scale sanction mechanism, including closure of all transport communications between Russia and Georgia. Almost one year later, in August of 2007, a new scandal flared up related to the shooting attack on the Georgian village Tsitelubani, of which Tbilisi accused Moscow.

The aggravation of Georgia-Russia relations has had serious impact not only on these two nations, but also on all of Southern Caucasus. For instance, the

closure by Russia of the Verkhny Lars crossing point at the Russia-Georgia border had serious implications for Armenia's economy, as its only land communication with Russia running through the territory of Georgia was blocked by Russia itself.

2. Deepening of cooperation of the Southern Caucasus States with the EU and NATO

At the NATO Istanbul Summit held in June of 2004, a decision was taken regarding the strategic importance of the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia regions for NATO. Readiness to pass from the Partnership for Peace level of cooperation to a closer cooperation based on individual action programs, and the establishment of the institute of special representatives in Central Asia and Southern Caucasus were declared. In December of 2005, Georgia and Armenia, and later Azerbaijan, signed the Individual Partnership Action Plans (IPAPs) with NATO. Georgia openly poses the question of NATO membership, having passed to the level of an intensive dialogue (ID) in its cooperation with the Alliance.

We should consider in more detail the obligations undertaken by Armenia in the IPAP framework. It should be noted that here not only security related issues, the anti-terrorist campaign, defence and military reforms, border security and preparedness for emergency situations are dealt with, but also Armenia's obligations in the area of democratic transformations, human right protection, assurance of the rule of law, civil control of the army, the anti-corruption campaign, establishment of the military ombudsman institute, electivity of the position of mayor of Yerevan, etc., are described in detail.

After EU enlargement in 2004, all three Southern Caucasus States as well as Ukraine and Moldova entered the group comprising 17 countries that drew up and signed closer cooperation programs with the EU. Thus, in October of 2006, the EU signed new Partnership and Cooperation Agreements with the Southern Caucasus States, and on November 14, 2006 the three Southern Cau-

casus States ratified the agreements in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

It should be noted that the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plans for Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia differ and constitute separate processes with each individual country. Thus each of the countries has its own objectives and tasks in the European integration processes. We believe it is of utmost importance that the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan for Armenia covers not only cooperation and support on the part of the EU in the economic, trade, environmental, scientific, cultural and other areas; but also deals with such political issues as strengthening of democratic institutes, judicial system reform, support for a peaceful resolution to the Karabakh conflict, and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

3. The world is facing the beginning of a new Cold War

On the one hand, Russia acknowledges the right of the EU, NATO and the US to pursue active cooperation with the Southern Caucasus States in all issues, including military cooperation and regional security. For instance, in the Joint Declaration signed in May of 2002 by Presidents Bush and Putin it is stated that: "In Central Asia and Southern Caucasus, we acknowledge our mutual interest in the assurance of stability, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States in the region..." On the other hand, the speech given by Vladimir Putin on February 10, 2007 at the Munich Conference on Security Policy represented a declaration of a new direction in the country's foreign policy, the cornerstone of which is an open confrontation with the West. The Russian leader said that in the present-day world a unipolar model is "not only unacceptable, but absolutely impossible."

At the EU-Russia Summit held in May 2007, the Russian delegation definitely refused to ratify the European Energy Charter Agreement (the Charter was adopted in 1991, and the Charter Agreement was signed in 1994 in Lisbon); and on July 16, 2007, the Russian President signed the Order regarding

Discontinuation of Russia's Participation in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty).

It seems today that the Russian authorities are constantly looking for those areas of international policy, where relations with the West can be intensified even more. The most recent example of that was Moscow's attempt to engraft the continental shelf with an area of 1.2 million square kilometres in the Arctic Ocean. For that purpose, Russia sent an expedition there, in the course of which, on August 7, 2007, the Russian flag was placed at the bottom of the Arctic Ocean. A few days later it was established that Russia had resumed regular watch by its strategic (long-distance) aircraft which had been suspended since 1992.

4. Changes in the military structure of Southern Caucasus

The withdrawal of Russian military bases from Georgia is an important process which will have serious impact on the formation of a new military architecture in Southern Caucasus.

The Russian military presence in the Southern Caucasus region is decreasing. At the same time, the scope of cooperation between the US and NATO and the Southern Caucasus States is growing: for instance, after the events of September 11, 2001 the US started bilateral military cooperation with the states in the region; hundreds of initiatives have been implemented in the framework of cooperation of NATO with the states in the region, including major Cooperative Best Effort military training exercises; the Southern Caucasus States falling under flank restrictions of the CFE Treaty (pursuant to the Treaty, each of the three Southern Caucasus States may not have in its military forces more than 220 tanks, 100 combat airplanes, 50 combat helicopters, 220 armoured combat vehicles, and 285 artillery systems); active participation of the Southern Caucasus States in the anti-terrorist campaign, and the presence of their peacekeepers in Iraq, Kosovo, and Afghanistan; participation of the OSCE in the settlement of regional conflicts and monitoring in the zones of conflicts, etc.

In the beginning of March 2007, an official representative of the US Department of Defence declared the intention of the US to consider the possibility of deployment of an ABM radar in the Caucasus region in the framework of development of the anti-ballistic missile (ABM) defence system in Eastern Europe. In our opinion, the probability of deployment of the US ABM defence system elements in Southern Caucasus is fairly high, and will constitute a logical continuation of the actively developing bilateral military cooperation between the states of the region and the US.

We believe that the proposal made to the US by the Russian President Putin on June 7, 2007, at the G8 Summit in Germany regarding joint use of the Gabalin Radar Station is not accidental and that it reflects the increasing significance of the Southern Caucasus region for global politics.

5. Changes in the economic and energy structure of Southern Caucasus

Russia's decision to raise the tariff for gas supplied to Armenia in the winter of 2005–2006 and the closure of the Verkhny Lars crossing point at the Russia-Georgia border had some detrimental effects on the Armenian economy and caused serious concern in the Armenian community. Even the pro-Russian Armenian politicians have now understood that Russia has changed its policies, including its policies towards its most loyal partners.

Today, Russia controls about 80 percent of the energy systems in Armenia. For instance, the Sevan-Hrazdan Hydroelectric Plant Cascade was transferred to Russia as reimbursement for the national debt; Hrazdan, the largest thermal power plant in Southern Caucasus, was transferred to RAO UES of Russia; and in April of 2006, the Armenian Government sold the fifth uncompleted power unit of the above-mentioned power plant to the Russian monopolist Gazprom. Since September of 2003, the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant has been on transfer for a five-year term to the financial management of RAO UES of Russia.

Armenian authorities are quite slow in reacting to the current situation in the area of energy security, yet even they are bound to look for alternative sources and ways of supply of energy resources. For instance, in March of this year, the construction of the Iran-Armenia gas pipeline was completed; construction of a modern power unit at the Yerevan Thermal Power Plant is underway financed by the Japanese loan funds; construction of the Megrin Hydroelectric Plant on the border at River Araks was started in cooperation with Iran; and the program of construction of small hydroelectric plants is being developed actively.

Armenia has undertaken the obligation to decommission the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant. This issue was included among the main priorities of the ENP Action Plan, in which it is stipulated that Armenia, by the year 2007, undertakes to present the action plan and the time schedule for decommissioning of the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant. One thing is clear — in this situation Armenia needs to go in the direction of construction of a new nuclear power plant, as no alternative sources of energy will be able to compensate decommissioning of the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant and ensure Armenia's energy security.

However, in order to make such plans reality certain initiatives must be demonstrated, e.g. by suggesting Georgia jointly construct a nuclear power plant in the territory of Armenia. This will make the task of construction of a new nuclear power plant a more realistic one, enable sourcing of required financing (it is well-known that the EU and the US always encourage joint projects in Southern Caucasus!), and involve Armenia in the regional cooperation activities.

Recently, the EU has been paying special attention to searching for alternative sources and ways of energy resource supply. The elaboration and implementation of new large-scale projects concerning oil and gas supply to Europe from the Caspian basin, and countries of Northern Africa and the Middle East is underway.

Having constructed the Baku-Tbilisi-Supsa and Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipelines, and the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzrum gas pipeline, Azerbaijan made its choice in favour of supply of energy resources to the global markets independently of Russia.

At the Summit held in Krakow on May 11, 2007 (which was attended by the leaders of Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Georgia, Lithuania, and Poland), the Azerbaijan President Aliiev talked about the readiness of his country to join the

Odessa-Brody oil pipeline project, which will enable transportation of Caspian oil to Western Europe through the territories of Ukraine and Poland.

As far back as 10-12 years ago, active discussions on the issues of restoration of the Great Silk Route that went through the territory of Southern Caucasus for the purposes of trade between the East and the West were started. The EU has joined the discussions enthusiastically, and started implementation of several communication and transportation projects in the Southern Caucasus region. For instance, roads from the East to the West in the territory of Azerbaijan and Georgia were constructed and repaired. From this point of view, construction of the new Baku-Tbilisi-Akhalkalaki-Kars railway line will also encourage more active trade between the East and the West and increase the importance of the role of Southern Caucasus as a transit region.

Thus, it is clear that establishment of close economic ties with the EU, the US, Turkey, Iran, China, and countries of the Middle East and Central Asia leads to rapid changes in the structure of economic relations between the states in the region.

The only question that arises here is the issue of participation (that is, non-participation!) of Armenia in most of the above-mentioned projects.

What can Armenia do in order to convince Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey of the need to involve Armenia in the major regional projects? As we know, Azerbaijan and Turkey demand withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the “controlled territories” (the territories around Nagorno-Karabakh), and only afterwards will they be ready to discuss the issue of participation of Armenia in regional projects and the issue of unblocking the routes leading to Armenia.

I don't consider this to be the best plan of action on the part of Azerbaijan and Turkey, because the post-war experience of Europe has demonstrated that many conflicts can be solved thanks to and alongside with economic, cultural and scientific cooperation of the conflicting parties.

6. Reference points for Armenia's foreign policy

What should be the main reference points for Armenia's foreign policy, enabling the creation of favourable conditions for trilateral cooperation in the Southern Caucasus region? In the current situation, one may not passively observe the processes, because such passivity may lead to Armenia turning from an international law subject into an object whose destiny is decided outside of the country and the region.

We believe that Armenia needs to take the following steps in the nearest future:

- To abandon the orientation towards the ineffective Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) system that creates separation lines in the region and is rapidly losing its significance in the context of development of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO);
- To express its readiness to create a common security system with Azerbaijan and Georgia;
- To continue integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures, by fulfilling all obligations undertaken under the Individual Partnership Action Plan signed with NATO and the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan signed with the EU;
- In its cooperation with the OSCE and CE, to abandon the practice of imitation of democratic transformations in the country;
- To express its readiness to cooperate with the GUAM on observer rights;
- To expand bilateral military cooperation with the US;
- To announce plans of construction in Armenia of the second (new) nuclear power plant, and to express its readiness to implement this project together with Georgia;
- To express its readiness to turn the Iran-Armenia gas pipeline into a transit pipeline with an output to Georgia;
- To express its readiness to establish official relations with Turkey without setting any preconditions;

- Yerevan must officially express its interest in Turkey's membership in the EU;
- To abandon the policy of prolonging ("freezing") the resolution of the Karabakh conflict;
- To express its readiness to resolve the Karabakh conflict in a mutually acceptable manner based on concessions and compromises;
- To abandon the practice of transfer of Armenia's major energy sites into the control of a single state.

It goes without saying that the above-mentioned steps to be taken by Armenia must be accompanied by certain reciprocal steps from its neighbours. Turkey might refrain from setting any preconditions for normalisation of its relations with Armenia. Azerbaijan in its turn has to be ready for mutual concessions and compromises in the process of resolution of the Karabakh conflict.

BELARUS' RELATIONS WITH UKRAINE AND LITHUANIA BEFORE AND AFTER THE 2006 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

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Abstract

This article contains an analysis of the changes in the Belarus' foreign policy towards its immediate neighbours, Lithuania and Ukraine. Special attention is given to the analysis of reasons and conditions for such considerable changes in the Belarusian authorities' policies, and the comparison of policies before and after the "reversal" that took place in 2005–2006. The "reversal" was caused by a number of factors, some of which are dependant on the peculiarities of the political development of Belarus such as the political isolation on the part of the West, the aggravation of relations with Russia, the presidential elections of 2006, and the strengthening of the authoritarian regime. Other factors were of external and regional nature such as the coming into power of new political leaders in the Ukraine in 2004, and the growing acuteness of the energy security problem. For better or worse, the events of 2005–2006 have significantly altered the foreign policy orientation of Belarus, which promises both new challenges and new opportunities.

1. Belarus-Lithuania relations

Until recently, Belarus-Lithuania relations remained in the shadow of the official relations between Minsk and Moscow, and only after the presidential elections in 2006 and the changes in the international context did relations between the two neighbouring countries become more dynamic and gain more importance for Belarus. This evolution of bilateral relations can firstly be explained by the deterioration of Russia-Belarus relations, and the actual winding

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up of the process of creation of the union state of Russia and Belarus after a series of energy conflicts that took place in 2004, and 2006–2007.

In the framework of increasing the “pragmatism” of its foreign policy, the Kremlin refused to indirectly subsidise the Belarusian economy by supplying cheap energy resources, which led to a pained reaction from the Belarusian authorities. In this situation, Minsk was forced to urgently start looking for new opportunities for diversification of its hydrocarbon supply, and form new foreign policy vectors that could enable balancing the previous foreign policy inclination towards Russia. The review of priorities of Belarusian foreign policy, among other things, led to an increased interest in the development of relations in the framework of Baltic and Black Sea regions on a qualitative new level.

Regardless of the undoubted significance of the transformation of orientation of foreign policy in the Republic of Belarus after 2006, Belarusian analysts have not demonstrated any due interest in the study of the new stage of Belarus-Lithuania relations. The most recent studies of Lithuania-Belarus relations come from 2003¹. The study of bilateral relations after the Belarusian presidential elections in 2006 has not been initiated whatsoever.

This situation can be partially explained by the fact that after accession of the Republic of Lithuania to NATO and the European Union it began to be viewed by Belarusian analysts and diplomats as part of a more extensive political formation — the European Union, thus Belarus-Lithuania relations began to be viewed in the context of relations with the EU. This explanation is evidenced by the inclusion by the Belarusian Foreign Ministry of Belarus-Lithuania relations in the category of “relations with European countries,” in which only EU member states are listed².

In the meantime, Belarus-Lithuania relations may not in any case be limited to EU-Belarus relations, because the policy of Belarus towards Lithuania differs considerably from its policy towards the EU, and the policy of Lithu-

¹ Халиманович Н. Белорусско-балтийские отношения в региональном контексте // Белорусский журнал международного права и международных отношений. - Минск, 2003, № 3. - С. 56-59 (Khalimanovich N. *Belarus-Baltic Relations in the Regional Context*. // Belarusian Journal of International Law and International Affairs, Minsk, 2003, No. 3, pp. 56-59).

² Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus, <<http://www.mfa.gov.by/rus/index.php?d=policy/bicooop&id=106>>, 22.09.2007.

ania towards Belarus is somewhat different from the attitude of the entire EU towards Minsk. In this case, we may talk about fully-fledged bilateral relations of two independent states.

1.1. Belarus' policies towards Lithuania in 2002-2006

The period between 2002 and 2006 is characterised by rather lukewarm, and sometimes tense, relations between Lithuania and Belarus. The year 2002 is taken as the bottom limit for this period because it was then, at the NATO Prague Summit (to which, it should be mentioned, Alexander Lukashenko was not admitted), that Lithuania's accession to the Alliance in 2004 was officially announced. This circumstance was not least of all to have an impact on the policies of Minsk towards Lithuania. At the beginning of the period in question, Belarusian authorities had a very negative attitude towards NATO expansion to the east, associating itself with Russia on this issue. Accordingly, the Republic of Lithuania — which was preparing to become an equal member of the North Atlantic Alliance — was viewed as an instrument of influence of the “aggressive military block” in Eastern Europe.

An analysis of speeches given by the Belarusian leader and articles published by *Belarus Segodnya-Sovetskaya Byelorussia (Belarus Today-Soviet Belarus)*, the newspaper of the Presidential Administration, gives us some understanding of the general nature of presentation of the Republic of Lithuania in the Belarusian media.

In the statements given by Lukashenko, Lithuania was represented as a base of the West, by means of which the West intends to exert influence or implement military invasion of the Belarusian territory. Lithuania and other neighbouring countries (Poland, Ukraine) were more than once reproached for providing help to the Belarusian opposition and for preparation of militants for the overthrow of the existing political regime.

“Today, there are support bases that were created in order to exert influence on Belarus: these include the media, control measures, and spying on the part of Lithuania and Poland. They are also attempting to involve Ukraine”³.

³ A discussion on the issues of internal and foreign policies, <<http://www.president.gov.by/press12395.html#doc>>, 25.09.2007.

“Russian citizens must be able to freely move from one part of the Russian territory to another; but today, when Lithuania or any other state starts restoration of a nuclear state and exerts pressure on Russian citizens, including Belarusians, this is impermissible”⁴.

Belarusian state propaganda represented Lithuania as one of the pro-American Eastern European nations obediently fulfilling the will of the US Government. This was especially emphasised after the official decision of the Alliance was taken to accept Lithuania among its members⁵. The dependency of Lithuania’s foreign and internal policies was also linked to the process of accession of Lithuania to the European Union.

“What are the United States doing in Lithuania prior to the elections, together with the Lithuanian troops; incidentally, how many of those are remaining — five or six thousand? They are concentrating armed forces at our borders — just think, they want to hold some training exercises there”⁶. “Consider the Kaliningrad issue. (...) Well, that’s not even a problem. This problem should not have been posed at all. Nevertheless, no concessions are being made. Yes, they are doing this through Lithuania. They say it’s Lithuania that doesn’t agree; but if the European Union gives a signal tomorrow, Lithuania will be bound to react and solve all the issues”⁷.

Prior to accession to the European Union, considerable attention in the representation of Lithuania was given to the themes of poverty and social injustice. From the beginning of the 21st century, an increasing number of Belarusians started visiting Lithuania, which naturally led to growing awareness among Be-

⁴ Interview of the Belarusian President A.G. Lukashenko to representatives of the media on the relevant issues of foreign policy, 12.11.2002, <<http://www.president.gov.by/press13364.html#doc>>, 25.09.2007.

⁵ E.g. see Градов Е. Балтийский бальзам. // Советская Белоруссия №154 (21529), June 12, 2002 (Gradov E. The Baltic Balsam. // Sovetskaya Belorussia No. 154 (21529), <<http://www.sb.by/article.php?articleID=17712>>, 25.09.2007; Астахов И. Фарс мажорные обстоятельства. // Советская Белоруссия №66 (22223), April 9, 2005 (Astakhov I. Force Majeure Circumstances. Sovetskaya Belorussia No. 66 (22223), <<http://www.sb.by/article.php?articleID=42884>>, 25.09.2007.

⁶ Лекция “Исторический выбор Республики Беларусь” в БГУ (Lecture The Historical Choice of the Republic of Belarus held at the Belarusian State University), 14.03.2003, <<http://www.president.gov.by/press29279.html#doc>>, 25.09.2007.

⁷ Press conference of the Republic of Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko held for the Russian regional media, 2003 08 01., <<http://www.president.gov.by/press29326.html#doc>>, 25.09.2007.

larusians of the higher standard of living in the neighbouring country. In his speech given on March 14, 2003 to students of the Belarusian State University, the Belarusian President aimed at dispelling these “myths”:

“An apartment [in Belarus] costs almost nothing, whereas in the Baltic States, in Lithuania, it costs 120 USD for a two-room apartment. Is there anything you'd like to say about salaries? Well, I want to ask you then, who is it that earns that kind of salary in Lithuania? They say, this is the average Russian salary, whereas this is the average Lithuanian salary. So, I mentioned one person whose income equals 16 billion, but there are those who have absolutely nothing, and they account for ninety percent of the population. That's how the average is calculated. The average temperature of the patients at the hospital is good, as the saying goes.”⁸

In his interview with Russian media journalists the Belarusian President came back to this topic once again:

“So they say that in Lithuania the average salary is 280-300 dollars, whereas in Belarus it is 150-200 dollars. So I am asking you, do 100 percent of Lithuanian residents pay for the public utility services? They pay 100, and in Belarus we pay 47. Up to 47. (...) Then, do they have any free kindergartens and schools? No. They pay 100 percent of the fees for the kindergarten. Everything is private.”⁹

Revelatory articles were also published by *Sovetskaya Byelorussia*, which compared the income of the “ordinary” Lithuanian and “ordinary” Belarusian, and concluded that the latter was much better-off, while at the same time they accused the Belarusian opposition of manipulation of information and fraud.¹⁰

⁸ Лекция “Исторический выбор Республики Беларусь” в БГУ (Lecture The Historical Choice of the Republic of Belarus held at the Belarusian State University), 14.03.2003, <<http://www.president.gov.by/press29279.html#doc>>, 25.09.2007.

⁹ Press conference of the Republic of Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko held for the Russian regional media, 2003 08 01. 3, <<http://www.president.gov.by/press29326.html#doc>>, 25.09.2007.

¹⁰ See Курчатова С. Так ли хорошо там, где нас нет? // Советская Белоруссия №242 (21239), 24 августа 2001 (Kurchatov S. Is the Grass Always Greener on the Other Side? // *Sovetskaya*

Belarusian television regularly broadcasted reports negatively portraying the economic and social situation in Lithuania.

As regards the internal political processes in Lithuania, the period in question was represented by the official media as a period of chaos and anarchy. First to be mentioned was the impeachment of President Paksas, which was represented as a political lynching of the nationally elected head of state.¹¹

A certain weakening of anti-Lithuanian statements in the Belarusian media is also linked to the very fact of Lithuania's accession to the EU and NATO. Prior to accession, Lithuania was viewed by Belarusian authorities as a traitor and defector, which together with Belarus was once part of the Soviet Union, but later joined the enemy, and as a result is now cherishing the values and implementing the policies of that enemy. After Lithuania joined the EU and NATO, it was no longer perceived as a separate independent state (regardless of its links to the "enemy") and was started to be seen as part of the "West," which turned it from the "defector" to "the fully-fledged OTHER." Belarus had to accept the new status of its neighbour.

In addition, many of the non-amicable actions of Lithuania in relation to Minsk now meet a considerably more moderate reaction from the Belarusian Foreign Ministry compared to the reactions prior to 2004, because foreign policies of Lithuania are now viewed by Minsk as a constituent part of Brussels' policies, of which Vilnius cannot be accused. For instance, the acceptance by Lithuania of the EU restrictions regarding issuance of visas to Belarusian officials has not led to a sharp reaction from Minsk, which could have been expected had such a decision been taken a few years earlier.

Together with the media representation of Lithuania as described above, the foreign policies of Belarusian authorities in the period from 2002 to 2006 do not allow mention of any good level of political relations between Lithuania and Belarus.

The year 2005 and a considerable part of 2006 in Belarus-Lithuania relations were darkened by the scandal in connection with Lithuania's plans to

Byelorussia No. 242 (21239), August 24, 2001), <<http://www.sb.by/article.php?articleID=8267>>, 25.09.2007.

¹¹ Мацукевич П. Импи́чмент или расправа? // Советская Белоруссия №64 (21974), 7 апреля 2004 (Matsukevich P. Impeachment or Lynching? // Sovetskaya Byelorussia No. 64 (21974), April 7, 2004), <<http://www.sb.by/article.php?articleID=35593>>, 25.09.2007.

build a depository of spent materials from the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant next to the Belarusian border.

The Belarusian media started a real anti-Lithuanian campaign. As a response to the “environmental war” declared by Lithuania,¹² Belarusian officials announced their plans to build two giant pig breeding facilities in the immediate vicinity of the territory of Lithuania. The Lithuanian Prime Minister Algirdas Brazauskas condemned this decision saying that “building of pig breeding facilities in the basin of the River Neman would equal barbarity.”¹³ The western media called this incident “a strange diplomatic scandal.” The conflict was only settled in September of 2006 when the Lithuanian party announced that the depository would be constructed in the vicinity of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant rather than next to the Belarusian border. The Belarusian media presented this news as an achievement of Belarusian diplomacy.

In advance of the presidential election campaign in September-October of 2005, large-scale command and staff training of the North-West operational command forces was held by Belarus next to the Latvian and Lithuanian borders, the objective of which was the refining of actions aimed at fighting against illegal armed formations and parachute-equipped diversion groups. The location selected for the training was not accidental: Belarus has willingly demonstrated its increased military activity at the borders of the Baltic States. Speaking to the Grodno military garrison officers, the Belarusian Defence Minister Leonid Maltsev stated that “an information war is being waged against Belarus”; therefore, Belarus and Russia, with the help of their combat capacities, must be able to meet the potential threats posed by NATO.¹⁴

As regards official visits, no meetings of Lithuanian and Belarusian Presidents have taken place since November of 1998. Since 2003, annual political consultations between the Lithuanian and Belarusian Foreign Ministries have

¹² Дорошенко Е. Недобрый сосед атом. // Советская Белоруссия №155 (22312), 13 августа 2005 (Doroshenko E. Atom, the Unfriendly Neighbour. // Sovetskaya Byelorussia No. 155 (22312), August 13, 2005), <<http://www.sb.by/article.php?articleID=46011>>, 25.09.2007.

¹³ Партифф, Том. Ссора из-за ядерных отходов оборачивается зловонием в Литве (Partiff, Tom. The Dispute Concerning Nuclear Waste is Turning into a Malodour in Lithuania), <<http://www.inopressa.ru/guardian/2005/08/25/12:58:21/aroma>>, 25.09.2007.

¹⁴ Викторovich Ю. Белоруссия нашла террористов у границ Прибалтики. // Коммерсантъ. - № 181(3265) от 27.09.2005 (Viktorovich Yu. Belarus Found Terrorists at the Baltic States' Borders. // Kommersant), <<http://www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=612388>>, 10.10.2007.

been held. The Belarusian Prime Minister Sergey Sidorsky has visited Lithuania several times.

Unlike political relations in 2002–2006, the development of economic co-operation between the two countries was fairly rapid. From 2002 to 2006, trade between Lithuania and Belarus grew 1.6 times. In 2006, the volume of transportation of Belarusian cargo through the territory of Lithuania totalled 4,515 million tons, an increase of 29.1 percent compared to the data for 2005.¹⁵ Due to the increasing volumes of Belarusian cargo shipped through the port of Klaipėda, Alexander Lukashenko emphasised the importance of Belarus for Lithuania.

“Lithuania’s dependence on us is considerable. 30 percent of Lithuania’s national budget¹⁶ is formed thanks to shipment of our goods and cargos at their ports. Through them, we ship approximately five million tons of potassium fertilisers alone. Lithuania earns a lot of money from this. Lithuania must respect and appreciate both ourselves and the Russian Federation for this,” stated the President at the press conference.¹⁷

In 2004, the Lithuania-Belarus Entrepreneurial Association was established in Lithuania, and in May of 2005 the Lithuania-Belarus industrial forum was organised in Klaipėda by the Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists.

Furthermore, since July 1, 2005, Belarus and Lithuania have considerably reduced the price of entry visas for citizens, which has had a positive impact on business contacts between the two countries.

Belarus-Lithuania relations in the period from 2002 to 2006 can be characterised in the following manner:

¹⁵ Транзит белорусских внешнеторговых грузов через Клайпедский порт постоянно растет – С.Сидорский, (The transit of Belarusian foreign trade cargos through the port of Klaipėda is constantly growing. S. Sidorsky) <http://www.government.by/ru/rus_news03102007.html#n5>, 10.10.2007.

¹⁶ According to approximate estimates, the profit earned by the Republic of Lithuania on the transit of Belarusian cargos does not exceed 0.5 percent of the budget revenue.

¹⁷ Press conference of the Republic of Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko held for the Russian regional media, 01.08.2003, <<http://www.president.gov.by/press29326.html#doc>>, 10.10.2007.

- In the economic sphere, relations were built on the basis of pragmatic cooperation strengthened by mutual interest in the transit of Belarusian goods through the territory of Lithuania, and the increasing intensity of business contacts;
- The level of political contacts of the neighbouring countries remained fairly poor, which can be explained both by Lithuania's need to coordinate its foreign policy activities with the remaining NATO and EU member states, and by Belarus' internal policy trends directed towards self-isolation of the state from Euro-Atlantic structures.

1.2. Presidential elections in 2006 and the new reality

Presidential elections in Belarus in 2006 can be viewed as the beginning of better Belarus-Lithuania relations for several reasons. Firstly, it was only after these elections that the Russian authorities saw that Lukashenko did not intend to settle accounts for the Russian financial and political support for his campaign, and that he did not intend to let the Russian capital take part in the privatisation of the most important Belarusian companies. What followed then was the raising of gas prices by Gazprom and the actual winding-down of the Belarus-Russia integration project with Belarus trying to improve its relations with the West. Secondly, the election of Alexander Lukashenko as President of Belarus for the third term of office has demonstrated to the European Union and the US the inefficiency of their strategy towards Belarus and forced them (at least the EU) to make attempts to review the strategy. The steps taken in this direction, which coincided with the "oil and gas war" between Russia and Belarus, led to attempts on the part of the EU to improve relations with the Belarusian regime with a hope to force it from the influence of Moscow and, finally, to encourage democratisation of the regime. In this latter process the EU assigned a major role to Lithuania as Belarus' closest neighbour.

Gazprom's decision to raise the gas price payable by Belarus up to 200 USD and Putin's statement on the discontinuation of support for the Belarusian economy have put Lukashenko in a difficult situation. Therefore, since summer of 2006, Belarusian authorities have been feverishly looking for an alternative

foreign policy support in order to reduce the importance of the Russian vector on Belarusian foreign policy. This search resulted in the forced formation of the so called “distant link” of Belarusian foreign policy, which includes China, Iran, Venezuela, and Cuba. At the same time, Belarus’ activity in the Non-Aligned Movement has increased. These steps enabled Belarus to win support on the international arena.

The next step was the search for alternative sources of energy resources with a view to reducing the level of energy dependence on Russia. By the end of 2006, two possibilities emerged: extraction of oil in Venezuela and Iran, whose governments concluded the relevant agreements with Belarus. However, the above-mentioned alternatives, considering their fantastic nature, had to be accompanied by specific projects of transportation of oil to Belarus, which were impossible to implement without improving relations with their immediate neighbours, i.e. Lithuania and Ukraine.

The fact that during the course of 2006 some signs of improvement in relations between Belarus and Lithuania appeared can be proved by changes in several parameters of cooperation.

1.3. Changes in the official rhetoric

Compared to the prior period, the rhetoric of Belarusian officials in relation to the Republic of Lithuania has changed considerably. There are no negative statements about Lithuania in the speeches of the head of the Belarusian state anymore, and official newspapers and television channels have begun to “discover” Lithuania for Belarusians once again, emphasising cooperation and good neighbours’ relations.

Whereas before articles about Lithuania published in the official media were dominated by the theme of comparison of the standard of living, now particular attention is given to the issues of mutual trade, transit, and culture¹⁸;

¹⁸See Дуда плюс сакс. // Советская Белоруссия №35 (22690), 21 февраля 2007 (Sovetskaya Byelorussia No. 35 (22690), February 21, 2007), <<http://www.sb.by/article.php?articleID=56969>>, 10.10.2007; Мальдис А. Корень и крона истории. // Советская Белоруссия №180 (22835), 25 сентября 2007 (Maldis A. The Root and Head of History. // Sovetskaya Byelorussia No. 180 (22835), September 25, 2007), <<http://www.sb.by/article.php?articleID=61020>>, 10.10.2007; Селицкая Л. Вдоль по Вили. // Советская Белоруссия №76 (22731), 25 апреля 2007 (Selitskaya L. Along the Vilia. // Sovetskaya Byelorussia No. 76 (22731), April 25, 2007), <<http://www.sb.by/article.php?articleID=58075>>, 10.10.2007.

more attention is paid to interviews with officials working at the Lithuanian Embassy.¹⁹

Belarusian authorities have positively evaluated the fact that Lithuania voted against expulsion of Belarus from the EU's Generalised System of Preferences, in relation to which President Lukashenko stated the following:

“We enjoy very good relations with our neighbours. No matter what they say, we cooperate with the European Union in the economic area. Yes, they did try to adopt some declaration regarding our expulsion from the regime of preferences, but nobody voted for it. The Baltic States voted against it. (...) How can Lithuania vote against Belarus in economic issues, if today we form 30 percent of the budget of Lithuania thanks to shipment of our cargos?”²⁰

During his conversation with the new Lithuanian Ambassador Edminas Bagdonas, at the ceremony of presentation of letters of credence Alexander Lukashenko emphasised that “today we are ready to build very warm and good relations with Lithuania in all spheres of life,”²¹ and even permitted Mr Bagdonas to call him any time.²²

2006 also saw changes in Belarus' attitude towards the problem of building a nuclear waste depository by Lithuania. While previously such plans were viewed as a “declaration of environmental war” and chairman of the Council of the Republic commission on international affairs and national security, Nikolay Cherginets, threatened to take “a decisive stance in Belarus-Lithuania relations,” in December of 2006 Cherginets himself supported discouraging Lithuania by applying methods of persuasion.²³

¹⁹ See Романова Н. Минск и Вильнюс — это рядом! // Советская Белоруссия №15 (22670), 24 января 2007 (Romanova N. Minsk and Vilnius are Near! // Sovetskaya Byelorussia No. 15 (22670), January 24, 2007), <<http://www.sb.by/article.php?articleID=56385>>, 10.10.2007.

²⁰ Verbatim account on the press conference for representatives of the Russian regional media, 29.09.2006, <<http://www.president.gov.by/press31105.html#doc>>, 10.10.2007.

²¹ «Александр Лукашенко подтвердил готовность Беларуси к взаимовыгодному сотрудничеству с Европой» (Alexander Lukashenko confirmed readiness of Belarus for a mutually beneficial cooperation with Europe), 13.02.2007, <<http://www.president.gov.by/press39493.print.html>>, 10.10.2007.

²² Edminas Bagdonas: “One of the most important demands is the release of all political prisoners in Belarus,” <<http://www.charter97.org/bel/news/2007/03/12/bagdonas>>, 10.10.2007.

²³ Cherginets: “We must take advantage of all opportunities in order to persuade Lithuania not to construct the depository.” // Белорусские новости (Belarusian News), <http://naviny.by/rubrics/society/2006/12/19/ic_news_116_264116/>, 10.10.2007.

1.4. Geopolitical projects

The need to diversify the supply of hydrocarbon resources to Belarus determines the interest of Minsk in the implementation of joint transit projects with Lithuania and Ukraine. In this respect, the statement of the Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus concerning the possibility of involving the port of Klaipėda in the pumping of Venezuelan oil is of advantage to Belarus, and was favourably accepted by the Belarusian side.

On the day following Adamkus' statement (February 14, 2007), Mikhail Osipenko, Deputy Head of the concern Belneftekhim, said that Belarus was ready to consider Lithuania's proposal. "The project of delivery of oil to Belarus by sea from Klaipėda, unloading through the Klaipėda oil terminal and subsequent delivery by rail is absolutely realistic," he said, emphasising that Minsk has all the technical means necessary for implementation of the project.²⁴ The reaction of the Belarusian Foreign Ministry to Adamkus' statement was also positive. Spokesman for the Belarusian Foreign Ministry Andrey Popov said the following at the press conference:

*"I believe that diversification of the sources of supply of energy resources is a natural and normal objective for any country. Belarus is no exception. We are now actively dealing with the issue, and will continue to deal with it in the future."*²⁵

Regardless of the fact that independent experts assess the above-mentioned project rather sceptically, it should be acknowledged that "Western" support for Belarus on the part of Adamkus has had a considerable impact on the decisions taken by Lukashenko, including his decisions in the framework of Belarus-Russia relations.

²⁴ Мухина В. Три нефтяных мушкетера. // Новости Украины (Mukhina V. *The Three Oil Musketeers*. // Ukrainian News), <<http://www.from-ua.com/eco/5de72dd3a1f30.html>>, 10.10.2007.

²⁵ МИД: Беларусь продолжит диверсифицировать свои источники энергии. // Белорусские новости (Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Belarus will continue diversification of its energy supply sources. // Belarusian News), <http://naviny.by/rubrics/economic/2007/02/15/ic_news_113_266910/>, 10.10.2007.

Furthermore, statements of the Belarusian President evidence the viability of the idea of a Baltic and Black Sea transit union, which was put forward in the early 1990s by the leaders of the Belarusian People's Front (BPF). In the context of deteriorating relations with Russia, this project received new impetus and is probably under discussion in the Administration of the President. In his interview with the German newspaper *Die Welt*, answering the question about the possibility of a transit union, Alexander Lukashenko stated that Belarus is:

*“ready to cooperate with everyone in order to ensure our national security. (...) Ukraine and Belarus are the most important transit states. I am quite sure that we will be able to reach an agreement. And others (Poland, the Baltic States) will follow us. It's been some time now since we've been offered the idea of consolidation of transit states, and we'll defend our interests together.”*²⁶

An important signal that made Belarusian authorities change their policies towards Lithuania was the statement made by the Lithuanian Ambassador Edminas Bagdonas regarding his country's intention to become an advocate of Belarus in the European Union.²⁷ Facing the need to normalise their relations with the EU, Minsk officials take advantage of all opportunities to improve official and private contacts with Brussels, including help provided by their neighbours, Lithuania and Ukraine.

At the same time, Belarus is seeking to keep the Belarus-Europe dialogue in the framework of discussions of economic projects, and not allow it to focus on discussions on the protection of human rights and democratisation of the country's political system. Therefore, some misbalance between the intensity of economic and political relations between Lithuania and Belarus is seen, which will probably continue to exist in the future as well.

However, the degree of reorientation of the direction of Belarusian foreign policies must not be overestimated. Belarus remains highly dependent on Russia in the areas of supply of energy resources and sale of its products. This depend-

²⁶ Interview of the Republic of Belarus President to the largest German newspaper *Die Welt*, 30.01.2007, <<http://www.president.gov.by/press38517.html#doc>>, 10.10.2007.

²⁷ Lithuania has promised to become the “advocate” of Belarus in the EU, <<http://worldnews.org.ua/news34392.html>>, 10.10.2007.

ency will not be eliminated in the short term. Therefore, Belarusian authorities will need to balance between the interests of the EU and those of Russia, without giving preference of foreign policy to either of these two actors.

1.5. Moving closer together

The gradual normalisation of Belarus-Lithuania relations is also evidenced by the goodwill gestures on the part of Minsk officials, which would have been barely possible or absolutely impossible prior to that.

As an example, we may cite the incident of the Kaunas air club plane, which on June 6, 2006 illegally crossed Belarusian airspace and was forced to land at Lida military airfield. After an investigation, on the decision of Oshmyany District court the airplane was confiscated in favour of the state and in October of the same year was to be sold at auction. However, these plans were not implemented, because on receipt of the Lithuanian party's request to Belarusian authorities, the President ordered that the airplane be returned to its previous owners.²⁸ According to the Lithuanian Seimas (Parliament) Member Vaclovas Stankevičius, this gesture did not pass unnoticed in Lithuania.²⁹

Another example is the accelerated completion of demarcation of the Belarus-Lithuania border and the signing of all related documents. This is the first eastern border of the EU, on which the works of demarcation have been completed. On February 2, 2007 (prior to the beginning of the term of office of the new Lithuanian Ambassador), the final documents concerning demarcation of the Lithuania-Belarus state border were signed.

According to the Lithuanian Prime Minister Gediminas Kirkilas, the Belarusian side has also provided all possible help in the investigation of the tragic death in Brest of the Lithuanian diplomat Vytautas Pociūnas.³⁰ The parties

²⁸ Конфискованный у литовцев самолет-нарушитель вернули на родину. // Белорусские новости (*The confiscated Lithuanian airplane that had violated the state border was returned to its previous owners.* // Byelorussian News), <http://naviny.by/rubrics/society/2006/10/27/ic_news_116_261201/>, 10.10.2007.

²⁹ Мартинович В. Всё-таки имел место несчастный случай. // Белгазета, 30 октября 2006 г. (Martinovich V. *The incident did take place.* // Belgazeta, October 30, 2006), <<http://www.belgazeta.by/20061030.43/020080141>>, 10.10.2007.

³⁰ Lithuanian Prime Minister: "I hope that the truth regarding the incident in Belarus will be established." <<http://www.charter97.org/bel/news/2006/08/24/pm>>, 10.10.2007.

managed to avoid politicisation of this theme: official Belarusian media has expressed a fairly calm reaction to the version expressed by Vytautas Landsbergis of the possible “political assassination” of the diplomat.

These seemingly minor gestures have had a great significance for the practice of international relations, and in the long run led to an increase in mutual trust between the two countries. This process allows hope for a gradual intensification of political relations between Lithuania and Belarus, especially taking into consideration the interest of both parties in the closer cooperation and joint implementation of regional projects.

1.6. Strengthening of economic cooperation

The expansion of economic cooperation was both the result and the driving force of the overall improvement of Belarus-Lithuania relations. After all, it was economic motives that encouraged Lukashenko to review his relations with the European Union and neighbouring states. It was the issues of transit and diversification of energy resource supply that became the cornerstone of the Belarusian foreign policy after presidential elections in 2006.

The 2006–2007 period in Lithuania-Belarus economic relations is characterised by the overall growth of trade volumes, an increase in the transit of Belarusian goods through the territory of Lithuania, and intensification of business contacts. For instance, in 2006, the volume of trade between Belarus and Lithuania totalled 603 million USD, an increase of 24 percent compared to 2005. In January–July 2007, the volume of trade totalled 461.94 million USD, an increase of 37.8 percent compared to the same period in the previous year. Exports grew by 51.8 percent and totalled 352.84 million USD. According to the Belarusian Prime Minister Sergey Sidorsky, by the end of this year the two countries can reach trade volumes of one billion USD.³¹

³¹ Belarus acknowledges the importance of cooperation with Lithuania (S. Sidorsky), <http://www.government.by/ru/rus_news03102007.html#n5>, 10.10.2007.

Table 1. Trade between Belarus and Lithuania (million USD)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Trade	383.2	366.1	419.2	460.4	486.4	603.0
Exports	275.8	256.7	265.0	284.8	351.8	432.7
Imports	107.4	109.4	154.2	175.6	134.6	170.3
Balance	168.4	147.4	110.8	109.3	217.2	262.4

Source: Belarusian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

(<http://www.mfa.gov.by/rus/index.php?d=policy/bicoop/europe&id=6>)

The volumes of Belarusian cargos shipped through the port of Klaipėda have increased in the period in question as well. In 2006, the port of Klaipėda shipped a record amount of cargos throughout the entire history of its existence, i.e. 23.6 million tons, 19.1 percent of which (4 million 517.2 thousand tons) accounted for the Belarusian foreign trade cargos. This is an increase of 1 million 20 thousand tons compared to 2005. Belarus is “the most important foreign partner of the Lithuanian port, whose cargos receive preferential treatment from the Lithuanian port workers, and the best shipment and storage conditions.”³²

During the meeting of the Belarusian Prime Minister Sergey Sidorsky and the Lithuanian Prime Minister Gediminas Kirkilas on October 3, 2007, agreements were concluded under which Lithuania will invest about one billion USD in the Belarusian economy. Somewhat earlier, consultations regarding possibilities of cooperation in construction of a nuclear power plant in Lithuania and Belarus were started.

³² Клайпедский порт планирует увеличить грузооборот за счет белорусских грузов. // Белорусские новости (The port of Klaipėda is planning to increase its cargo turnover thanks to Belarusian cargos. // Belarusian News), <http://naviny.by/rubrics/economic/2007/02/14/ic_news_113_266853/>, 14.10.2007.

2. Belarus-Ukraine relations: changes in the configuration in 2005–2007

2.1. Introduction and background

If we compare relations between Belarus and Ukraine, with Belarus' relations with other neighbouring countries, they can be classed as the most politically neutral and free from any particular ideology.³³ While Belarus' relations with Lithuania, Poland and Russia have undergone periods of crises (which sometimes were extremely serious), its relations with Ukraine from the very moment of declaration of independence represent a perfect example of tranquillity and smoothness, despite the fact that the economic aspect of these relations wasn't always successful. The traditional problems of bilateral relations arising from the mid-1990s, i.e. ratification of agreements regarding state borders and payment of debts, have never acquired the features of a poignant conflict. The political challenges related to the victory by the oppositional political forces in the Ukrainian presidential elections in 2004 have transformed the situation but have not resulted in the deterioration of bilateral relations between the two countries. Rather, the opposite has happened: under the influence of the external political and economic environment, the interest in cooperation has increased considerably.

Although official Belarusian media have created several negative information waves on the Orange Revolution, no forcing of the situation has taken place. The image of Ukraine portrayed in the Belarusian media is fairly neutral, even though Belarusian authorities like emphasising the “poverty” and political chaos in Ukraine. This is especially contrasting with the portrayal of Poland and Russia, the images of which are often emotionally charged. Until recently, in speeches and official statements Ukraine was usually mentioned in various contexts along with other countries. Despite the contradictions present in bilateral relations, such contradictions have never acquired the political acuteness and ideological charge characterising relations with the other neighbours (Russia, Poland, and Lithuania).

³³ Diplomatic relations between Belarus and Ukraine were established on December 27, 1991. The Republic of Belarus Embassy in Ukraine started its work in October of 1993.

It would be fairly difficult to find any clearly political crises in relations between the two countries. The vigilance in relations in late 2004 – early 2005 can only nominally be called a crisis. At the same time, we would struggle to find any periods of euphoria. Here we should mention Lukashenko's statements made in 1995 regarding the idea of a trilateral union between Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia, and some populist steps taken in that direction, which have not led to any practical results.

In addition to the overall description of relations between Belarus and Ukraine, we should mention the presence of close links other than those on the state level. For instance, since the 1980s close links have existed between Belarusian opposition and the right spectre of the Ukrainian political order, which actually came to power in 2004. At the same time, links between the Ukrainian elite and Belarusian counter-elite have a fairly constant nature. There are a number of organisations working in Ukraine in connection with programs aimed at the promotion of democracy in Belarus, yet Minsk has not used this fact in its propaganda. The degree of civil cooperation is hard to evaluate; however, the very existence of this phenomenon enables the creation of a more comprehensive picture of the context and logic of relations between the two states. A certain impact can be seen on the intellectual sphere as well, whereby Ukraine is viewed as a cultural alternative to the Russian influence, considering that a considerable demand for intellectual and academic (first of all history related) products is seen in Belarus.

If we consider the drawn-up projects of Belarus-Ukraine relations after restoration of independence, then the first one in terms of chronological order was the idea of the Baltic and Black Sea Union, which was supported in Belarus by the nationalist democratic opposition. The essence of the project was to create a regional bloc of the European countries of the former USSR in order to counterbalance Russia. However, this project has not become a political reality.

The next project was related to the attempts of integration of Ukraine and Belarus based on the "Slavic" and Soviet rhetoric of the mid-1990s. In 1994, presidential elections were held in Ukraine and Belarus, in which Alexander Lukashenko and Leonid Kuchma won respectively. Both politicians were viewed as pro-Russian candidates and used the integration related, somewhat "all-Slavic," rhetoric in their election campaign. The year 1995 saw activation of Belarus-

Ukraine contacts. In March of 1995, Belarusian President Lukashenko visited Ukraine, and in July of 1995, Ukrainian President Kuchma visited Belarus. In the spring of 1995, Lukashenko officially announced the beginning of the “pan-Russian” project of the internal and foreign policies of Belarus, actually passing to the position of Russian nationalism and restoration of the “common state” and integration with Russia.

In this situation Belarusian authorities have made attempts to develop Belarus-Ukraine relations in the framework of the “Slavic unity” paradigm. In May of 2005, Lukashenko suggested creation of a political union of Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia. This idea was actively promoted on the Russian political scene as well. Similar statements were made by various representatives of Belarusian authorities in the course of 1995. The idea was undoubtedly supported by the pro-Russian political forces in the Ukraine, but was not popular with the Ukrainian elite. After the coming into power of Leonid Kuchma, the Ukrainian authorities quickly switched to the position of limited cooperation with the CIS States and non-involvement in the political integration processes. Thus the activation of integration attempts, which was mainly dependent on Belarusian authorities, has diminished. The failure of integration initiatives led to an ideologically neutral and pragmatic period of Belarus-Ukraine relations, whereby relations of the two countries were limited to economic contacts. At the same time, in the CIS zone, Ukraine and Belarus occupied opposite political positions. Ukraine announced its appeal for European and Atlantic integration, and became an active participant of the GUAM, an organisation of the CIS States opposing Russia. Belarus announced its clear orientation towards Russia and its appeal to create a “union state” with the latter.

2.2. A new stage in relations in 2005–2007

The new stage of Belarus' policies towards Ukraine should be linked to the year 2005, which is often considered the turning point of bilateral relations of the two countries, rather than the 2006 presidential election in Belarus. There were many reasons for changes in the format and activation of cooperation, and various factors often overlapped. After a serious crisis in relations with Russia, Belarusian authorities needed to reformat their own foreign policies in order to find new political and economic alternatives. Some changes had to be introduced in Ukraine as well, after new political forces came into power in 2004. Furthermore, energy security problems became more pressing in Ukraine. As a result, a fairly specific model of relations was created over 2005–2007, which can be described as a certain configuration of “rapprochement” despite the political polarity of the two regimes.

It should be noted that Belarus-Ukraine relations in 2005–2007 were somewhat asymmetrical. Belarus had been implementing policies which resulted from its reaction to the external conditions; the country was oriented towards economic relations and, whenever possible, tried to push any political problems to the periphery. It is in this framework that relations between the two countries and the possibilities of regional coordination were discussed. In addition to its pragmatic interests, Ukraine has been seeking to implement more active and diverse policies towards Belarus, including policies concerning the issues of democratisation. These policies have targeted state institutions, political parties, the media, and civil institutes.

Thus the main objectives of Belarus included the need to break the political isolation, the search for new markets to sell its products, and the search for new suppliers of resources. In this situation, Ukraine became a very useful partner. The main objectives of Ukraine included activation of bilateral relations, the posing of the issue of democratisation, and the issue of protection of human rights in Belarus. Ukrainian authorities have officially condemned Belarusian authorities for their actions towards the opposition (in particular after the elections in 2006) and suppression of democratic freedoms, while at the same time expressing their readiness to cooperate along the entire economic and political spectre.

At present, the chronological order of the contacts at the highest level looks as follows: in autumn of 2005, negotiations were held in Kiev between the Foreign Minister and Belarusian Security Council Secretary. On October 18, the Ukrainian Prime Minister Yury Ekhanurov was on an official visit to Minsk. On November 28, 2006, the new Prime Minister of Ukraine Victor Yanukovich was on a working visit to Belarus. At the end of 2006, Victor Baloga, the Head of Secretariat of the Ukrainian President, visited Belarus.³⁴

Furthermore, in the period of 2005–2007, Presidents of Belarus and Ukraine have met at least four times at various forums and summits of the CIS States, and at other large-scale events. Preparations for an official meeting of Alexander Lukashenko and Victor Yushenko are underway, yet the meeting itself has been postponed several times (according to the official explanation, due to unpreparedness of the parties to sign the necessary agreements concerning state borders and acknowledgment of Ukraine's debt to Belarus).³⁵

2.3. Main problems of Ukraine-Belarus relations

The main problem of bilateral relations since the mid-1990s remains the problem of Ukraine's debt, and the issue of demarcation and delimitation of the Belarus-Ukraine border. As far back as May of 1997, during the official visit of the Belarusian President to Kiev, the parties signed a Treaty on the State Border. The said Treaty was ratified by the Ukrainian Supreme Rada three months later, whereas the Belarusian parliament so far has not done this.

The basis for disagreement was not the issue of the border itself, but the position of the Belarusian side, which insists on a “package-type” solution to this issue. That is, ratification of the Treaty must take place together with the acknowledgement and reimbursement of the debt by Ukraine, whereas Ukrainian authorities do not acknowledge the state related nature of the debt. The issue

³⁴ On cooperation of the Republic of Belarus with Ukraine // Website of the Republic of Belarus Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <<http://www.mfa.gov.by/rus/index.php?d=policy/bicoop&id=16>>, 14.10.2007.

³⁵ Press conference of the Ukrainian Ambassador to the Republic of Belarus Igor Likhovoy. Data on the press conference *Belarusians and the Market*. Еженедельная аналитическая газета. №32(767), 27 августа – 3 сентября 2007 (*Ezhenedelnaya Analyticheskaya Gazeta*, August 27 – September 3, 2007), <<http://www.br.minsk.by/index.php?article=30882>>, 14.10.2007.

is related to the debt to Belarusian companies, which formed after withdrawal of Ukraine from the Soviet ruble zone in 1992.³⁶ The Ukrainian side expressed its readiness to reimburse national debts where they exist, yet they insist on the view that the debts to Belarusian companies formed in the early 1990s constitute debts of economic agents rather than the debt of the Ukrainian state whose institutes in the period in question were only in the process of formation. Taking into consideration the complex nature of the process of separation of national and corporate debts, Ukraine views the demand for a “package-type” resolution of the issue of the state border as ungrounded.

“Ukraine will never agree that this debt be documented as its foreign debt. We believe, and this is proved by all documents, that it is a corporate debt from 1992, and we are looking for mechanisms to solve this issue.” (A. Kinakh, October of 2005).³⁷

Among other important issues of bilateral relations, the mutual trade problems — more precisely, the conducting of anti-dumping investigations and imposition of restrictive levies on the import of various goods — should be mentioned. Such investigations are initiated on a regular basis by both parties, and they limit bilateral cooperation. In this relation authorities of both states initiated the process of preparation of an inter-governmental memorandum on the issue of application of anti-dumping measures.

2.4. The issues of democracy and human rights: “the middle way policy”

The issue of democratisation, which became part of Ukraine’s foreign policy towards Belarus, has several dimensions. On the one hand, actualisation of this issue might lead to a deterioration of relations with Ukraine’s northern neighbour. On the other hand, it gives Ukraine an opportunity to take the role of

³⁶ For more details, see Володимир Кравченко. Україна — Білорусь: договір в обмін на гроші. // Дзеркало тижня № 42 (467), 1 — 7 листопада 2003, <<http://www.dt.ua/1000/1600/43478/>>, 14.10.2007.

³⁷ Anatoly Kinakh, Secretary of the Ukrainian National Security Council. The statement was made prior to the visit to Belarus of the Ukrainian Prime Minister Yury Ekhanurov. Cited from: Ольга Мазаева. Україна буде демократизувати Білорусь в економічному і людському вимірах (Olga Mazaeva. *Ukraine will democratise Belarus in the economic and human dimensions.*), <<http://news.tut.by/59153.html>>, 14.10.2007.

mediator in the process of democratisation, which can lead to a more important political role for Ukraine in the region. Here, the basis for the legitimacy of the leading role was the idea of democratic and European values whose victory and success were demonstrated by the new Ukrainian authorities. One way or another, Ukrainian authorities have chosen a “middle way” strategy by gradually changing the nature of their foreign policies. As mentioned before, Ukrainian democratic forces have close links with the Belarusian opposition, and Belarusian oppositional politicians took an active part in the events of the Orange Revolution.

“Ukraine has consistently supported democratic forces in Belarus. I am delighted that many Belarusian colleagues were present in the Maidan. From the point of view of the authorities, my aim was to give the signals which could provide new opportunities. My official contacts serve for that purpose.”

(Yushenko, October of 2005)³⁸

At the beginning of his term of office as Ukrainian President, Yushenko took some practical steps which provoked concern among Belarusian authorities. For instance, he invited representatives of the Belarusian opposition to the ceremony of his inauguration. After the presidential elections of 2006, his position became even clearer, as Ukraine officially supported the EU’s opinion on the non-democratic nature of the election process in Belarus.

“Our attitude to the events [presidential elections in 2006] in Belarus is clear. We view them the same way as Brussels. No additional comments are needed here. We — just as Belarus now — have seen long years when the authorities ignored the opposition, at a time when we were looking for possibilities to hold round tables for the Ukrainian dialogue in Warsaw. We found possibilities there, and that’s very good. However, we have concluded that a much better way to resolve the political crisis would have been holding a round table in Kiev.”

³⁸ Victor Yushenko: Orange Revolution is an example for others. Interview given to BBC, October 17, 2005. // The official website of the Ukrainian President, <http://www.prezident.gov.ua/ru/news/data/17_3531.html>, 14.10.2007.

“I regret that not everyone has come to certain conclusions from the events that took place in Ukraine. Belarusian authorities have to talk to the opposition. Ukraine can become a mediator in this dialogue.” (Yushenko, May of 2006)³⁹

Thus the practical aspect of support for democratic values was expressed as well. Ukraine expressed its readiness to become a legitimate mediator between Belarusian authorities and the opposition, which could lead to the increasing political influence of Ukraine on its northern neighbour. It goes without saying that for the time being such negotiations remain only a hypothetical possibility. Yet, taking into consideration the degree of cooperation between various political forces in Belarus, Ukraine indeed could become a mediator. Furthermore, Ukraine is the only state that has the necessary political reserves, as Moscow, Vilnius and Warsaw seem to have insufficient trust on the part of the parties to the possible negotiations.

In the new political situation Ukraine, just as Lithuania, can hope for one more mediation related position: between Belarus and the West. This has been proposed by Ukrainian authorities more than once since 2005 — for instance, during the crisis provoked by the pressure exerted by Belarusian authorities on the Union of Belarusian Poles (summer of 2005). The attitude of Belarusian authorities to the idea was fairly negative. Nevertheless, it was in Kiev that the meeting of the heads of national security councils of Ukraine, Poland and Belarus was held, which meant the renewal of dialogue with Warsaw. Thus Ukraine has fulfilled the functions of a mediator between the two parties and has preserved the overall potential for this type of cooperation.

If we consider the position of Belarus, its attitude towards mediation related initiatives is fairly negative. Defining itself as a sovereign state and an independent subject of international relations, Belarus declares its capacity to independently conduct all required negotiations. Therefore, invitation of mediators is possible only as a compulsory measure, whereas the international position of Belarus now is fairly unstable and it is ready to apply this procedure in order to deal with some pressing issues. In this process, Ukraine can be a valuable partner not least because of its moderate position towards Belarus. It is interesting

³⁹ Victor Yushenko: *Let's Meet Each Other* (Подадим друг другу руки). An interview with Victor Yushenko. // The official website of the Ukrainian President, <<http://www.president.gov.ua/ru/news/data/print/8228.html>>, 14.10.2007.

to note in this respect the campaign by Belarusian authorities to change the wording and replace “mediation” with “neighbourly support” in the process of improvement of relations with the European institutions.

“Rather than being a mediator, Ukraine is ready to provide neighbourly support in the process of improvement of our relations with the West and other partners.”⁴⁰

The main advantage offered to Belarus by Ukraine as a mediator in relations with Europe is regular contacts between the Belarusian state head and Ukrainian officials. As is well known, such fully-fledged contacts are not possible with EU States. Furthermore, Ukraine is not bound by any restrictions imposed on Poland and Lithuania by the European common policies regarding Belarus. It is these intentions, together with the campaign to support and develop the pragmatic aspects thereof, that constitute the essence of the “middle way” position of Ukraine towards Belarus.

“Contacts and dialogue must be maintained, and round tables must be held. Let’s start at least with a pragmatic dialogue: how can we conclude the discussions on delimitation and demarcation of borders; how can we create the free zone, and free border communication regime; how can we create a transport corridor in the direction of the Baltics, and include Belarus? All of the above-mentioned must go in addition to the political aspects: my country supports all decisions regarding Belarus in the framework of the EU and the OSCE. Although these are our neighbours, we should act in a delicate manner, without crossing this border.”⁴¹

The above-cited statement provides a fairly accurate reflection of the “middle way” position aimed not only at accentuating, but also expanding economic and political relations, while at the same time maintaining a critical attitude towards

⁴⁰ These statements were made by the Head of Belarusian Presidential Administration Gennady Nevyglas published in the central official publication *Belarus Segodnya (Sovetskaya Byelorussia)*. The journalist then commented on Nevyglas’ statement as follows: “It is an important aspect: mediation between Europe (the European Union) and Europe (Belarus) looks somewhat strange, whereas neighbourly interest is a different matter.” По-соседски! (*Like Good Neighbours!*) // Советская Белоруссия. 17 февраля 2007 года (Sovetskaya Byelorussia, February 17, 2007), <<http://www.sb.by/article.php?articleID=56898>>, 14.10.2007.

⁴¹ Interview of Victor Yushenko with BBC prior to the visit in Minsk of the Ukrainian Prime Minister Ekhanurov. Беларусь — Украина: лучше не бывает? (*Belarus and Ukraine: It Can't Be Any Better?*) // Belarusian portal Svich.Com <<http://svich.com/articles.php?articleId=297>>, 28.10.2007.

the regime. It should be noted that in this case Ukraine holds a unique position among all other states surrounding Belarus. Among other things, Ukraine has not imposed any restrictions on the entry to the country of Belarusian officials (as was expected at the beginning of 2005 and after presidential elections in 2006). Furthermore, Ukraine stated that it is against such policies, and that it has its own stance on the issue of international isolation and imposition of additional sanctions in relation to Belarus.⁴²

“As regards our present-day relations in the economic sphere — we could not hope for anything better... As regards our political relations, I am satisfied with the current trends. The dynamic is good, and the results are good as well.” (Lukashenko, October of 2005)⁴³ These words of Alexander Lukashenko said during the visit to Minsk of Yury Ekhanurov (November of 2005) express the overall “positive” evaluation of Ukraine’s “middle way” position, which Belarusian authorities will seek to use in order to pursue their interests.

2005 saw the first fairly positive assessment by the Belarusian President of the personality of Victor Yushenko. For instance, Alexander Lukashenko compared Yushenko to himself at the beginning of his own political carrier:

“The events taking place in Ukraine [resignation of Yulia Timoshenko] seem familiar to me and remind me of the mid-1990s when I became President. At that time, my team was joined by several recruits, whereas afterwards not all of them could assume a position or manage to agree on something, so they had to leave. ... My reaction was calm, and I appointed new recruits.”

(Lukashenko, September of 2005)⁴⁴

⁴² This, among other things, was stated by the Ukrainian Ambassador to the Republic of Belarus Igor Likhovy on August 22 at the press conference dedicated to the 16th anniversary of independence in Ukraine. *Belarusians and the Market* press conference materials. Еженедельная аналитическая газета. № 32(767) 27 августа - 3 сентября 2007 (*Weekly Analytical Newspaper* No. 32 (767), August 27 – September 3, 2007) // <<http://www.br.minsk.by/index.php?article=30882>>, 14.10.2007.

⁴³ Said during the visit to Belarus of the Ukrainian Prime Minister Yury Ekhanurov. Александр Лукашенко встретился с Юрием Ехануровым (*Alexander Lukashenko met with Yury Ekhanurov*). // The official website of the Republic of Belarus President, <<http://www.president.gov.by/press11932.html#doc>>, 14.10.2007.

⁴⁴ From the answers given by the Republic of Belarus President to questions of Belarusian and Russian journalists. Cited from: the official website of President of the Republic of Belarus, <<http://www.president.gov.by/press16252.html>>, 14.10.2007.

2.5. Economic cooperation: the boom of 2005–2007

The configuration of Ukraine-Belarus political relations described above was formed in the context of considerable success in the sphere of economic cooperation, and with the energy security problem acquiring a more pressing nature. These factors had a direct impact on the readiness of both sides to cooperate, regardless of the clear political antagonism (at least in the initial stage).

According to the data of the Ministry of Statistics and Analysis of the Republic of Belarus, the dynamic of trade between Belarus and Ukraine looks as follows (see Table 2):

Table 2. Trade between Belarus and Ukraine in 1999–2006 (USD million)⁴⁵

Period	Trade	Export	Import	Balance
1999	696.3	280.6	415.7	- 135.1
2000	900.3	559.7	340.6	219.1
2001	699.2	421.8	277.4	144.4
2002	562.3	271.6	290.7	-19.1
2003	705.6	343.5	362.1	-18.6
2004	1,084.7	539.8	544.9	-5.1
2005	1,801.7	907.8	893.9	13.9
2006	2,458.7	1,234.0	1,224.7	9.3

Statistical data show that the volume of trade between the two countries decreased considerably in 2002–2003, which also led to a negative trade balance for Belarus. Since 2003, the volume of trade has been growing. In 2005–2006, the growth acquired the nature of a boom: 53.7 percent and 66.1 percent respectively. The year 2007 is demonstrating the trend of further growth (in

⁴⁵ Статистический ежегодник Республики Беларусь. Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Belarus. Минск, 2007.

January—June, growth equalled 25.4 percent). In 2005–2006, Belarus' trade balance was positive, while in 2007, the numbers for imports are considerably higher than those for exports. The significance of economic cooperation with Ukraine has changed as well (see Table 3).

Table 3. Share of trade with Ukraine in the Republic of Belarus' total foreign trade in goods (%)

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
5.6	4.4	3.3	3.3	3.6	5.5	5.8

Thus the process of development of relations between the two countries acquired a stable economic basis, although the large portion of raw materials in mutual trade makes the growth of economic cooperation less stable.

If we consider the structure of Belarusian imports, major volumes account for raw materials and agricultural products. Belarus imports iron and unalloyed steel products, grain and foodstuffs, chemical products and machinery, and some other goods. Among strategic items energy supply should be mentioned. Belarus exports mineral fertilisers, machinery and equipment, oil products, chemical and light industry products, and ferrous metals. That is, the nature of exports is more technological, although the portion of raw materials is considerable as well. It should also be noted that the main consumers of Belarusian products are the city of Kiev, and Dnepropetrovsk and Donetsk Oblasts, which in their turn supply products to be imported to Belarus. In January—June 2007, the portion of trade with Kiev (and Kiev Oblast), Dnepropetrovsk and Donetsk Oblasts accounted for 51.8 percent of total trade,⁴⁶ i.e. the major economic links are concentrated in Ukraine's capital city and in the industrial regions in the east of the country.

Usually, among the factors of growth of the volumes of trade, the favourable pricing regime for Belarusian products on the Ukrainian market (specifically,

⁴⁶Data on the volumes of trade of the Republic of Belarus with various regions of Ukraine. Ministry of Statistics and Analysis of the Republic of Belarus, 2007.

oil products), and the passing of Russia and Belarus to the procedure of payment of VAT in the country of destination of the goods from 2005, are mentioned. The changes introduced in the principles of taxation led to the increase in prices of some goods, which forced Belarusian manufacturers to purchase such goods in other countries. For instance, the volume of supply of metal products to Belarus from Ukraine in the first half of 2005 increased 1.5 times, whereas the volume of imports of the said products from Russia decreased by the same number. Furthermore, another important factor was the desire to ensure energy security by means of diversification of energy supply sources, and to reduce the degree of dependency on Russia. Among the promising economic projects we should mention Ukraine's interest in the transit of energy through Belarus to the Baltic States.

2.6. Geopolitical configuration, and fuel and energy security

The passing by Russia to a new type of relations in the energy sector led to considerable changes in regional policies, which might have some long-term geopolitical consequences. Discussions on fuel and energy security of the region and all of Europe resulted in the revival of plans and strategies popular in the early 1990s (the Baltic and Black Sea Union), and to a certain reconfiguration of the orientation of foreign policies of the states in question. In this case, we are talking about the projects of coordination and about a closer economic, and perhaps political, cooperation between the transit states lying in the territories from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea.

Such ideas and possible implementation plans have been voiced many times throughout 2005–2007 both by Belarusian authorities, and by officials from Lithuania, Ukraine, and other countries.

“As soon as Belarus and Ukraine reach an agreement, the configuration in this segment of economic and political relations will change dramatically.”

(Lukashenko, November of 2006)⁴⁷.

⁴⁷ Press conference of the Republic of Belarus President to representatives of Ukrainian media. // The official website of the Republic of Belarus President, <<http://www.president.gov.by/press33657.html#doc>>, 14.10.2007.

“The time has come to fill Belarus-Ukraine relations with new content. By doing this, we will considerably contribute to the assurance of the sovereign status of our states, and we will raise the geopolitical significance of the Eastern European region.”

(Lukashenko, April of 2007)⁴⁸

Here, the position of Belarus is two-fold. On the one hand, assurance of close cooperation of the states in the region objectively weakens the influence of Russia and in its most radical version may mean the creation of a sanitary cordon separating Russia from Europe. In some cases, Belarusian authorities have demonstrated their disposition for exploitation of this kind of threat in order to obtain a more preferential treatment on the part of Russia. On the other hand, certain coordination is required in order to ensure energy security and avoid economic dependency on a single state. Taking into consideration the above-mentioned factors and the peculiarities of the process of decision-making in the authoritarian Belarus (any decision and agreement can be annulled without adhering to any bureaucratic procedures); Belarus cannot be viewed as a reliable partner in the possible cooperation. Participation in such a bloc is viewed by Belarusian authorities as a forced measure rather than a strategic choice, at least at this stage. However, the very fact of participation, and investments in joint projects might lead to reorientation of the Belarusian elite.

At present, all regional cooperation projects are of a preliminary nature. They are mainly related to discussions on the directions of transit of energy, gas and oil (including routes bypassing Russia), which, according to Lithuanian President Adamkus, call for coordination of steps taken by Ukraine, Lithuania, and Belarus. This idea received full support from Ukraine and some support from Belarus (for instance, information on this was published in the *Sovetskaya Byelorussia* newspaper).⁴⁹ Some of the major projects in this area include the extension of the Odessa-Brody oil pipeline and the creation of the Eurasian oil

⁴⁸ Annual message of the Republic of Belarus President to the Belarusian people and the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus: «Независимая Беларусь — наш достойный и надежный дом» 24 апреля 2007 г. (*Independent Belarus is our great and reliable home*, April 24, 2007) // The official website of the Republic of Belarus President, <www.president.gov.by/data/press43753.doc>, 14.10.2007.

⁴⁹ По-соседски! (*Like Good Neighbours!*). // Советская Белоруссия.. 17 февраля 2007 года (*Sovetskaya Byelorussia*, February 17, 2007), <<http://www.sb.by/article.php?articleID=56898>>, 14.10.2007.

transportation corridor. The Odessa-Brody oil pipeline was constructed in 2001 with a view to transporting Caspian oil to Central European countries bypassing Russia.⁵⁰ At present, preparations are made for extending the oil pipeline until Plotsk (Poland) to reach the port of Gdansk. Belarusian authorities have already expressed their interest in the supply of Caspian oil for their own needs. Furthermore, Belarusian authorities have expressed their desire to diversify the supply of oil and gas thanks to more active cooperation with Iran, Venezuela, and Azerbaijan.

Conclusions

The above-described circumstances of development of Belarus-Lithuania relations after presidential elections in Belarus in 2006, and of Belarus-Ukraine relations after the year 2005 enable us to reach the following conclusions regarding reasons for, and consequences of, transformation of the direction of Belarus' foreign policies:

- The visible normalisation of Belarus-Lithuania relations in 2006–2007 and intensification of contacts with Ukraine are the result of changes in Belarus' foreign policy context and, among other things, the result of partial suspension of subsidies to the Belarusian economy on the part of Russia, due to which Minsk is bound to look for new reference points on the international arena and diversify the sources of energy supply. Furthermore, activation of economic cooperation with Ukraine is related to the search for new markets for Belarusian products and for new raw material sources after the deterioration of the economic situation for Belarusian companies on the Russian market.
- Improvement of Belarus-Lithuania relations constitutes part of a larger-scale process of rapprochement of Belarus with the European Union and the search for a dialogue between Minsk and Brussels, in which Lithuania received the role of mediator. The same applies to Belarus' relation with Ukraine, which is also viewed as a mediator (helper) in Belarus' contacts with the West.

⁵⁰ At present, the oil pipeline does not carry out any of its direct functions but carries out reverse transportation of Russian oil.

- Consequently, the state of Lithuania-Belarus relations and, to a lesser degree, of Ukraine-Belarus relations is directly dependent on the current Russia-Belarus and Belarus-Europe relations, which makes the former somewhat unstable and highly dependent on contextual changes.
- Belarus is seeking to intensify its relations with the EU, Lithuania and Ukraine in the economic sphere, and at the same time slow down political contacts on the highest level (in the case of Ukraine, Belarus is seeking to push the political issues to the periphery), because the latter demand from Belarus implementation of political reforms, which is unacceptable to Belarusian authorities.
- Belarusian authorities are interested in the creation of the Baltic and Black Sea Transit Union of Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine in order to ensure independence in the energy sector and strengthen their geopolitical position in the region. However, being under considerable political influence from Russia, in their steps related to foreign policy Minsk officials will have to consider the Russian factor, and will most likely attempt to use the EU and Russia's disagreements to their own advantage.
- Considerable restrictions on Belarus-Lithuania political relations are imposed by Minsk's perception of Lithuania as a foreign policy actor highly dependent on Brussels and Washington, and therefore unable to form the balance of power in the region the way such balance is projected by Belarusian authorities.

STANDPOINT OF THE BALTIC STATES TOWARDS NATO AND ESDP: THE RUSSIAN FACTOR

Arūnas Molis*

Abstract

After reestablishment of independence, the range of problems associated with the withdrawal of the Soviet army dominated the security agenda of the Baltic States until 1994. Subsequently, an undisputed priority of their foreign and security policy became integration into euro-Atlantic structures. Presently, the Baltic States are formally full-fledged members of NATO and the EU which consider the guarantees of the fifth article of the The North Atlantic Treaty as the most efficient mean for ensuring “hard” security. On the other hand, due to transformation of the nature of threats to security of the world and each state, also for a number of other reasons, the Baltic States may not stay away from the common European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). This article examines a new dilemma of security and defence policy that has been recently faced by the Baltic States: commitments to which organization (NATO or EU) concluded and assumed by the Baltic States should be given priority. The article analyses the factor of a still imminent threat from Russia as one of the most important factors having an effect on this choice.

Introduction

After the withdrawal of the Soviet army from the Baltic States, the scope of threats to the security of the Baltic States didn't diminish, but on the contrary, increased. Nevertheless a willingness to ensure that Russian imperialism is not restored remains one of the most important priorities of security policy. To this end, bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation in the security field was started: military cooperation projects between the Baltic and Nordic countries were initiated, and cooperation with NATO was established within the framework of the PfP program. In truth, besides integration into transatlantic Western structures, other alternatives were considered, e.g. choosing a “neutrality” model

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promoted by Finland or Sweden, or simply maintaining close possible pragmatic relationships with Russia. However with the unceasing words of Russian politicians on integration of the Baltic States into the sphere of Russia's impact, the choice became clear: integration into transatlantic structures that can provide guarantees of collective defence.

Although the EU speedily develops "European" crisis management instruments, within the present day context the Baltic States primarily treat ESDP as activity to the benefit of European and US security. Different assessment of the transatlantic projects associated with Europe and the US is not accidental. First of all, the period of the Cold War is associated by the Baltic States with US assistance and distrust in Western Europe, which did not take any actions in restoring democracy in Eastern Europe after the Second World War (the so-called "Munich Syndrome"). In other words, the US, not Europe, is associated by the Baltic States with the power that helped defeat the Soviet Union. Secondly, the process of integration into NATO was actually much simpler, i.e. requiring less effort and compliance with different criteria than integration into the EU. Criteria for EU membership and closer cooperation, conditions, and requirements have until now determined some distrust in the whole EU structure. Finally, quite considerable emigration of the Baltic States elite to the US created a particular sense of commonality between both sides of the Atlantic and even ensured some lobbyist impact of the Baltic States in US political life.

On the other hand, taking into consideration the present day trends of the global security situation, the Baltic States may not stay away from ESDP development. Although the "old" sources of threat really didn't disappear, the nature of threats caused by them changed considerably. In other words, the instruments held at the disposal of the US and NATO are not sufficient to tackle the new challenges. Challenges of rogue or failed states may not be neutralized with military force only (no matter how efficient it is in the battle field), whereas NATO has virtually no civil crisis management capacities. Meanwhile the EU, guided by the principle that the best conflict resolution mechanism is the establishment of an efficiently operating democratic state,¹ develops the civil crisis management instruments quite successfully.

¹ "Conflict resolution in South Caucasus: The EU's role" Europe Report N°173 – 20 March 2006. <http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/europe/caucasus/173_conflict_resolution_south_caucasus.pdf>, 12 09 2007

Openly admit that if not within a short-term perspective, then in medium or long term the Baltic States will not be able to delegate sufficient and equal attention for fulfilling obligations within the NATO and ESDP framework risk only very few policy shapers in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonian. Neither officials, nor academics openly discuss what would Baltic States choose if they had to delegate limited capacities to both NATO and ESDP operations at the same time. Authors investigating the interests of the Baltic States with respect to NATO and ESDP (e.g. Ž. Ozolina or E. Mannik) mostly limit themselves to abstract statements that the goal of the Baltic States is to coordinate their commitments to NATO and the EU, to contribute to strengthening the strategic cooperation of both organizations etc.² Maybe this will be achieved by the time the need to make a choice emerges, yet what will happen in the event of failure remains unclear.

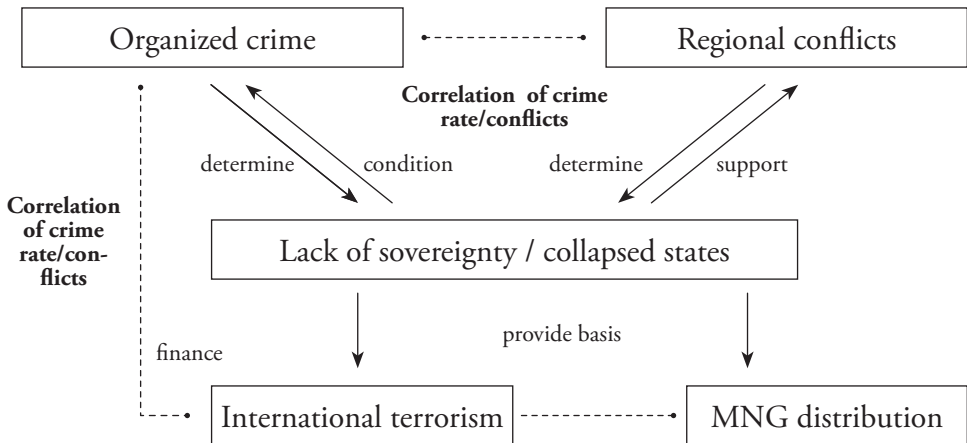
The present article is not intended to provide fast answers to the issues of how to solve the potential, and, probably, presently relevant dilemma of making a choice between NATO and the EU. The goal of this analysis is to start a discussion by identifying which factors could determine the choice of the Baltic States. Several essential assumptions have been made in the article: 1) an essential goal of the security and defence policy of the Baltic States is to ensure that short-term and long-term threats they face are neutralized in time; 2) the military capacities of the Baltic States, as well as financial and human resources, are too scarce to be able to independently neutralize the threats: this “forces” the state to integrate into the global organizations ensuring security and stability; 3) threats from the East are still very relevant to the safety of the Baltic States. The first part of the article analyzes the transformation tendencies of common threats to the national interests of the Baltic States. The second part contains an overview of ESDP and NATO instruments to respond to threats to the security of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia (by making yet another assumption that selection of the “alliance” is determined by its capacity to reduce state vulnerability). The third part investigates the importance of a specific source of threat - Russia - with a view to selecting the most efficient organization for assurance of security.

² Archer C., eds, *New Security Issues in Northern Europe: The Nordic and Baltic States and the ESDP*, Routledge/UACES Contemporary European Studies, 2007, p.115-173.

1. Transformation of threats to the Baltic States

The nature of threats to the security of Europe radically changed at the end of the 20th century with the emergence of regional conflicts in the Balkans, activation of international terrorism, and organized crime. The “old” threats associated with military aggression did not disappear: high energy prices enable Russia to threaten with the deployment of strategic weapons in the Kaliningrad region and maintain their army in the Eastern European, Southern Caucasus, Central Asian countries. Terrorism, proliferation of WMD, regional conflicts, failed states, and organized crime have not emerged suddenly either - they were topical for several decades. Yet, after the terrorist attacks in New York, Bali, Madrid, and London it became clear that the threat of a military conflict between modern states was replaced by not less challenging globalization and complexity of the nature of threats. A schematic representation of the global type of threats is provided below:

Scheme 1. Complexity and mutual correlation of threats to security in Europe



Source: http://www.amo.cz/publikacefiles/new_threats2_ditrych_amo.pdf

Until the end of last century, residents of the Baltic States primarily associated membership in NATO if not with pure military support in case of intervention, then at least with a striving to prevent any attempts to repeat occupation and annexation. Therefore, the greatest effect on their security concept is still made not by national egoism promoted by realists, but by ambitions of the neighbouring state, specifically Russia, to restore its impact in the international environment. Open ambitions of Moscow to compete with the West, usage of leadership in the energy market for political goals, increasing closure of Russia's political system, and similar trends make one resist the attempts of Russia to prevent countries in the CEE region and South Caucasus from independently selecting their security partners and integrating into the world economy. The fact that a threat from the East still remains relevant is also demonstrated by recently conducted surveys, although the national security strategies and concepts as well as the military strategies of all three Baltic States state that no direct threat is imminent to them.³ According to the findings of a survey conducted in 2007, 44 per cent of Lithuanian residents chose Russia as the state which presently poses the greatest threat to Lithuania.⁴

On the other hand, both the mentioned strategic documents and surveys illustrate an undisputed transformation of both the threats themselves and their perception in the Baltic States over the last couple of decades. For example, according to data of the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, only 7 per cent of the country's residents seriously assessed external threats to the country's security in 2004 (fighting these threats was primarily associated with NATO functions). Meanwhile over 40 per cent of the respondents did not question the relevance of internal threats (their neutralization instruments traditionally belong to the EU). Moreover, according to findings of a survey conducted in 2005, Latvian residents assessed the threat of an armed conflict or state occupation as absolutely the least probable – their probability in the general list of threats took 31st and 32nd place. Russia was no longer assessed as a real threat in Latvia: only one-fifth of the respondents were hostile to Russia, and as many as 65 per cent of them did not support the opinion that Russia poses a threat to Latvia's

³ Only Estonia identifies the sources of military threats in the National Security Concept wherein it states that due to lack of trust and transparency in the military field, or due to violations of the state border, military crises may emerge in the vicinity of the country.

⁴ Delfi, *Survey: 44 per cent of major city residents believe that Russia poses the greatest threat to Lithuania*, <<http://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/article.php?id=14740935>>, 18 10 2007.

independence. Latvians are much more concerned with internal threats, such as the crime rate, drugs, and the possibility of an economic crisis. Findings of the surveys in Estonia are similar: approximately 70 per cent of ethnic Estonians and 30 per cent of Estonia's foreign-born persons assessed direct aggression against the state as probable in 1992, but since 2002 (when Estonia was invited to join NATO) this threat was considered as quite probable only by 14-17 per cent of Estonian residents. According to data of the survey conducted in Lithuania in 2007, one-third of Lithuanian residents did not consider a single state as a threat to Lithuania.

It's obvious that it's not possible to neutralize "future" threats with "yesterday's" instruments. Therefore the need emerged to develop a new means of response, first of all to review the strategy for reducing the vulnerability of Europe. The main strategic elements of response to the threats became the expansion of the security and stability zone into the most unsafe (and neighbouring Europe) regions: Eastern Europe, the Balkans, South Caucasus, the Great Lakes Region in Africa, the Middle East. The EU declared their objective to have new measures of impact including both civil and military components. This decision may be motivated by the interests of the great EU states aimed at strengthening their power and developing a counter-balance to the US, yet, it should be admitted that until now no single international organization has crisis management instruments covering both the civilian and military component. In European Security Strategy (ESS) enshrined concept of creation of "ring of friends" became an ideological basis for the development and usage of these instruments. The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), Wider Europe Initiative, Barcelona Process, military and civilian crisis management operations became the main measures for implementing the strategy of threats prevention or neutralization.

It should be noted that ways how to respond to the changed nature of threats are searched not only by the EU, but also by NATO. After the great EU states determined to develop "autonomous" mechanisms for the neutralization of threats to Europe and commenced implementation of independent foreign policy in the field of security and defence, the process of Alliance transformation gained momentum. The ministers of NATO foreign affairs decided in Reykjavik in 2002 that the current understanding of "out-of-area" operations is outdated: the Alliance should be ready to participate in the place where a threat

emerges.⁵ Correspondingly, NATO became involved in the ISAF operation in Afghanistan in October 2002, and subsequently also undertook the command over it. This activation of NATO operations meant that the Alliance acknowledged the necessity for a new type of preventative involvement. In other words, the Alliance, similar to the EU or UN, started to raise goals in the field of crisis prevention such as the promotion of economic, political, and social development seeking to prevent the emergence of new challenges.

2. Baltic States: between NATO and the EU

2.1. Background of the “choice dilemma”

Assumptions of the alliance theory constitute the core of foreign and security policy of the Baltic States. In other words, by implementing the goals of foreign policy, Baltic states are inclined to rely on the regional and global international structures. One can be sure of this after examining the implementation of one the priorities of the Baltic States’ foreign policy – the “Eastern Policy”. The Eastern Policy of the Baltic States is associated with the inhibition of threats spurred by instability in the Eastern European states in the place where they emerge – Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, South Caucasian countries, Russia. These countries not, let’s say, the Great Lakes Region of Africa and even the Balkans are considered to be the sources of imminent threats to the Baltic States. In addition, namely by operating in Eastern Europe Baltic states may make use of a minor, nevertheless significant advantage over the Western European states – the mentality of Moldavians, Ukrainians or Georgians is closer to us than to Germans, Brits or Spaniards. Nevertheless, acting independently or cooperating only among themselves, the Baltic States would only have few efficient measures of impact. Therefore they are interested in promoting more intensive ties of Eastern countries with the EU and NATO: firstly, political, economic, social, military, and other assistance of these organizations to the states located in the

⁵ Robertson G., “Video interview NATO HQ, 16 December 2003”. <<http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2003/so31216a.htm>>, 12 10 2007.

Eastern neighbourhood. This goal is associated with Baltic's specific interests of political "visibility" and energy security as well as blocking Russia's imperial ambitions, crime expansion or prevention of the collapse of less powerful states.

Ideally, the Baltic States should distribute their resources so that their obligations to NATO and the EU successfully contribute to the implementation of national interests. Resources are limited, however, whereas national, regional, NATO and EU initiatives are frequently not supplementary, but competing among themselves. Therefore while selecting a "priority" organization, a natural question arises: Which organization may assist with the implementation of goals of the Baltic States' foreign policy to the greatest extent and most efficiently? According to R.E. Osgood, the efficiency of a defence alliance and trust of its members will primarily depend on the level and nature of the threats: with an increase, the level of a threat will increase, and will diminish with the reduction of the latter.⁶ Therefore it is natural that when military threats were considered to pose the greatest threat to security during the years of the Cold War, the NATO security "shield" had special significance. The response to political, economic, and social challenges at that time was the secondary interest of the European states in the best case. Therefore, the strategic significance of the UN, EU, ESCO, and other international organizations established to neutralize them was of far less importance. Presently, the situation has changed – with the diminishing possibility for a military conflict between the states, the probability of "asymmetric" threats has emerged. This also changes the attitude of states towards the most efficient instruments for threat neutralization.

The probability of military aggression from Russia considerably diminished over the last decade, yet the intensity of associated political, social, energetic and other type of threats even increased. Meanwhile seeking to become an "expert" in neutralizing "soft" security threats, the EU still has no clear vision, and regularly faces the shortage of human, military or other resources in the field of ensurance of security. Besides that, EU hardly manages to combine priorities of the member states and the national interest, as well as different EU "policies", formats and specific initiatives.⁷ The EU "keeps silent" even at the time when the US and Russia discuss actions that may have a direct effect on the security

⁶Osgood R.E., *Alliances and American Foreign Policy*, The John Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1968, p. 17-21.

⁷Fiorenza N., "EU Force Seeks New Mission After Congo", *Defense News* 18 (33), 2003. p. 42.

of Europe⁸. Meanwhile USA is traditionally treated within the context of security and relationships with Russia as a supporter of the Baltic States. In fact, the image of Washington somewhat altered in the Baltic States after the latter approved the CFE Flang treaty according to which Russia acquired a possibility to deploy three times more weapons at the Latvian and Estonian border than they had it until now. A suspicion emerged in the Baltic States that should the interests of America required so, the US might “sacrifice” them.⁹

Thus, presently, the Baltic States may not be one hundred per cent sure that in case of external threat NATO or ESDP will meet their collective defence obligations. Nevertheless, if USA (which instrument in Europe is NATO) and the great EU states (i.e. the main supporters of ESDP) set uniform goals for themselves in the field of security and acted together, the Baltic States did not have to tackle any dilemmas of the “choice between the alliances”. Yet, this is not reality: NATO and ESDP develop separate crisis management instruments, and cooperation in the place of crisis is frequently so inefficient that officers of both organizations participating in an operation are become endangered. The legal ESDP and NATO cooperation basis has some drawbacks: the *Berlin plus* agreements signed in 2003 are not officially binding treaties between the two institutions and are based on a non-binding EU-NATO declaration which also is not an international treaty. In order for the EU to use NATO resources accordingly with the *Berlin plus*, other more specific agreements have to be concluded. Due to peculiarities of the national policy, some NATO, but not EU members (e.g. Turkey) may block them. Besides, NATO, as an organization, does not practically have its own capacities, whereas the *Berlin plus* does not provide EU with the possibilities to use the USA resources. Limitation of the agreements was highlighted by the Cyprus and Malta membership in EU: it

⁸ For example, during the meeting of G8, V. Putin offered to USA to develop RPG together and to deploy some elements of the system in the Russian military bases in Azerbaijan. It is obvious that any decision in this context will have an effect in the European security system. Having involved into negotiations of the USA and Russia, EU could impact the final decision and become an important player in the development of the global RPG system. Practically no debates on this issue are going on in Europe.

⁹ Rumours about secret agreements between the USA and Russia were spread in March 2001, according to which Washington promised to Moscow that the Baltic States will never become members of NATO, whereas Russia will not question the necessity of the USA RPG system. Washington officially denied these rumours, yet premises to newly assess by the Baltic States the security ensurance mechanisms being developed in Europe have already been created.

turned out that these countries may neither participate in the NATO EU PSC meetings nor obtain protocols of NATO decisions. Sooner or later the Baltic States will have to choose which of the Western structures is able to provide the most efficient security guarantees and is able to achieve other, actually even more important goals of foreign policy. Hereinafter arguments associated with this choice will be examined.

2.2. Factors determining the choice of a safety organization

In the security sector all three Baltic States traditionally give priority to NATO and practically do not participate in the debates of Europe regarding the future of ESDP. ESDP is frequently not even attributed to the factors determining the national security policy¹⁰. For example, in the Latvian National Security Concept of 2005 no even mention is made about EU participation while solving the regional and global security issues and EU impact on the national security and defence policy. ESDP is mentioned in the aforementioned Latvian document one single time in the statement that Latvia should participate in the EU defence policy, without detailing how this participation should manifest itself. Factors determining that the so called “NATO first” principle is one of essential features of the state and defence policy of the Baltic States may be classified into several groups:

- Traditional euroatlantism. The Baltic States traditionally identify themselves as a “marginal” territory: this identification hasn’t changed significantly since the end of the cold war. This is determined by the fact that issues of the “hard” security, despite the transformation of threats and attitude towards them, has still inertly been among the most important ones to the Baltic States until now. According to A. Wendt, identity of the states is a relatively stable variable. Its transformation within a short-term and even medium-term perspective is little probable. Therefore the Baltic

¹⁰In other words, they treat EU as an economic and political union of states which membership is useful seeking to change the security environment, but not for the establishment of a long-term and favourable environment of operation in the security field.

States give priority to the transatlantic security projects and mechanism “out of inertia”;

- Reliability of security guarantees provided by the alliance. Collective security guarantees of the 5-th article of the North Atlantic Treaty for the Baltic States seem to be more reliable than the current or intended commitments of mutual assistance within the framework of ESDP. Such a conclusion is correct even taking into consideration the fact that NATO presently interprets security entirely differently than at the time when the Baltic States decided to seek membership in the Alliance. This is determined by a number of reasons (efficient military planning, operative capacities were checked in the place of crisis), yet nearly one of the most important of them is the existence of a clear axis capable of consolidating the efforts of majority of countries;
- Capacity of the alliance to adapt the organizational structure and crisis neutralization instruments to the constantly changing global security situation. Presently, the alliance operates as one of constituent parts of the international security ensuring mechanism. Activities of the Alliance combine with other instruments, such as international law and other international institutions. Besides, the diversity of instruments at the disposal of the alliance has also expanded: apart from mechanism for the prevention of military threats, the impact of NATO on international security is presently associated with the preserving and spreading of political stability.

An attention should be drawn to M. Ruhle’s¹¹ observation that being a democratic, multinational, defensive organization, NATO is essentially unable to plan and implement actions of offensive nature.¹² In his opinion, practical training in crisis management held by NATO in January-February 2002 demonstrated that only the US and Turkey were ready to take preventative actions. The role of representatives of the member states working in NATO institutions is to convey to the allies the standpoint of their country and to notify their governments on the position of other allies, but not to adopt decisions

¹¹ NATO manager of the planning and speech preparation unit of the Division for Political Affairs and Security Policy.

¹² Ruhle M., “NATO and the coming proliferation threat”. *Comparative Strategy* 13 (3), 2004, p. 317.

automatically. In other words, although separate military and civil structures operate inside NATO, there are no any voting procedures in the Alliance. Contrary to the EU, NATO does not have an efficient legal system; there is no any mechanism that would oblige the member states to comply with the “common” position which was reached during the internal consultations. It is hard to reach an agreement on sharing the intelligence information, necessity of the concrete initiative, usage of forces, type and length of operation, etc. In other words, it is difficult to NATO to adopt decisions of tactical and operative type at the time of crisis due to intergovernmental nature of the Alliance’s structure. This raises a question regarding trust in NATO as a military alliance, and at the same time makes one turn to the ESDP capacities in this field.

Sixteen operations have been carried out until now within the framework of ESDP: 4 of them were of military type, 3 – military/civil, and the remaining ones – civil. In 2006, 7,500 EU soldiers and officers participated in EU crisis management operations, and 900 more carried out civil missions. The EU helped the local authorities to prepare police officers (EUPOL-COPPS mission in the territory of Palestine, EUPM operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, EUPAT mission in Macedonia, EUPOL Kinshasa and EUSEC Congo missions in Congo), monitored the implementation of international peace treaties signed and activities of the border crossing points (AMM mission in Indonesia’ Aceh province, the EU BAM mission at the borderline between Moldova and Ukraine, and EU BAM Rafah mission in the territory of Palestine), helped reform the legal systems of some countries (EUJUST LEX in Iraq and *EUJUST Themis* in Georgia).¹³ Successful operation *ARTEMIS* (during which neither the EU nor UN used any NATO logistic support) became a basis for creating a concept of the EU Battle Groups. By supporting *Amis II* mission (carried out by the African Union), the EU created a new crisis management precedent when assistance is rendered not to the crisis-ridden government, but to the regional organization operating “on its territory”. In parallel, the planning of new operations was carried out (EUPT KOSOVO, EUPOL Afghanistan and EU missions in Chad),¹⁴ command over the civil crisis management operations was strengthened (a posi-

¹³ “EU Missions and operations”. *IMPETUS. Bulletin of the EU Military Staff*. Spring/Summer 2006, p. 8-11.

¹⁴ The expansion of several more operations in Africa has not been discussed, but it was prepared too.

tion of the civil operations commander was introduced, and plans were made to establish a command post for civil operations) in 2007. This demonstrates that the EU transforms its reputation of an international actor being unable to reach an agreement or implement complicated crisis management operations.

It is obvious, that involvement of the Baltic States into the ESDP activities in the field of crisis management operations is more symbolic. It would be even right to state that security of none of the Baltic States is directly associated with ESDP development and initiatives. In other words, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia are essentially only passive participants of ESDP.¹⁵ Several groups of factors should be differentiated as a result whereof ESDP does not become an efficient instrument of foreign or security policy of the Baltic States:

- The Baltic States do not have any more significant effect on ESDP nor opportunities to take a more active role. Therefore to them ESDP is rather an “imposed” than natural choice – at one time the government of Estonia even directly expressed its dissatisfaction that Germany allegedly attempted to “impose” ESDP rather than “suggesting” to join NATO¹⁶;
- So far the EU has not been fully prepared to act independently in all high intensity operations. This is determined not only by the drawbacks in the implementation of operations, but also in control over their planning, command, and supervision;
- As a part of the so called “new” Europe Baltic states pursue different from the “old” Europe’s view towards the ESDP geographical framework and

¹⁵ In 2004, Tallinn decided to join the EU Combat group formed by Sweden, Finland and Norway. Estonia will delegate 45 soldiers to the EU Combat group to be on duty during 1st Quarter 2008. Lithuania assumed an obligation to appoint a military unit of the squadron size and minor logistics elements (in total 200 soldiers) to the EU Combat group of Germany, Poland, Slovakia, Latvia and Lithuania that will start to serve duty in 2010. This is nearly the most significant, but so far “paper” contribution of the Baltic States into ESDP crisis management operations: each of them appointed only one or several officials or military officers to specific ES ALTHEA, CONCORDIA, EUPOL Afghanistan and other civil and military crisis management operations.

¹⁶ This suspicion was even more enhanced by the statement of the then EU president R. Prodi in Riga that allegedly any aggression against an EU state shall be treated as an aggression against the entire EU and that the security guarantees provided by EU membership are even “better” than those of NATO. Mannik E., “The role of the ESDP in Estonia’s security policy” in Archer C., ed., *New Security Issues in Northern Europe: The Nordic and Baltic States and the ESDP*, Routledge/Uaces Contemporary European Studies, 2007, p.140.

application of its concrete instruments.¹⁷ Only the coordination of initiatives within the framework of ESDP and European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) would enable to harmonize different foreign policy goals of the member states. This is probably the only way to enhance the interest of the Baltic States in EU foreign policy. Yet, even in this case the Baltic States will be supporting ENP development in the Eastern dimension and the EU Southern states in the Southern dimension;

- EU external policy is too heavily dependent on Russia's interests.¹⁸ In other words, each time big Western states take into consideration Russia's regional or even global interests despite clearly undemocratic actions of the latter one regarding Ukraine, South Caucasus and the Baltic States (presidential elections in Ukraine, position with respect to the "frozen" conflicts, issues associated with the supply of energy resources are good examples). In this context, scepticism of the Baltic States is determined by the fact that the granting of priority to the ESDP would nearly coincide with an "ideal" variant suggested by Russia some time ago, according to which the Baltic States "could" join the EU with a similar status as Sweden and Finland, i.e. by remaining neutral in the military respect.¹⁹

The Baltic States declare that they are seeking to turn the development of ESDP in the direction of strengthening transatlantic ties with Northern America and the EU. The achievement of this task in any other way but by getting involved in ESDP activities is not possible. Participation in ESDP is useful to them also because NATO instruments for developing an active Eastern policy (which is the priority of the Baltic states) are undoubtedly less efficient than the corresponding EU instruments. In other words, only the EU, which has a sufficient arsenal of the "soft" power measures at its disposal, is capable of

¹⁷ CFSP priorities (in principal determined by the great EU states) are cooperation with international organizations, vigorous actions in the Near East and Africa, meanwhile priorities of foreign policy of the Baltic States concentrate on Eastern Europe.

¹⁸ For example, after the Baltic States and Poland suggested that border monitoring mission in Georgia should be taken over from ESCO; other countries rejected the suggestion due to possibly negative attitude of Russia to this initiative. Similar reaction was received to Latvia's suggestion regarding EU involvement in the Transnistrian conflict.

¹⁹ Asmus R. D., Nurick R., "NATO enlargement and the Baltic States". *Survival* 2 (38), 1996, p. 121-142.

neutralizing the levers of Russia's impact in the CIS region. Should the EU succeed in consolidating CFSP instruments and creating an efficient EU crisis management system, this could be used not only for solving the "frozen" regional conflicts in the post-soviet space. This could also change the NATO instruments – if, after its transformation, the Alliance became a political forum with a weak fifth article dimension. Finally, ESDP is undoubtedly an additional engine for reforming the national military forces: the development of the EU crisis management system induces the transformation of the national forces into the mobile deployable forces. In other words, ESDP creates possibilities to enhance the interaction of military units of all Baltic States as well as to learn, gain useful military experience, etc.

3. The efficiency of NATO and ESDP instruments in neutralizing threats emanating from Russia

Nearly the most important goals of the Kremlin with respect to transformation of the European security system is to create preconditions for the development of a new system and, after eliminating the US from this process, to replace Washington in Europe. Therefore Moscow's standpoint with respect to NATO is clear- Russia resists any NATO initiatives, including the geographical as well as the functional expansion. All cooperation initiatives of Russia and NATO are more an imitation of cooperation, and not a solution of specific security issues. This is clearly demonstrated by inefficient activity of the NATO-Russia's Council. Russia's position with respect to ESDP is not so unambiguous. On the one hand, the Kremlin is interested in ESDP as instrument that weakens the role of NATO in the European security system, fosters multi-polarity of the international system and facilitates the misbalancing of transatlantic ties. True transatlantic partnership on security issues (the so called "Western alliance") at the same time would practically leave Moscow without any possibilities to create a mechanism for counterbalancing its impact in Europe and in the world. Therefore such a scenario of ESDP development is not acceptable to Russia. The development of the new efficient EU defence union is also not handy to Russia, since such a formation may enhance EU external subjectivity too much

and mean the emergence of the new “competitor” in the “zone of Russia’s interests.”²⁰ Therefore, by supporting ESDP development, Russia seeks the ESDP to become a project of “a part of states”.²¹ This ESDP development model means that also the entire EU internal integration would be developing according to the “core” and “periphery” model, i.e. states hostile to Russia would not gain any major impact on political processes in EU. Thus, in summary, it could be stated that Moscow’s “support” of ESDP development is primarily associated with the implementation of “Primakov’s doctrine”, i.e. with an attempt to create a global security system opposing US hegemony, to enhance the Kremlin’s role and to restore the status of Russia as of a super-state.²²

Russia’s strategic objective to have impact on the European security system is an undoubted challenge to specific interests of the Baltic States. Threat to the security of the Baltic States is determined by the following specific goals of Russia’s security policy:

- Enhancement of military and economic power. Moscow enhances demonstrates its military power by reforming its armed forces, decreasing the number of conscripts in the Russian army, reviewing the tasks undertaken by specific types of armed forces, increasing funding to defence, modernizing and renewing the strategic weaponry, suspending the participation in CFE treaty, etc. An economic impact of Russia increases by enhancing the dependency of Europe on Russia’s energy resources:²³ growing revenues from oil and gas exports establish conditions to the Kremlin to invest into the currencies and securities of foreign states.²⁴ The Kremlin’s

²⁰ More information about ESDP development scenarios is provided at: Molis A., “*Future Scenarios of European Security and Defence Policy and Interests of the Small States*”, *Political Science* 4 (44), 2006, p. 54-83.

²¹ “Guidelines of Lithuania’s European Policy Strategies in Short Term and Medium Term perspective. Summary”. Centre for Strategic Studies, 2006. <[http://www.ssc-lietuva.lt/picture/upload/ssc_leps_sant-rauka_20061119\(1\).pdf](http://www.ssc-lietuva.lt/picture/upload/ssc_leps_sant-rauka_20061119(1).pdf)> 10 10 2007.

²² Rontoyanni C., “So Far, so Good? Russia and ESDP”, *International Affairs* 78(4). 2002, p. 813-830.

²³ Recently Europe has been importing from Russia approximately one third of natural gas and oil resources necessary to it. In 2030 Europe may import from Russia as much as up to 70 per cent of energy resources necessary to it.

²⁴ Approximately 40 per cent of the budget funds and the greatest portion of revenues in foreign currency are received by Russia from trade in energy resources which prices have been constantly increasing. Only a minor fraction of these funds is used for investments inside the country - the greatest portion thereof

administration uses economic levers quite efficiently: deprived of attention in the international arena since the very end of the cold war, Russia again was in the focus of attention due to its position on Iraq, Kosovo and other issues.²⁵ The more Europe is dependent on Russia in the economic field, the more it will be made to yield to Russia in another field, e.g. while regulating “frozen” conflicts in the Eastern neighbourhood. Such a scenario is quite probable, all the more so, that contrary to the things several decades ago, when in the relationships with Moscow the West sought to reduce a potential threat posed by it, presently the great EU states approach Russia as a “reliable supplier of energy resources” whose security interests may also coincide;

- An attempt to “make” the EU to start negotiating with Russia issues associated with the development of security architecture in Europe and to acknowledge the post-soviet space as “a special zone of Russia’s strategic interests”. Moscow still treats the attempts of other states to pursue more vigorous political or economic activity in Eastern Europe as a challenge to the national interests of Russia.²⁶ In other words, in the Eastern ENP dimension the decisions that may not be impacted by the Kremlin are not acceptable to Russia. Therefore Moscow demands to associate the usage of ESDP instruments with a corresponding UN Security Council resolution which could be vetoed by Moscow. Meanwhile Russia by using arguments of political and military integration as well as manipulating the energy resources seeks to reinforce its impact on CIS: it enhances the “collective” security obligations of CIS (i.e. expands impact of the Collective Security Treaty Organization), seeks a “mediator’s” role while “solving” “frozen” conflicts in the South Caucasus and Moldova, etc.
- An attempt to misbalance the transatlantic ties by fostering multipolarity of the international system²⁷. Due to Russia’s objections, EU external pol-

is used for the enhancement of impact on the world economy: annual expenses of the Investment Fund only amount to 3-4 billion USA dollars, whilst expenses of all target federal investment programs amount to 18 billion USA dollars.

²⁵ The Royal Institute of International Affairs, “Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign policy” *Chatham House Papers*, London: Blackwell Publishing, 2006. p.65

²⁶ Haukkala H., Moshes A., “Beyond “Big Band”: the challenges of the EU’s Neighbourhood Policy in the East” *Report of Finish Institute of International Affairs* 9, 2004, p. 19.

²⁷ Rontoyanni C., “So Far, so Good? Russia and ESDP”, *International Affairs* 78(4). 2002, p. 813-830

icy in Eastern Europe is inactive and non-efficient. A clear USA attitude towards the region could foster a more active EU involvement, yet different viewpoints towards the role of international organizations, the right to use the military force, integration of Turkey into EU, etc. remain serious obstacles to the USA and Europe partnership. By using concessions in the energy and other fields, Russia seeks to “fuel up” these differences between the attitudes of USA and EU even more: instead of promoting “collective” solutions EU members are urged to establish bilateral cooperation, implement bilateral initiatives with the Kremlin.

Within this context, the ways, instruments, measures and formats with the help whereof it would be possible to neutralize the threats arising due to Russia’s aggressive foreign policy, should be examined. Paradoxically, the US which is most interested in blocking the power of Russia and its impact in Eastern European countries and South Caucasus, has few opportunities to contribute to the implementation of analogous goals of foreign policy of the Eastern European and Southern Caucasian states. Firstly, the “hard” security instruments (military operations) of NATO are neither the most efficient, nor the most easily used. The “soft” security measures of the Alliance (provision of humanitarian aid, establishment of political dialogue, etc.) have not been developed so far and may not bring great practical benefit (e.g. while solving issues associated with economic progress, “frozen” conflicts, energetic safety, etc.) to the countries located in the Eastern neighbourhood. The US may not offer these countries any integration alternatives in the field of “soft” security. US assistance rendered on bilateral basis would bring positive consequences to Eastern Europe within a medium and long-term perspective only if Eastern Europe remains similarly important to Washington in the global priority scale as it was in the second half of the 20th century. Therefore, conditions for the receipt of assistance from Washington should not oppose these states with the EU – organization integration into which could essentially transform the geopolitical code of the present ENP Eastern dimension countries.

Having sceptically assessed the structural possibilities of NATO to counterbalance Russia’s impact in the region, it should be noted that having set the very same goal, the EU could make use of a number of cooperation formats

and instruments – starting with the provision of assistance and crisis management activities, and finishing with the neighbourhood expansion and development policy. Fear of Russia, however, makes EU not to get directly involved in conflict resolution and to concentrate activities “around the conflict”.²⁸ For example, instead of forming substantial crisis management mission, the EU provides financial support within the framework of the first “pillar” to South Caucasus and Moldova, organizes small civil crisis management operations, sends EU special representatives, tries to assume a “mediation” role (e.g. in Transnistria, according to 5+2 format), etc. In other words, in the region traditionally attributable to Russia’s zone of impact, EU acts more as an economic donor rather than a political actor.²⁹ It is no surprise that EU efforts do not satisfy the beneficiary states: e.g. Georgia has submitted petitions to the EU to form two missions for assessing possible demilitarization of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and monitoring the border between Georgia and Russia.³⁰

Nevertheless, the quite passive EU position does not mean that the EU shall not assume any major crisis management activity in the region in the near future. Having solved political (internal and external) problems on the usage of ESDP instruments in the ENP Eastern dimension, the EU may form, for example, border protection missions that would help Georgia’s and Russia’ border guards to delimitate the state border, foster cooperation on frontier issues.³¹ After reviewing their powers, the special EU representatives already active in the region could take a more vigorous political role in multilateral or bilateral negotiations, submit specific offers regarding conflict resolution on behalf of the EU. The EU essentially has sufficient capacities to support the plans for resolving the existing “frozen” conflict, e.g. to launch a demilitarization or police mission based on the Georgian plan for resolving the South Osetian conflict. EU military forces could supervise the withdrawal of Russia’s military forces and

²⁸ Department of International Development, “Conducting Conflict Assessments: Guidance Notes”, 2002, <<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/conflict-assess-guidance.pdf>>, 28 08 2007.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ “Conflict Resolution in the South Caucasus: The EU’s Role”. Euro Report 173, 2006. <<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4037&cl=1>>, 01 06 2007.

³¹ Vashakmadze M., “The EU and Russian Hegemony in Georgia” in Lejins A, ed., *An Enlarged Europe and its Neighbourhood Policy: The Eastern Dimension*. Riga: Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 2004, p. 106.

help disarm militarized groups operating therein.³² The EU could contribute by creating a necessary international negotiations format and becoming one of the parties in these negotiations. The EU could also launch a military mission in the Nagorno-Karabakh to ensure security, and then it could send a civil mission which one of the tasks would be the organization of a referendum on the status of Nagorno-Karabakh and implementation of the rule of law principle. In other words, the EU has at its disposal a wide array of legal, financial, social and other mechanisms the potential impact whereof on the “frozen” conflicts would be huge³³ and which would undoubtedly have a positive effect in the attainment of goals of the Baltic States’ foreign and security policy. This is possible, however, only if the EU does not get scared of the “clash” of interests with Russia in the ENP Eastern dimension countries.

Conclusions

During the first decade after the reestablishment of independence, the Baltic States primarily sought specific short-term interests, i.e. assistance in neutralizing threats from the East. They had no other choice but to rely on the transatlantic Alliance and its security guarantees. Presently, seeking to counterbalance the impact of Russia in South Caucasus, Moldova, Ukraine or Belarus at least partially, the EU sets up institutes of “democracy” and supports the establishment of democratic political parties. Nevertheless, despite more vigorous activity within the EU framework, the Baltic States still trust the US the most in the security field. Although practically nobody believes in the opportunity to employ article five of the North Atlantic Treaty against Russia, trust in Washington’s commitments remains both important and strong among the new NATO members. In other words, threats posed by Moscow to the “hard” security of the Baltic States (not the threats of trans-national nature or even the “soft” security threats posed by Russia) remain nearly the most important imperative of security and defence policy of the Baltic States. There is no doubt that if some

³² Munteanu I., “Moldova and the EU Neighbourhood Policy” in Lejins A, ed., *An Enlarged Europe and its Neighbourhood Policy: The Eastern Dimension*. Riga: Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 2004, p. 92.

³³ Popescu N., “The EU and Transnistria”. *UNISCI discussion papers* 10, <<http://pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00002858/01/popescu.pdf>>, 14 10 2007,

of the great EU states unite with Russia against the US, the Baltic States would give priority to partnership with Washington. As long as the leaders of Germany, France, and the Southern EU countries insistently reiterate the necessity to take into account both the global and regional interests of Russia, NATO will remain to the Baltic States a priority organization for ensuring security. The situation could only change if:

- Nature of the threats remaining the same the EU starts to coordinate its initiatives in the first (ENP) and second pillars (ESDP). So far, ENP and ESDP initiatives regarding crisis prevention and management have been controlled by different EU institutions. Therefore, initiatives implemented within the ESDP framework, lack resources/possibilities and political will. This shortcoming may be eliminated by uniting the instruments of economic cooperation and technical assistance with EU initiatives in the crisis management field;
- Mechanisms for the solution of conflicts in the Eastern ENP neighbourhood are dissociated from the general cooperation of the EU and Russia. The ultimate solution of the “frozen” conflict would be possible only with the participation of all conflicting parties (including Russia). However, for example, EU energy dependency on Russia should not become transformed into concessions to Russia in the Eastern neighbourhood. It is even more important that this dependency should become crucial factor during the negotiations regarding new EU-Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement;
- The biggest countries EU review a list of EU priority regions and start to get ready for the real crisis management operations not only in Africa, but also in Eastern Europe. The new EU member states located in Central Europe have virtually no experience acting in the same region, or opportunities (influence) to initiate the planning of operation and preparation to it. Therefore, so far, ESDP instruments are either unsuitable in principle, or simply too weak to solve the “frozen” conflicts in the ENP Eastern dimension countries. This diminishes the interest of the Baltic States in the ESDP in general.

THE BIG, THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL: AMERICA, RUSSIA AND EUROPE'S MELLOW POWER

Kęstutis Paulauskas*

As political scientists, we are lucky to live in an extremely exciting period. French President is confessing love to the US, Russians are flying strategic bombers along the American coast, Americans are preparing for another episode of Star Wars and another military adventure in the Middle East. The North Pole is suddenly an object of geopolitical competition. In such a vibrant, dynamic environment, even a new treaty of the EU does not stir much excitement. The jungle of European institutions, committees and directorates may sometimes seem depressing, at least from International Relations perspective. Despite this, I will try to showcase and upraise the beauty of Europe's mellow power.

Lithuanian worldview has always been rather simple, painted in black and white. It is framed by three strong images. First, it is an image of big and powerful US dominating the world politics. It is a good friend of ours, so everything that US does must be good for Lithuania. Secondly, there is the image of a big bad bear – Russia, who, we think, is doing everything to make life miserable for Lithuania and everything that Russia does must be bad for Lithuania. Last but not least is the EU – a generous source of social and economic welfare, whose power of attraction, seduced us to become a member of the family. When the EU agrees with the US, it is good for Lithuania, when the EU agrees with Russia, it is bad for Lithuania.

Life is not that simple anymore, but these three images is a useful starting point when discussing the global role of the EU itself. EU's international behaviour is shaped by the same actors and factors: cumbersome transatlantic relations with the US, cumbersome relations with Russia, and tricky relationship with itself.

There are three groups of problems and dilemmas related to the EU's global role: metaphysical, strategic and institutional. Let's start with metaphysics.

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What is Europe? Where is Europe and which Europe are we talking about? Some call it Venus, some call it Eurabia, Americans say it is somewhere between Vancouver and Vladivostok, Eurocrats say it is between Lisbon and Liubliana. Postmodernists like R.B.J. Walker, say that Europe is not where it is supposed to be. So what is so European about the EU?

Those who still believe in neorealism know for sure where Europe is and what it stands for. They consider Europe an economic giant and a military dwarf, which has to boost its military power and align with the US in order to survive. For constructivists, Europe is what we make it. We are constructing Europe by speaking Europe. On one hand, we have a modern image of Europe made up of territory and power, balancing against other great powers. On the other hand, we have a postmodern image of Europe, in which international politics have transformed into post national and post sovereign politics.

The distinction that Robert Cooper makes between modern and postmodern actors seems to be more useful than Robert Kagan's comparison of Venus and Mars. The neorealist logic of IR does not lead us very far: Kagan wants us to believe, that transatlantic relations during the Cold War were good because of the misbalance of power – US was a strong Mars, and Europe was a weak Venus. Now, he says, the transatlantic relations are bad because of the misbalance of power – the US is the strong Mars and Europe is the weak Venus. As it is usually the case with neorealists, the same cause seems to explain any outcome.

From a constructivist point of view, international politics are a matter of social interaction. Anarchy and power politics are not eternal laws – for one, European nations have chosen to move beyond national politics, share sovereignty and live in a security community, within which war is impossible. The newest twist in the US-French relationship provides another good example that relations between states is a matter of choice, not a matter of metaphysical geopolitical destiny.

The EU is an increasingly postmodern, postnational space, in which the notions of power, territory and boundaries are increasingly losing significance. In Europe, politics are no longer about the security of the state borders, but about individual happiness and welfare.

In the meantime, much of the modern world, including Russia and the US still believe in national sovereignty and importance of territory. The ultimate

objective of the state is to defend the state. This seems to be the source of asymmetries and misperceptions in the EU-US and EU-Russia relations.

The second important metaphysical tension is the one between deepening and widening of Europe, between the logic of internal post-territoriality of the EU, and the strive to draw the final borders. One school of thought argues in favour of the widening imperative – enlargement has always been the most successful foreign and security policy of the EU. Enlargement is what ensures thriving of the common market. Stop the enlargement, and you stop the EU itself. It would be a disaster for sluggish economy and aging society of Europe to build new walls. Another school of thought contends that the deepening imperative is much more urgent: to be able to function properly, the EU needs to pursue further internal institutional, social, economic consolidation and probably draw final external borders. If the EU chooses deepening over widening, it will not be able to use its beauty to solve the problems of its neighborhood. At the same time widening the EU would almost definitely create new obstacles to deepening.

This dilemma is related to the second of problems - the strategic issues. Let's start with Europe's immediate environment. To paraphrase the George W. Bush famous speech in Warsaw, Europe is not whole, Europe is not free, Europe is not secure and Europe is not at peace.

First, Europe is not complete. The EU is still struggling in the Balkans, Turkey's membership prospects are getting bleaker by the day, and Ukraine is probably decades away from membership, to say nothing about Georgia or Moldova. The most successful tool in the EU's toolbox – enlargement – may still help complete the vision of Europe from Lisbon to Liubliana, but it is of little help in other cases.

Europe is not free. The last European dictatorship is just 200 kilometers away from us. The Freedom House ranks both Belarus and Russia as not free countries. Here, the EU has very limited options. If anything, both Belarus and Russia has moved further away from democracy in the last decade. So much for Europe's power of attraction.

Europe is in danger. Solana's security strategy lists a number of threats: terrorism, WMD, regional conflicts, state failure and organized crime. For Europe, terrorism and organized crime are pretty much an enemy within. To cope with external challenges, the EU would have to underpin its mellow power with

credible military capabilities. The latter may never happen and on this I agree with Kagan – Europeans have no appetite for war. They will spend more money on police to fight terrorism at home, but they will not spend more money to fight terrorism abroad or get into American-style regime change business.

Finally, a number of frozen or not so frozen conflicts persist in European neighborhood: South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Transnistria. Some of these conflicts can explode into new war. The EU is pretty much absent from resolution of any of them. So far, Europe's neighbourhood policy has been too misbalanced and to make a difference in Eastern Europe. Mr. Europe Javier Solana often acts as Mr. Balkans or Mr. Africa.

On the global issues, that dominate current headlines, the EU is more a factor than an actor. Ironically, most of these issues are directly related to Europe's security. While US and Russia continue negotiating on missile defence in Europe, on Treaty of Conventional forces in Europe, on the future of Kosovo in Europe, the European voice is absent - it would be difficult to pinpoint any clear common European position on these issues.

Of course, the EU continues to be a major global economic actor, it is the largest donor of humanitarian aid and sometimes does make a difference in such places as Democratic Republic of Congo or Lebanon. However, it is obvious that a strategy of being beautiful and attractive is not always sufficient – sometimes a focused effort of persuasion or punishment is necessary. To become a global actor comparable to the US, China or Russia, the EU would have to underpin its mellow power with more assertive foreign policy and military power. The latter seems unlikely, which leaves the EU one option - to get its foreign and security policy right.

This leads to the institutional dilemmas of the EU. The CFSP may have a new architecture, but the furniture is the same. Moving the furniture around does not solve the chronic problems of this policy. I am not convinced that Lisbon treaty alone can do this. Now the EU dragon will have three heads: the High Representative, President of the commission, and President of the EU Council. The question remains the same, who do you call when you want to make war or love with the EU?

Although Lisbon Treaty is supposed to help solving the problem of democratic deficit, ironically, probably only one nation will hold a referendum on it. As a

historian Timothy Garton Ash once remarked, if the EU applied to join the EU, it would not be admitted because it would not meet the democracy criterion. Supranationalism by definition is difficult to appreciate in terms of democracy.

Most obvious problem is the 27 national diplomatic services and 27 national foreign policies trying to preserve the autonomy of decision and action. The ongoing EU integration increasingly blurs distinction between foreign and national, domestic and external, subnational and supranational policies and politics. Both the nationhood and the statehood of nation states many indeed be at stake. As David Campbell has argued, states strive to articulate identity by means of foreign and security policy. In other words, states quite simply cannot and does not exist without a foreign policy.

Therefore, every member state wants to have some kind of special relationship with the key actors outside the EU, especially the US and Russia. Not surprisingly, most European countries can be easily identified as either being pro-American and anti-Russian, or anti-American and pro-Russian, but it would be difficult to list a sincerely pro-European camp.

There are at least three distinct approaches towards Russia within the EU:

- *An idealist romantic view* - Russia is European, Democratic partner of EU;
- *A pragmatic cynical view*, there are problems, but interests come first;
- *And a suspicious view*, expansionist and authoritarian regime, a bad guy threatening neighbors.

The beauty of the EU is that the combination of these contradictory views provides a mish-mash common policy on Russia, with which none of the members are fully happy. For bigger states, this is an additional incentive to go the bilateral way, for smaller states the bilateral way is even worse than the consensual EU way.

Transatlantic relations are no less problematic. During the Cold War transatlantic link was synonymous with NATO. It's no longer so: today transatlantic dialogue takes place between Europe and US inside NATO, between NATO and the EU and between the US and the EU. In the first case, NATO is not always the first choice for the US - take invasion of Afghanistan as an example. As

for NATO-EU relations, NATO's secretary general described them as a „frozen conflict“. Finally, US-EU dialogue bypasses NATO altogether. Although the rift over Iraq has more or less healed, some of the strategic tensions will remain for the foreseeable future: most notably, because of proximity to the Middle East and the growing addiction to Russian gas and oil, the EU will inevitably have different interests and concerns on these issues from those of US.

Life for Europe was easy during the Cold War: it defined its identity against the Soviet Union and Europe's own bloody past, while the US was the positive reference of a common civilisation. Today, Europe has an identity problem. Europe is divided and undecided whether Russia is a partner or a threat; Eastern Europeans view Americans as guardians of their freedom, while citizens of biggest EU members regard the US as the biggest threat to global peace, meanwhile Muslim minorities in some European countries is emerging as the enemy within.

The new member states are facing a plethora of their own dilemmas.

First, they have not yet mastered the rules of postmodern politics such as shared sovereignty, consensus building, and multi-level governance. For example, Lithuania pursues a rather contradictory strategy: our support for the deepening is rather reluctant probably out of fear that we will lose decision making autonomy and the Germans will sell us to the Russians. But we full-heartedly support the EU enlargement to all the willing countries from Turkey to Ukraine to Georgia. This would undoubtedly weaken the EU internally and redistribute EU funds towards the new new members.

Secondly, although the EU is beautifully mellow, it is no doubt a global actor. Many of the new Europeans are able to think and act regionally and often only locally. They objectively are too small to see the big picture. What we consider existential problems often are only marginal irritants to the great powers.

Thirdly, some of the new members, including Lithuania, like to use history as a tool of foreign policy. The problem is that the very success of the EU project was always dependent on the ability to forget the past for the sake of the future.

Fourthly, the new members usually believe that their best chance to outmaneuver Russia is American support, this is why they support Americans. There are two paradoxes in this belief: first, the full-hearted support for Iraq war has brought new wealth and power to Russia, while weakening the US

and dividing the EU. Secondly, the solutions to the problems that the Eastern Europeans are facing vis a vis Russia lie in Brussels and the ability of the EU articulate common foreign policy. There is not much Washington D.C. is able or willing to do in this regard.

Finally, most new member states have not yet decided which model of European integration would benefit them most: the British widening but not deepening EU, German deepening but not widening, or the French agricultural Europe of nations led by France. Which Europe do we want: Constitutional Europe, The United States of Europe, Free-Trade Europe or Multi-speed Europe?

There are no easy solutions to the problems I have outlined. The EU is aging and losing competitive edge – to reverse this trend, it needs to continue widening, embracing globalization, embracing immigration and getting rid of protectionism. It also has to put its act together internally, which means further deepening. Combining enlargement with integration will be increasingly difficult. To address this dilemma, the EU will need some kind of magic, or at least extraordinary imagination. Imagination, however, seems to be in deficit in the EU.

Probably the greatest paradox is that despite all its flaws and problems, all the EU's neighbours want to be friends with the EU and very often to become part of the EU. The EU is a beautiful transcendental, postmodern entity, which does not fit into the traditional models of international relations, and cannot be easily explained using the concepts of sovereignty and power.

Even if EU behaviour may seem boring and we cannot google up jokes about Jose Manuel Barroso or Javier Solana, we do have to take the EU seriously. The EU institutions may lack imagination, but we, political scientists, do need imagination to fully understand and appreciate the complex beauty of Europe.

THE GERMAN INTERESTS TOWARDS LITHUANIA: A DILEMMA OF THE *ZWISCHENRAUM*

Matthias Räntzsch*

Abstract

With the fall of the Berlin wall the two German states became unified, furthermore numerous other states were newly found, or as in the case of the Lithuanian re-established. Lithuania became apparent again as an own international political entity, consequently Bonn/Berlin had to create a new foreign policy to this situation. After intensive support and dialogue in the 1990s it seems that, in the new millennium, the bilateral relations between Berlin and Vilnius had “fallen asleep”. Through investigate the interests and fears of the foreign policy of Germany towards Lithuania, the present article also looks at the German-Russian relations, and in this context at the development of the Lithuanian-Russian-German relations, to examine reasons for the current situations and to make prospects for a future development.

Introduction

On the 1st May 2004 a collective elation overdrew the European continent when ten countries from central-, northeast-, and southeast Europe joined the EU. Already, before the majority of these states joined NATO. Not even two decades prior, the continent and the rest of the world was captured in an ideological confrontation between two blocks. The fundamental changes which took place in Europe made the countries apparent again between Russia¹ and Germany as own international political entities, while they had no voice for nearly 60 years, and Bonn/Berlin had to find answers to this new geopolitical situation. Furthermore, the challenge had a dual character: not only the global security environment had changed, also Germany itself transformed. With the unification, Germany gained more political and economic weight, as the most populous nation with the highest gross domestic product on the continent.

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¹ To simplify matters the following study speaks of Russia instead of officially expressing Russian Federation.

The self-understanding of the new central power in the post-Cold war Europe is reflected in its foreign policy, in particular in its foreign policy towards the *Zwischenraum*, the region between Germany and Russia. Being a space which suffered in the 20th century like no other region in Europe, it was the scene for the bloodiest wars, genocide, annexation, and suppression - but also a place of hope, revolution, and rebirth. Over centuries this area was characterised as a conflict zone between different cultures and interests. Swedish, Polish, Lithuanian, Russian and German, respectively Prussian interests clashed constantly in this region. Nevertheless, it was mainly not due to different cultures which led to constant conflicts in this area, moreover the geopolitical factors made Lithuania and the East Baltic Sea Region to a hard fought area, a constant which still remains.² Therefore the Russian policy towards the Baltic countries was often referred to as the “litmus test” of its new democratic policy direction.³ But the Baltic States are not only a “litmus test” for Russia, they are also a test for the German foreign policy, towards a problematic geopolitical zone in its own backyard. Furthermore, it is also an indicator whether the united Germany has found an adequate role on the international policy stage, which refers to its interests and responsibility as a European central power and economic heavyweight.

This article wants to develop the thesis that, till now, Germany has not developed a conclusive foreign policy concept towards Lithuania and the East Baltic Sea Region. This lack of a clear political strategy, so the assumption, makes the geopolitical situation of this area even more precarious. Furthermore it would be also a sign that the united Germany has not found an adequate policy role yet, which refers to its interests and responsibility in the new Europe.

Consequently this article will first try to examine German interests, with a focus on the East Baltic Sea Region and Central and Eastern Europe. In a second step the German-Lithuanian are evaluated, moreover a view on the development of the German-Russian relation is paid. This helps to approach the

²The region is important as sea, land and air transit route between West and East, and North and South. Especially for Russia as it is the only possible land link which connects the Kaliningrad exclave with the Russian heartland. Lithuania must be seen “as the most problematic case” of the Baltic States. It is the “weakest part” in the chain of defence, mainly because of the long border with Byelorussia and the transit – especially the military one - to Kaliningrad oblast. And also because of simple historical constants - for centuries the Baltic nations were provinces of the Czarist Empire and later the USSR – traditional assumptions, thinking and beliefs normally do not change overnight.

³Bildt, C. “The Baltic Litmus Test”, *Foreign Affairs*, No. 73, 5 (September-October 1994), p. 72.

question: What weight should Lithuania have in the future German foreign policy and how will the German-Russian, and in this context, the Lithuanian-Russian-German relations develop?

1. What are the German Interests? An Approach

From the official side German interest are defined. Initially in the *Weißbuch zur Sicherheitspolitik*⁴ from 1994, later supplemented by other papers like the *Verteidigungs-politische Richtlinien für den Geschäftsbereich des Bundesministers der Verteidigung*⁵ from the year 2003. The actual German security policy can be found in the *Weißbuch*⁶ 2006. From which the following definition can be extracted: “German security policy is guided by the values enshrined in the Basic Law and by the goal of safeguarding the interests of our country, in particular:

- preserving justice and freedom, democracy, security and prosperity for the citizens of our country and protecting them from dangers;
- ensuring the sovereignty and integrity of German territory;
- preventing regional crisis and conflicts that may affect Germany’s security, wherever possible, and helping to control crisis;
- confronting global challenges, above all the threat posed by international terrorism and the proliferation of WMD;
- helping to uphold human rights and strengthen the international order on the basis of international law;
- promoting free and unhindered world trade as a basis for our prosperity thereby helping to overcome the divide between poor and rich regions of the world.”

To reach these goals “German security policy takes account of general long-term conditions as well as changing interests. The constants include Germany’s

⁴ Bundesministerium der Verteidigung. *Weißbuch 1994: Weißbuch zur Sicherheit der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und zur Lage der Bundeswehr*. Bonn: Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, 1994.

⁵ Bundesministerium der Verteidigung: *Verteidigungspolitische Richtlinien für den Geschäftsbereich des Bundesministers der Verteidigung* (Berlin: Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, 2003).

⁶ Federal Ministry of Defence. *White Paper 2006: on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr*, Berlin: Federal Ministry of Defence, 2006.

geographical location at the heart of Europe and the experience gained from German and European history, our worldwide integration as a trading and industrialised nation, and international obligations arising particularly from our membership of the United Nations, the European Union and NATO". The partnership towards the USA is described as "central" for the German foreign and security policy. Another "overriding goal" is to strengthen the European stability and integration and also to "develop and deepen a lasting and durable security partnership with Russia". And overall the German foreign and security policy has a multilateral character. "Globalisation, Terrorism, Proliferation and Military build-up, Regional Conflicts, Illegal Arms Trade, Energy Security, Migration, Epidemics and Pandemics" are defined as the main global challenges, opportunities, risks and dangers.⁷ All together, the list is quite abstract, gives no order of precedence and no practical suggestions which could disturb somebody. The formulations are noble and good, but also spongy and noncommittal. The foreign and security policy of a country, and the interests and values on which this policy is based, need precision and clarity.⁸ It is obvious that in this sensible field not all facts are made official in writing.

The *Weißbuch* 2006 leaves nearly all critical, and for the practice relevant questions unanswered. All norms and rules are right but they give no proposals for the hotspots of our times. Also priorities are not selected clearly. It seems to be necessary to set the official papers aside for the moment - to rethink, at least partly and a bit more feasible, the German national interests. Not all interests have the same weight, it is necessary to define a hierarchy, beginning from vital, to outstanding, and important up to preferable interests. The vital interest of every state is self-preservation, to save the material and ideational existence of the nation state. This means to secure the integrity of its own territory, wealth of its own people and goods which are necessary for the self-determination, for example, securing energy sources or free trade routes, against external threats.⁹

⁷ Ibid.; pp. 17-22.

⁸ Mey, H. H. "Der Interessenbegriff in der Politikberatung für nationale Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik", in Theiler, O. (ed.) *Deutsche Interessen in der sicherheitspolitischen Kommunikation* (Tagungsband zum 7. Strausberger Symposium vom 28. bis 30. Juni 2000), Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2001, p. 148.

⁹ Theiler, O. "Annäherung an die Definition nationaler Interessen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland", in Theiler, O. (ed.) *Deutsche Interessen in der sicherheitspolitischen Kommunikation* (Tagungsband zum 7. Strausberger Symposium vom 28. bis 30. Juni 2000), Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2001, p. 166.

That nearly no state can defend all its interests alone and that states therefore need to cooperate seems to be a natural fact of our times.

But what is the main danger for Germany and what is therefore its vital interest? Terrorism, proliferation of WMD, military build-up, regional conflicts, illegal arms trade, epidemics and pandemics are for sure serious threats, globally and for Germany. But they are not very concrete and specific, no main political actor in the world is addressed, which makes it very easy to talk often and loud about these topics. No one will be offended, no controversial discussion is to fear. After thousands of repetitions, the people became “used” to these mainly abstract threats, no need to discuss further. These dangers also do not reflect to the geographical location specifically or the long European and German history. Australia, Japan, France, Russia or the USA also agree without provisos that these points are challenges and threats for their countries. Engagement against terrorism, the non proliferation of WMD, the active commitment to avoid regional conflicts and sanctions against illegal arms trade are with no doubt outstanding and important interests for Germany. But the focus of the German foreign and security policy should lie where the risks are closest, in Central and Eastern Europe, directly at its own “front door”.¹⁰ The vital German interest is to avert a new threat power or instability in the East. Therefore is it indispensable to involve Russia - as the superior player in this region - in the European Security architecture. It is essential for Germany to promote Russia’s way towards a stable system and legal certainty.¹¹ Only in a dialogue it is possible to develop partnership with Russia. Of course it is impossible to see the vital interest detached from its surroundings. Germany should look vigilant when nationalist and populist become leaders in Eastern European countries and when it seems that old tensions break up and new conflicts rose.¹² Only a stable and integrated Europe is a guarantee for German security and prosperity. Interwoven global security architecture can reach this target best. Therefore is it

¹⁰ Mey, (note 8); pp. 148-149.

¹¹ Bahr, E. *Deutsche Interessen. Streitschrift zu Macht, Sicherheit und Außenpolitik*, München: Karl Blessing Verlag, 1998, pp. 79-81.

¹² Krzeminski, A. “Tiefe Risse in der Demokratie. Der Populismus als Faktor der ostmitteleuropäischen Politik“, *Internationale Politik*, May 2006, pp. 23-29.

requisite to establish a workable European Security and Defence Policy and also to strengthen the relations with the USA and NATO.

It is an outstanding German interest to obtain the welfare of the country. In a globalised world this goal is best achieved in a capable EU together with friends and allies. To guarantee prosperity and security at home it is important to limit, or better to stop regional conflicts. It is also important to avoid the proliferation of WMD and illegal arm transfer. World trade needs free markets and save transit routes, hence Germany should defend terrorism, organised crime, corruption and piracy. It is also a preferable German interest that freedom, democracy and human rights may grow worldwide. But with the exception of Europe, Germany should only use “soft power” to support these goals. Main instruments are the long-term and purposeful use of development aid as well as cultural and educational policy. In case of doubt interests is preferable to moral.

Even after this extensive dialogue this approach is not half complete. A lot of delicate questions and practical relevant issues are not even addressed. The EU is at a crossroad. Many targets are reached but a further deepening in this constellation seems to be impossible. Some states were not willing to join the euro zone in the past and they will also not give more responsibility to the European Security and Defence Policy in the future. When it is a vital interest, Germany needs to push a common European security policy foreword. A lot of other EU states also want a further deepening. But how will it deal when a few countries actively block and break from the inside? A strong EU-Russian partnership is desired from nearly all sides, to strengthen the energy security to stabilize Europe and to avoid a Russian concentration on Asia.¹³ But what will the EU and Germany do if some states bloc agreements and cooperations, because of national animosity against Russia? And what is the German strategy when Russia uses rude political pressures and undiplomatic methods to widen its influence?¹⁴ It is to ask how the growing tensions in the *Zwischenraum* influence the German foreign policy and the bilateral relations between Berlin and Moscow?

¹³ Rahr, A. “Geopolitischer Infantilismus. Europas Unsicherheit im Umgang mit Russland nimmt zu“, *Internationale Politik*, July 2006, pp. 14-20.

¹⁴ Adomeit, H. “Rückkehr auf die Weltbühne. Moskaus Ambitionen sind größer als sein politisches Gewicht“, *Internationale Politik*, July 2006, pp. 6-13.

2. Unshakeable German principle - “Russia first”

From 1988 onwards Bonn gave direct assistance to the Soviet Union. The reform process of Gorbachev provided hope in the Kohl government that political concessions are possible. Therefore the capitalist West Germany wanted to present itself as a vital economic partner for Moscow, contrary to the German Democratic Republic which represented a large net loss for the Soviets. Bonn’s successful *Ostpolitik* and the over decades acquired trust, as well as the economic strength, earmarked the field for reunification.

From the beginning till the end of the 1990s Russia was derailed by various crises. In August 1991 the *coup d’état* against Gorbachev, in October 1993 the struggle at the parliament building when more than 150 people died, the success of the ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky at the Duma elections, the first Chechen War from 1994 onwards, the tricky re-election of president Yeltsin in 1996, the rouble crisis of 1998 combined with hyperinflation, and the de facto bankruptcy of the state were just some of the major events. The problems were obvious and not only hazardous for the withdrawal of Russian troops from the German territory¹⁵, more over they were dangerous for the stability of Europe. German politicians felt the need to help Russia, within the realms of possibility, with financial aid, economical assistance, consultancy, advocacy and other kinds of support. Between 1990 and 1994 Germany gave over 2 billion euro to multilateral programmes, technical and humanitarian aid.¹⁶ From the years 1993 till 2001 Russia received in the frame of the EU program Transform 200 million euro, which was mainly used for assistance and consultations in restructuring companies, for establishing a system of taxation, for building up administrative structures and to help the environmental protection. Russia’s

¹⁵ The withdrawal was “top priority” for Germany and essential to become a sovereign state. In 1989 the Western Group of Soviet Forces included 337.800 military personnel, 44.700 civilian and 164.700 family members. What meant that nearly 550.000 people associated to the Russian army lived in the German Democratic Republic, including 4.100 tanks, 7.900 armoured vehicle, 3.500 artillery, 600 combat aircrafts, 800.000 tons of ammunition and a lot of other equipment. An orderly, controlled and regular resettling of people and material was an essential element for the German security policy. See: Wallander, C. A. *Mortal friends, best enemies: German-Russian cooperation after the Cold War*, Ithaca, NY et al.: Cornell University Press, 1999; p. 71.

¹⁶ Götz, R. “Deutschland und Russland - „strategische Partner“?”, *APuZ*, March 13, 2006, p. 19.

overall debts abroad were in 1993 around 40 billion dollars. Germany was with 50 percent the most important creditor.¹⁷

Nevertheless the bilateral relations in the economic, political and security field were highly dynamic and prosperous. In 2004 there were more than 4.000 German companies active in Russia.¹⁸ German banks gave credits between 1991 and 2002 in a volume of 11 billion dollars to the Russian market. German banks are also providing financial consultants for acquisitions, foreign investments and initial public offerings.¹⁹ It was the *Deutsche Bank* who developed a consolidation strategy with *Gazprom* for the Russian energy industry.²⁰ The total turnover in trade amounted nearly 39 billion euro in 2005. With 21,6 billion euro stands Russia on place number ten of the German imports, and with 17,2 billion euro on rank 14 of exports.²¹ Vice versa Germany is Russia's most important partner in foreign trade. The emphasis of Russian exports to Germany is connected to gas, oil and other raw materials. Germany is Russia's main customer for energy products, and Russia is Germany's biggest energy supplier. The connections in the energy sector are broad and interwoven. The chief executive officer of *E.ON Ruhrgas* is the only foreigner who is member of the supervisory board of *Gazprom*.²² The German energy industry, which plays no important role in the oil sector, tries to become a global player in the electricity and gas market. Therefore German companies will also participate, as minor partner, in investments in Siberia. In this frame *E.ON Ruhrgas* and *BASF* - together with *Gazprom* - are participating in the development and delivery at the gasfield Yushno Russkoje. In 2006 *E.ON Ruhrgas* extended its contracts with *Gazprom* until 2035.²³ Another result in this cooperation is the North Eu-

¹⁷ Bierling, S. G. *Wirtschaftshilfe für Moskau: Motive und Strategien der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der USA 1990 – 1996*, Paderborn et al.: Schöningh, 1998, p. 246.

¹⁸ Meier, C. *Deutsch-Russische Wirtschaftsbeziehungen unter Putin: Praxis, Probleme, Perspektiven*, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik: Berlin, 2004, pp. 11-12.

¹⁹ Richter, R.; Schäfer, K. "Geld für Öl: Deutsche Banken und Russlands Ölförderung", *Osteuropa* No. 57, (1) January 2007; pp. 22-27.

²⁰ Gvosdev, N. K. "Weder Partner noch Gegner. Auch die USA suchen nach dem richtigen Umgang mit Russland" *Internationale Politik*, July 2006, p. 23.

²¹ Statistisches Bundesamt. *Statistisches Jahrbuch 2006 für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland, für das Ausland*. Wiesbaden: Statistisches Bundesamt, 2006, p. 471.

²² Follath, E.; Schepp, M. "Der Konzern des Zaren", *Der Spiegel*, March 5, 2007, pp. 123-130.

²³ Bergmann, B. "Verlässlicher Versorger. Energiepartnerschaft mit Moskau: Warum wir Russland auch weiterhin vertrauen" *Internationale Politik*, March 2007, p. 67.

ropean Gas Pipeline. The pipeline under the Baltic Sea should directly connect Germany with the Russian main system. *Gazprom* has a share of 51 percent in the joint enterprise, the other 49 percent are split between *E.ON Ruhrgas* and the *BASF*. The project should be constructed until 2010.²⁴

The growing economical merge is embedded in close governmental cooperation. Also relations on personal level were always very good. Kohl and Gorbachev, later Kohl and Yeltsin as well as Schröder and Putin developed an intimate friendship. At the German-Russian meeting in June 2000 both sides declared to renew the relations and to develop a strategic partnership. In his speech at the German parliament also president Putin spoke about real partnership and deepening the relations between both nations. He also mentioned the friendship between Europe and Russia, and that Germany has a special function to bring Russia closer to Europe, and Europe nearer to Russia.²⁵

It seems that with chancellor Merkel the times of male bonding in the German-Russian relations are over, but still the relations can be described as close and trustworthy. Tone and form have changed, but the questions of energy security, strategic partnership, and economical cooperation again dominate the political agenda.

In the security and military field Germany is already active since the early 1990s. The Kohl government was a leading voice for the establishment of a centre to employ Russian nuclear scientist, to prevent them selling their knowledge to Third World countries.²⁶ A military cooperation agreement between Germany and Russia was signed by defence minister Rühle and Grachev on the 13th April 1993.²⁷ The German-Russian joint venture *MiG Aircraft Product Support GmbH* was founded in 1993, to provide the maintenance of MiG aircrafts, which are also deployed in the German air force. Furthermore regular cooperation exists at: annual programmes, consultant activities, education of

²⁴ Timmermann, H. "Die deutsch-russischen Beziehungen im europäischen Kontext", *Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft*, No 01/2007, p. 112.

²⁵ Putin, W. "Rede des Präsidenten der Russischen Föderation Wladimir Putin im Bundestag", September 25, 2001 <http://www.documentarchiv.de/brd/2001/rede_putin_bundestag.html> (last accessed 21.10.2007).

²⁶ Stent, A. *Russia and Germany reborn: Unification, the Soviet collapse and the new Europe*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999, p. 174.

²⁷ Spohr Readman, K. *Germany and the Baltic problem after the Cold War*, London; New York: Routledge, 2004, p. 130.

German officer in Russia, an armament agreement, and exercises in the Partnership for Peace frame.²⁸ Since 2003 the German military can transport its supply for the soldiers in Afghanistan by land through Russia. Germany is the first NATO country which can use Russian territory for these kinds of transit. On the 20th of December 2006 the first German military reconnaissance satellite was brought to space, with the help of a Russian rocket. Four more satellites should follow.²⁹

Germany assists in different projects concerning disarmament of biological and chemical weapons, and nuclear security. Germany provided nearly 55 million euro between 2003 and 2004 for the safe disposal of the nuclear submarines in northern Russia. The project in Syda Bay will continue most probably until 2010. Berlin is contributing all together 300 million euro. Already since 1993 Germany supported different activities in the destructions of chemical weapons in the former Soviet Union, including chemical weapons destruction plants in Kambarka and Gorny. The engagement in this field should continue until 2011, Germany will provide up to 300 million euro. To help Russia with modernising the physical protection of nuclear material, Germany provides 170 million euro for different projects in Moscow and Ozersk until 2009.³⁰

With the exception of the works of art, which was stolen after the Second World War and never returned to Germany, there are no problems in the bilateral relations.³¹ Not even in terms of minorities or in the Kaliningrad questions. Also not financially – by August 2006 Russia paid all its debts back. Germany and Russia are highly interwoven by various contracts, agreements, and joint ventures. The political elite is in regular exchange, and also the cultural and social relations are very vivacious. A rapid growing commerce between both nations completes the positive picture.

²⁸ Bundesministerium der Verteidigung. *Friedenssicherung durch Vertrauensbildung. Zusammenarbeit mit anderen Streitkräften*, Bonn: Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, 1999, p. 9.

²⁹ Weissner, U. "Wir brauchen Russland! Für die gemeinsame Sicherheit nicht nur in Europa, sondern weltweit ist die enge strategische Kooperation der EU mit Russland unverzichtbar", *Internationale Politik*, March 2007, p. 51.

³⁰ Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit. *Die globale G8-Partnerschaft: deutsch-russische Zusammenarbeit = Global'noe partnerstvo gruppy vos'mi*. Berlin: Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit, 2005, pp. 14-21, 34-47, 53.

³¹ Götz (note 16); p. 15.

But is the vital German interest with this policy really fulfilled? The main intention was to avoid a new threat power or instability in the East, realized through involvement of Russia, as close as possible, in the European Security architecture, to promote Russia's way towards a stable system and legal certainty. But how stable is Russia if the opposition is suppressed and the media controlled? How stable is the region eastward from Germany, when Russia has trade conflicts with Poland, Moldova and Georgia. Gas disputes with Byelorussia and Ukraine, and permanent conflicts with the Baltic States on Russian minorities, transit questions, and different interpretations of history which lead to growing subliminal tensions? Furthermore it seems that a deeper integration of Russia in the European security architecture is at a dead-end road.

With no doubt, the bilateral relations between Germany and Russia are excellent, but the space between both nations is full of tensions. Invigorated with all "petro-money" Russia again thinks in great power categories, and try to regain its influence in the zone which it sees at its sphere of influence, especially in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. Germany, but also others, even assured Moscow in this behaviour. Like chancellor Schröder, when he called Putin a "flawless democrat". But also the French president Chirac gave Putin a sort of "whitewash" for his policy, when he decorated him with the French Legion of Honour. Maybe German politicians can not do much to influence the domestic situation in Russia, but they can at least avoid signals which strengthen Moscow's behaviour.

There are no serious problems between Moscow and Berlin visible. But this fact is not natural one, it is mainly based on the indiscriminating German behaviour towards Russia's domestic situation and on the low German policy profile in the regions which Russia claims at its sphere of interests. This fact is eminently pronounced for the East Baltic Sea Region, "a special German Nordic or Baltic Sea Region policy still does not exist".³² By maintaining low profile Germany avoided successfully any confrontation with Russia, or the blame it would search "hegemony in the East". Another question is, if this policy of low

³² Krohn, A. "Germany's Security Policy in the Baltic Sea Region", in Knudsen, O. F. (ed.) *Stability and security in the Baltic Sea region: Russian, Nordic and European aspects*. London; Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1999, p. 113.

profile is adequate to support Germany's interests in Lithuania and other countries of this region, and which effect it has on this states.

3. The German-Lithuanian (non) relations

The official reaction to Sajūdis and the Lithuanian struggle for independence was reluctant and passive, as in nearly all western countries. Germany was afraid to provoke harsh reactions from the Soviet side or to weaken Gorbachev and his way of reforms. Just four days after Boris Yeltsin recognised the Baltic Republics as independent states the treaty of the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Germany and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania was signed.³³ Since that time the relations in the fields of politics, economics and culture made a considerable progress.

In the economical field Germany and the Baltic States intensified contacts. For technical cooperation Germany allocated nearly 17 million euro to Lithuania between 1992-1993.³⁴ In the frame of the Transform and the PHARE programme Germany gave assistance in the area of consultancy and expertise. Also in the military field Germany assisted. The main instruments were annual programmes, consultant activities, military educational endowment, language training and cooperation in the Partnership for Peace frame.³⁵ Already since 1992 Germany provided support with armoured cars, machine-guns, light planes, first aid material, air defence systems and ships. Important in this field is also the opportunity for Baltic officers to study at the centres of military training in Germany.³⁶

Already from the early beginning Germany wanted to bring Lithuania and the other two Baltic nations closer to the European structures. It was in the

³³ Föhrenbach, G. *Die Westbindung der baltischen Staaten: Zur Integration Estlands, Lettlands und Litauens in die bi- und multilateralen europäischen und transatlantischen Sicherheitsstrukturen während der 1990er Jahre*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2000, p. 121.

³⁴ Leutrum, N. G. "Das Verhältnis der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zur baltischen Region", Meissner, B.; Loeber, D. A.; in Hasselblatt, C. (eds.) *Die Außenpolitik der baltischen Staaten und die internationalen Beziehungen im Ostseeraum*. Hamburg: Bibliotheca Baltica, 1994, pp. 361.

³⁵ Föhrenbach (note 33); pp. 124-127.

³⁶ Geralavičius, V. "What is Germany for Lithuania?", *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review* No. 8, 2001, p. 108.

national interest to avoid instability in a region so close to its own neighbourhood. The German foreign minister Kinkel made clear in a speech in 1994, that an expansion of the Euro-Atlantic stability structures eastwards is of primary interest, that the door for new members had to be opened, also for the Baltic States.³⁷ Germany pronounced itself even as an advocate for Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.³⁸ And in the fields of economical support or the active lead to EU membership, advocacy was visible. Especially in the light of “soft” security Germany did a lot to stabilize the region. Also in the field of diplomacy the activity was quite high. From 1996 on the foreign ministers of Estonia, Germany, Latvia and Lithuania agreed to meet on an annual base.

Could the Baltic States put trust in German assistance for an EU enlargement, was it in the case of NATO membership different and more complex. Chancellor Kohl wanted to do nothing which could offend or even destabilize Russia, he was against any kind of NATO enlargement to the East of Germany. Here a plain “Russia first” politic can be seen, which was and still is a definite constant in the German relations with Lithuania. Also the government of chancellor Schröder, which came into power in 1998, followed more or less this “rule”. Hesitating, looking at the others, avoiding a policy of the first step. Especially in the case of NATO enlargement, the government was hiding behind paragraphs and the accounting management. Not to make decision and not to offend someone, somewhere.³⁹ All in all was the German government was not able or not willing to use its good relations to Moscow to uncock the complicated affairs between the Baltic Republics and Russia.

But still in the fields of economical support, assistance for police, border protection, democratisation or the active lead to EU membership, advocacy was evident. Especially in the field of “soft” security Germany did a lot to stabilize the region. Therefore the first Lithuanian Prime Minister, Kazimiera Prunskienė, described Germany as one of the most important partners for Lithuania, espe-

³⁷ Kinkel, K. “Rede von Bundesminister Dr. Kinkel in der Graf-Stauffenberg Kaserne in Sigmaringen am 29. April 1994”, in Auswärtiges Amt (ed.) *Aussenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Dokumente von 1949 bis 1994*, Köln: Verl. Wiss. und Politik: 1995, p. 1055.

³⁸ Ischinger, W. “The Future of the Baltic States: A German Perspective”, in Arnswald, S.; Wenig, M. (eds.) *German and American Policies towards the Baltic States: The Perspectives of EU and NATO enlargement*, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2000, pp. 99-100.

³⁹ Rühle, V. “Zweite NATO-Erweiterung. Die Führungsstärke der Europäer ist gefragt”, *Internationale Politik* June 2001, p. 21.

cially in the aspects of “foreign trade, cultural ties and direct bilateral support, including technological, research and academic, as well as humanitarian assistance - the first partner among the Western countries”.⁴⁰

Even if there were ups and downs it seems that with the Euro-Atlantic integration the major problems were solved. But one who assumed that the bilateral relations between Berlin and Vilnius would flourish is deluded. After the EU and NATO enlargement the relations can be characterized as distanced, with a growing gap. There is no sense of deeper natural understanding and cooperation left. The bilateral relations can at best be characterised as usual relations between normal EU and NATO partners. Denmark or Sweden nowadays have closer security relationships with Lithuania than Germany. This fact is also seen simply by counting how often each state is mentioned in the Lithuanian White Paper 2006. And those pure numbers are quite impressive. The USA is mentioned 15 times, followed by Ukraine with 13, Denmark and Russia with 7, Poland and Byelorussia with 5, Latvia and Moldova with 4, Sweden with 3, and Estonia, Germany and Georgia with 2 references.⁴¹ Surely, pure numbers give no qualitative assertion, but they are an indicator for political significance.

Whereby the low profile of the bilateral relations is not attributed to Lithuanian fear of a too strong German influence in the region, it is simply the German political unwillingness to engage more. It seems that Germany neglects Lithuania, as well as all the rest of the area to its East. Germany's continues also after EU and NATO enlargement with its “Russia first” policy. The states which lie between both nations are politically often ignored by Berlin politically. With the consequence that Germany is not able to deploy its potential in this region, and step by step it loses even the theoretical possibility to gain influence within this area, a fact which is still pushed by its own foreign policy.

Especially the very close German-Russian relations under chancellor Schröder must be seen as highly problematic for Lithuania, whereby the problem is not that Germany, like a lot of other countries, has friendly relations with Russia. Problematic for Vilnius is that some deals ignore the vital interests of Lithuania, and other EU members. This refers mainly to the construction of the North Eu-

⁴⁰ Prunskienė, K. “Lithuanian-German political relations”, *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review* No.8, 2001, p. 22.

⁴¹ Paulauskas, K. (ed.) *White paper of Lithuanian defence policy*, Vilnius: Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania, 2006.

ropean Gas Pipeline in the Baltic Sea. When the project is completed Lithuania will not only loose transit money, it will also depend directly on Russian gas. The deal raises enormous fears in Lithuania, which is not completely understood by western officials, and not reflected in the scientific literature. From this the question to ask is, if it is normal that a former German chancellor becomes a “de facto” employee of the Russian state? However, in the end this project will enable Russia to separate EU countries, and on that basis to manipulate, to put more pressure on Lithuania and Eastern Europe. Because Russia will have direct pipelines to Germany, to Western Europe and Moscow, it can deal differently with Western European and Eastern European countries simultaneously. The pipeline can be used as a potential tool for an increasingly authoritarian regime, for energy blockades, and for energy power politics.

The hope that the EU would give a kind of economic security to Lithuania was disappointed. But the pipeline deal can also be described as a sort of “eye-opener”, that Lithuania cannot rely, on the will of bigger European players, that for its vital interests to be represented. For that reason Vilnius must most probably intensify an active bloc building in the European Union.

If such an active bloc, in the East of Germany, is in the interest of Berlin’s foreign and security policy must be doubted. Still Germany has the potential to get more active in this European hotspot, to integrate also the interests of small countries like Lithuania. That the relations of chancellor Merkel towards Putin are not so close, like with Schröder, is maybe a sign for a policy change to combine different interests in the EU.

Conclusions

In 2004 Lithuania was finally able to overcome all difficulties and became member of NATO and EU. Since that time, it seemed that Germany “stopped” its bilateral affairs with Lithuania. The relations are distanced, no special attention is paid. Lithuania is treated like Ireland or Portugal, countries where ordinary diplomatic ties are enough. Does this mean: “No attention, no problem”?

This article examined, why no attention is indeed a problem. Simply stated, Lithuania and the East Baltic Sea Region are hotspots on the European continent. They are not, like Ireland or Portugal, steady places. The assumed fact

that NATO and EU enlargement would eliminate the insecurities in the space between Germany and Russia was a deception. There is a big distance between aspiration and reality in the *Zwischenraum*. In fact different zones of security remained. This situation is not indifferent for Germany's security, as vital interests are located in this area. The aversion of a new threat power or instability to its East should be the essential interests of German foreign and security policy. The disregard of the hotspot East Baltic Sea Region neglects a vital security zone in its own backyard. Old tensions are not eliminated and new forces rose, additionally the region got more heterogeneous and complex.

The tensed situation between Lithuania and Russia gets even more problematic with the foreign policy of some western states, especially Germany. To nearly all critical Russian actions of the last two decades - from Moldova over Chechnya to the Baltic States - the German governments stayed calm. Kohl and Yeltsin, Putin and Schröder showed a demonstrative friendship, and praised each other wherever possible. The German policy of the last 20 years is critical observed in Lithuania, no critic towards Russia is interpreted as tacit approval, which legitimises and amplifies Russia's power politics. Lithuania sees the preliminary culmination point of this policy in the gas pipeline project under the Baltic Sea. Estimation prevails that Germany is just interested in good business relations, and does not care much for European unity. With the consequence that it loses even the rest of possible influence in this area, a gap which others will fill. But the major problem is that conflicts in this region can not be settled with this kind of policy and the rifts become deeper. Germany amplifies Russia's great power ambitions via this policy and undermines own interests.

By keeping a low profile to its East, Germany avoided successfully any confrontation with Russia, without looking at the consequences for the region which lies in between. But growing tensions in the *Zwischenraum* will in the long run directly influence Germany's vital interests. By simply ignoring the problems between Lithuania and Russia, but also with other states in the region, they will not become less. It is more probable that the tension will continue, maybe even grow, or shift to different institutions like NATO and EU. A first indication of this development is the veto on new Partnership and Cooperation agreement between Russia and the EU. Another example is the blocked initiative to sign an EU-Russia energy charter. The idea to integrate Russia closer to the European security architecture also becomes more unlikely, mainly due to the domestic situation

in Russia itself, but also because of resistance from Central and East European Countries. A bit more balancing between the positions could alleviate the strains. An intensification of the bilateral German-Lithuanian relations would serve this purpose, as for the future Berlin should pay more attention to symbolical gestures and practical politics. In the political field Germany could send a military attaché to Vilnius, like Denmark and the USA.⁴² Additionally to the annual meetings between the German foreign minister and its three Baltic counterparts, high political und diplomatic contacts between both nations could be intensified.⁴³ Compared with states like Denmark, Sweden, or the USA, the German profile in the economical sector and in the field of security policy is still quite low. Organisations like the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Baltic Council, or the Northern Dimension program of the EU are useful forms of multilateral regional cooperation, but they were inapplicable to eliminate regional anxieties.

In the last fifteen years Germany espoused Russia with a double-digit billion euro sum. No doubt the money was needed to stabilize Russia in catchiest political times. But just a couple of years later Russia is debtless and has currency reserves of more than 350 billion dollars.⁴⁴ Germany on the opposite has debts of more than 1.400 billion euro.⁴⁵ These facts allow raising the question if Germany follows a long-term concept which refers to its interest and responsibility in the new established Europe? As Germany has no strategically means like France or England it must especially rethink its economic and security policy, globally and towards Lithuania and the East Baltic Sea Region in particular.

⁴² At the moment the German military attaché in Latvia is also responsible for Lithuania.

⁴³ In the last years Lithuania enjoyed no priority on diplomatic level, seen also in the fact that for the most German ambassadors it was their last job in Vilnius before they abdicated to enjoy their pension.

⁴⁴ Stocker, F. "Staatsgeld beherrscht die Finanzmärkte", *Die Welt*, June 27, 2007, p.9.

⁴⁵ Statistisches Bundesamt (note 21); p. 591.

A RUSSIAN-LED „OPEC FOR GAS“ ? DESIGN, IMPLICATIONS, COUNTERMEASURES

Vladimir Socor*

Introduction

In April 2007 the Gas-Exporting Countries's Forum (GECF) held its sixth annual meeting in Doha, Qatar; and will meet in Moscow in April 2008. The group had been dormant until very recently, informal and barely noticed. But the Doha meeting took the first step toward creating a cartel-type system at the inter-governmental level that could control a lion's share of gas supplies to Western countries. Russia is the main factor in this initiative, and the upcoming meeting in Moscow can be expected to move closer to forming an exporters' cartel.

Commentators tend to portray this initiative as a "Gas OPEC." Should it materialize, however, it would not work like OPEC; but it would be all the same a cartel-type structure. An expert group commissioned by NATO had anticipated this development. It reported in November 2006 that Russia would seek to form a gas cartel in the context of using energy resources to achieve political objectives.

The GECF includes 15 member countries, among which Russia, Iran, Algeria, and Qatar rank as largest gas exporters and/or estimated-reserve holders worldwide. From its first meeting in Tehran in 2001 until this year, the group had disclaimed any intentions to control prices and volumes of gas supplies to Western consumer countries. This attitude is now changing, however, as the group's majority including the three leading countries are considering ways and means to form a cartel. Qatar's ultimate position seems uncertain (it had to show even-handedness as host and chair of the Doha meeting).

Western gas-exporting countries – Canada, Norway, the Netherlands – oppose this initiative, as does the West-oriented Azerbaijan. The Central Asian

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countries, lacking alternative export outlets, could end up in a Russia-led subgroup attached to the cartel, adding to Russia's leverage over themselves and others, unless the West offers Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan direct access to European markets.

One obvious rationale of the proposed cartel has to do with the pricing of gas. However, Moscow almost certainly thinks farther ahead. It sees gas production almost stagnant in Russia, internal consumption rising, shortfalls looming, and Russian export commitments jeopardized in the years immediately ahead, even as Western demand rises. Moscow may well conclude that other suppliers will seek to open or broaden access to Western markets. If so, Russia probably wishes to control that process by means of cartel-type arrangements that Russia could still dominate as the leading exporter by far. Through the proposed cartel Moscow could obtain a significant say in the relationships between Western consumer countries and suppliers other than Russia.

1. Design: from Doha to Moscow

The Doha meeting decided behind closed doors to set up a High-Level Group that would develop a common methodology on the formation of gas export prices and would conduct research on consumer markets. The High-Level Group, consisting of deputy ministers or departmental directors, is to discuss relevant proposals from member governments and submit proposals for possible decisions at GECF's April 2008 meeting.

Russian President Vladimir Putin twice made trial-balloon statements in favor of a gas cartel during the run-up to the Doha event, also while visiting Qatar just before the Forum's meeting.

Russia stands at the forefront of this initiative by dint of its disproportionate strength, compared to other GECF countries, in terms of gas reserves, field technology, own export potential, control of key transport routes, presence on lucrative markets, and rapidly growing network of bilateral relations with the other states in the group. Russia offered to host the next meeting, serve as co-

ordinator of the High-Level Group, lead the market research studies on price formation, and finance a large share of the Group's activities (apparently by covering the shares of impoverished member countries of GECF).

Some of the more radical or impatient governments – such as Venezuela, Bolivia, and Iran – called during the Doha meeting for creating a cartel immediately and then proceeding with research on price formation and market studies as the next step. A more sophisticated Russia, however, supported the sequence of steps that was eventually adopted at the Forum: research first, cartel afterward.

Russia fielded a powerful delegation led by Industry and Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko, Gazprom's president Alexei Miller, and vice-president Alexander Medvedev at the Doha meeting. These officials – as well as Valery Yazev in Moscow, chairman of the Duma's Energy and Transport Committee and president of the Russian Gas Society – hinted then and since, sometimes broadly and sometimes obscurely, at Russia's expectations regarding a cartel-type structure of gas exporters. Those expectations do not presuppose the formation of a full-fledged cartel, but can be pursued through a cartel-type group, with cartel-type arrangements in selective areas.

Thus, Russian expectations seem to focus on:

- Agreeing on common methods of price formation;
- Allocating specific markets in consumer countries or regions to specific exporting countries, by understandings among the latter;
- Avoiding competition among gas-exporting countries within the group on given markets or new ones (an intention that would clash with the European Union's competition policies);
- Ensuring “market reliability” by Russian definition (that is, a long-term lock on sizeable market shares);
- Reaching strategic understandings within the group on export volumes and schedules of delivery in various directions;
- Agreeing in advance within the group on new pipeline projects (this would enable a cartel-type group to sustain its own arrangements about market allocation to specific exporters);

- “Joint” exploration and development of gas fields in member countries (this would imply Russian access to gas reserves of member countries and marketing the product under Russian control);
- Coordinating start-ups and production schedules at newly commissioned gas fields in member countries; and
- Plan jointly for development of gas liquefaction plants and export of LNG.

2. Implications

Between the Doha and Moscow meetings, according to Yazev, „Russia may take up the integrating role in the gas cartel’s creation.” GECEF’s meeting next year in Moscow might create a standing body, such as an executive agency or a secretariat. That would indicate progress toward forming a cartel.

The widely used term „OPEC for Gas“ is of course a misnomer. Oil for the most part is moving freely on the world’s oceans and is largely traded in a global market. Gas, however, moves largely through single-destination pipelines and is therefore traded mostly in sub-regional and national markets (as long as liquefaction remains limited). OPEC can push price levels up or down, in short-term fluctuations; whereas gas supply contracts are, as a rule, longer-term.

A gas cartel’s main role would be one that OPEC by definition could not play in the case of oil: namely, determining the destinations and routes of energy supplies from producer to consumer countries, practically allocating certain markets to certain suppliers on a long-term basis. A gas cartel can do that. The essence of a gas cartel would be division of market shares and apportionment of niches among its members. Such a cartel could, moreover, introduce quantitative ceilings to exports in specific directions, so as to limit the drawdown on member countries’ reserves and maximize the price.

Unlike OPEC, such a cartel could involve a set of regional arrangements that allocate certain markets to certain suppliers, fix prices in those specific markets, coordinate delivery volumes, and even plan exclusive LNG development projects.

Russia would be strongly placed to set cartel rules for allocating gas markets by capitalizing on Russia's far superior export potential, its entrenched dominance in some European countries, and its control of some major transit systems and routes to Europe. Given that most gas exports move through single-destination pipelines to sub-regional or national markets (as long as liquefaction remains limited), any cartel-type group could consist of only two or three gas-exporting countries operating effectively in a specific market. For example, Russia's Gazprom could consider "sharing" certain European markets with Algeria's Sonatrach. Conversely – but also as part of cartel-type arrangements – Gazprom and another exporter in this group can agree to stay out of each other's market niches in certain European countries. As another example of a regional cartel in formation, the South American Gas Organization was founded by Argentina, Bolivia, and Venezuela, member countries of GECEF. Ultimately, an overall cartel that would evolve out of GECEF could function as an umbrella organization for regional and subregional cartel-type groupings or arrangements.

If created, such a cartel would be dominated by Russia, which is the world's largest reserve holder, producer, exporter, and transiter of gas. Russia could shape a gas cartel's behavior to an extent similar to Saudi Arabia's dominant role in OPEC, although with different methods, some of which are outlined above.

During 2006 and 2007, Gazprom and other Russian companies have entered into gas development projects in Algeria, Libya, Bolivia, and Venezuela (the latter is an up-and-coming exporter of gas). Russia seeks entry into gas projects in Egypt, other Arab countries, and Trinidad & Tobago (a significant exporter of liquefied gas). Thus Gazprom's agreements include exploration, field development, and marketing. These activities tend to undermine the position of European and North American gas-importing countries, in effect raiding the West's traditional and/or prospective sources of supply.

3. Central Asia is not included in the proposed cartel

Putin had first launched the idea of a Russian-led “alliance of gas-exporting countries” in 2002, focusing mainly on Turkmenistan but also on Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Putin’s proposal triggered a first round of international debate on a mislabeled “OPEC for Gas.” There was no follow-up, however, and neither Russia nor any combination of gas-exporting countries felt strong enough to challenge the West at that time.

In essence, Putin’s proposal meant that Russia would buy those countries’ gas cheaply and re-sell much of it in Europe expensively. Or, as a twin option, it would use low-priced Central Asian gas in Russia, so as to release equivalent volumes of Russian gas for high-priced export to Europe. This exploitative system is increasingly taking shape on a bilateral basis, under Gazprom’s control outside any cartel. In effect, it amalgamates Central Asian countries’ gas with that of Russia, into a single pool under Russia’s physical and commercial control. This is a far greater measure of control than Moscow could ever exercise over the gas exports of any countries in the proposed cartel.

Unsurprisingly, therefore, Russia does not mention Central Asian countries as possible members of the gas cartel. There was no public record of participation by Central Asian countries in GECF or the Doha meeting. Moscow would not willingly allow Central Asian countries into the exporters’ cartel. Russia would rather maximize its own strength within the proposed cartel by handling itself the gas exports from Central Asia. Moreover, Russia wants to buy Central Asian gas at lower prices than a cartel’s prices. Central Asian gas volumes not used within Russia would reach Europe through Gazprom’s pipelines as “Russian” gas.

Iran and Russia seem to be the pace setters in this initiative in the run-up to the Gas-Exporting Countries’ Forum (GECF) meeting, scheduled for April 9 in Doha. On January 29 2007 in Tehran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei publicly proposed the formation of a gas-export cartel to the visiting Igor Ivanov, Secretary of Russia’s Security Council. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has also signaled support for this idea. Iran pursues the specific interest of developing its vast gas fields, which are ranked potentially among the richest worldwide, but are undeveloped because of international and U.S. sanctions.

Russia regards Iran as a potential competitor, whose eventual gas exports should be directed toward Asia, consigning the European markets to Gazprom and its lesser partners such as Algeria's Sonatrach.

4. Possible countermeasures

The European Union and the United States have a number of good options to forestall the emergence of a Russian-led gas cartel. The question is whether Brussels and Washington are willing to act on these options, and act preventively.

First, moving decisively to open direct access to Central Asian gas on competitive terms. Turkmenistan, with an export potential far exceeding the current 60 or so billion cubic meters annually, is a key to diversifying Europe's gas supplies. Kazakhstan's inputs would be smaller but not insignificant. Washington and Brussels have lost five years through inactivity on the trans-Caspian pipeline project. Its reactivation must not be confined to the tapping of offshore fields only. Turkmenistan's binding supply commitments to Russia from onshore fields run out in 2009.

Second, preparing now for the day when development of Iranian gas fields becomes politically possible; and trying politically to bring that day closer. Keeping Iranian gas locked in the ground can not be a sustainable policy in the context of rising demand and prices, limited availability, insufficient competition, and excessive Russian leverage. Gazprom may well end up managing and controlling the entry of Iranian gas to export markets through the proposed cartel. Azerbaijan can help kick-start the first phase of the Nabucco project or the Turkey-Greece-Italy project. But the second-phase volumes would have to be within sight already during the early first phase.

Third, boosting liquefied natural gas development outside Gazprom's influence. LNG development is rightly seen as one of the means to counter Gazprom's dominance. However, Gazprom seems set to acquire LNG technology from Algeria's Sonatrach and from several Western companies – in some cases as quid-pro-quo for allowing those Western companies "access" to Russian gas fields. At the moment, Gazprom is planning a series of gas liquefaction

plants, including one near St. Petersburg, complete with a fleet of tanker ships line to carry the LNG via the Baltic Sea.

The GECF's April 2008 meeting in Moscow might not announce the formation of a gas cartel, but may well lay the foundation for one. The EU and the United States are presumably watching closely.

EUROPEAN STUDIES IN LITHUANIA: SHORT-LASTING FASHION OR PROMISE UNFULFILLED?

Ramūnas Vilpišauskas*

Abstract

The article introduces the main scientific research conducted in Lithuania after restoration of its Independence until present in the area of European integration and Lithuania's integration into the European Union, provides the assessment of their status quo and forecasts the issues of European studies that are most likely to attract scholars' attention in the future. The principal goal of this study is to assess from the point of view of the academic community member the status of the European political and economic studies, conducted research works and their developments while concurrently raising several problem issues. Firstly – what were the reasons which predetermined prevailing research trends and to what extent the themes and methods of analysis which dominate in them correspond to the general tendencies of the European studies in the Western academia. Secondly, to assess changes that took place in the European studies during this period of about seventeen years which while being parallel to the development of political science (and other social sciences) in Lithuania also was concurrent with radical changes in relationships between Lithuania and the EU from the recognition of the Independent State of Lithuania and establishment of official relationship with the EU until Lithuania's accession to the EU and participation in its activities. This is inevitably related with the issue of relationship between scientific research and practical policy, and also academic and practical activities of analysts themselves, which are still closely interrelated. Thirdly, in addition to evaluating the academic trends and results, to assess the work which still has to be done thus providing the basis for defining future research guidelines while maintaining the focus on pending material issues of the European policy agenda of Lithuania and practical needs for analytical evaluations. This analysis is based on assumption that such academic self-reflection is useful both to researchers of European studies (scientists, students) and institutions planning and commissioning such studies

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The Article is reprinted from the Lithuanian publication "Politologija", 2007/4 (48). The Article prepared on order of the Office of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.

The author thanks his colleagues from VU IIRPS Algimantas Jankauskas, Inga Vinogradnaitė and Indrė Jovaišytė for assistance in collecting information about the European studies in Lithuania.

Introduction

The fiftieth anniversary of activities of the European Union celebrated this year is a good occasion to assess the European studies in Lithuania. Self-reflection is useful to all professions, all the more if it is focused on the reflection of the Lithuanian and European policy (whether understood as *polity*, *policy* or *politics*). The period of development of European studies in Lithuania is much shorter than in the USA or old Member States of the EU, and the number of scientific research carried out in Lithuania is considerably smaller, however, the this overview of the research provides sufficient material for summarising and assessing possible trends of future European studies.

This article is aimed at achieving several goals. First – providing an overview of scientific publications in the main periodicals, published monographs and defended doctor's dissertations to distinguish the dominant research trends proposing the reasons behind them and to compare them with the European studies in the Western academia. In other words, a certain map is developed which might be useful to those who are interested in already written papers and those who are researching current European issues (of the European Union and its Member States). This would be the first assessment of the European studies in Lithuania of such type.

Second, to evaluate the trends of the European studies during this almost seventeen-year period which while being parallel to the development of political science (and other social sciences) in Lithuania also was concurrent with radical changes in relationship between Lithuania and EU from the recognition of the Independent State of Lithuania and establishment of official diplomatic relationship with the EU until Lithuania's accession to the EU and participation in its activities. This is inevitably related with the issue of relationships between scientific research and practical policy, and also academic and practical activities of analysts themselves, which are still closely interrelated.

Third, to assess the work completed and the research which is likely to dominate or the European agenda issues that are likely to deserve academic attention. This might provide the basis for defining future research guidelines while maintaining the focus on pending material issues of the European policy agenda of

Lithuania and practical needs for analytical evaluations. Overall, this analysis is based on the assumption that such academic self-reflection is useful both to researchers of European studies (scientists, students) and institutions planning and commissioning such research.

This analysis is based on the review of the main scientific periodical publications (first of all *Politologija* (Political science) as well as *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, *Viešoji politika ir administravimas* (Public Policy and Administration), *Pinigų studijos* (Monetary Studies) and monographs published in Lithuania. The article focuses on political science (and to some extent, economics and law) studies of European integration. It should be noted that this analysis does not aim at the review of all papers published in Lithuania on the subject of European integration, or all works on relationships between Lithuania and EU published in academic publications in the West. The aim is to assess general tendencies rather than statistical precision. Also, this review is first of all based on assessment of the works of VU IIRPS scientists. However, as they represent the authors of the absolute majority of European studies published in Lithuania, this should present quite accurately the trends and current state of European studies in Lithuania.

Finally, it should be noted that for the purposes of this analysis, the European studies are understood as academic research which treats EU as both an independent and dependent variable, i.e. the analysis covers either EU's impact on Lithuania and other countries, their national policy and institutions, or the impact of the countries themselves on decisions taken by the EU (policy content or institutional reform). The emphasis is on the EU and its relations with Member States, applicant countries and neighbours, rather than on individual States in Europe. Moreover, the analysis does not cover the European study programmes taught in universities, or their content, but is limited to scientific research published in academic publications.

Arguments

Further provided are the main arguments of the article which are developed below by analysing scientific works of the European studies in Lithuania.

First, European studies in Lithuania are directly linked with two factors – development of practical (political, legal and economic) relations between Lithuania and EU as well as emerging (reviving) social sciences and their development. The former predetermined the object and theme of studies, and the latter – research methods and quality of discourse.

Second, focus of European studies in Lithuania on current issues of practical policy reflects the tendencies of European studies in the Western academia – their numbers depend upon visibility of EU and themes – upon decisions taken by EU and issues dominating its agenda.

Third, community of European integration analysts dealing only with academic research has not yet emerged in Lithuania. The absolute majority of scientists engaged in studies of European integration reconcile scientific research with activities in governmental institutions or consulting work.

The article excludes normative assessments as to the advantages and disadvantages of combining such scientific and consultation activity or work in governmental institutions. Nevertheless, it can be stated that this combination also contributes to the dominance of practical policy issues dominating in the European studies.

1. EU studies in Lithuania

1.1. Publications in periodicals

As a rule, development of studies in scientific research first of all takes place during scientific conferences, followed by their publication in scientific journals and finally those studies that attract attention of publishing houses are issued in the form of monographs or collective volumes. As similar tendencies are also observable in Lithuania, analysis of the main periodical scientific publications and published books, including conference material, provides quite a good reflection of the objects researched by scientists interested in the European studies. It should be noted, that before starting to analyse academic publications it's

worth recalling that the almanac *Europe* of the Lithuanian Liberation Movement *Sąjūdis* edited by Romualdas Ozolas¹ was issued in Lithuania in 1989. This almanac comprised articles of journalistic nature in which philosophical, political, cultural articles were published from the interview on the outline of Europe with Jurgen Habermas to reprinted texts of Imanuel Kant and James Joyce. Unfortunately, this almanac which started covering issues of Lithuania's place in Europe, however, very carefully yet, without raising the question about Lithuania's membership in the European Union, did not become a periodical publication. This issue emerged on the political agenda of Lithuania only after several years of restoration of Lithuania's independence.

Politologija ("Political science" in English) is probably the main academic journal in which the greatest majority of works of the Lithuanian scientists devoted to the European studies are published. Since 1989, when its publishing was started (at first it was published under the title of *Politika* (Policy) and subsequently was renamed to *Politologija* (Political Science); before publication of the latest issue of 2007, which, by the way, was the first publication devoted to the EU related themes, 47 issues of *Politologija* have been published. About 25 articles on the subject of European studies were published in these issues. Analysis of publications by their themes reveals a sufficiently distinct tendency – themes of studies reflect the issues prevailing within the political agenda of Lithuania and EU. To illustrate this several stages of the European Union studies can be distinguished.

From the establishment of diplomatic relations between the EU and Lithuania until the start of accession negotiations (in 2000). Less than ten articles on the subject of European studies were published during this period predominated by analysis of treaties concluded by the EU and Lithuania, in particular association policy, and works on general themes of European integration (e.g., European security). The greatest attention is paid to the prospects of Lithuania's integration into the EU, assessment of the processes of European integration and of participation of the Central and Eastern European countries in these processes².

¹R. Ozolas (compiler), *Europa. 1988 Lietuvos Persitvarkymo Sąjūdžio Almanachas* (Europe. 1988 Almanac of the Lithuanian Liberation Movement *Sąjūdis*). Vilnius: Mintis, 1989.

²See, for example, R. Vilpišauskas, "Europos Bendrijų politika Vidurio ir Rytų Europos šalių atžvilgiu: asociacijos politikos formavimas ir raida" (Policy of European Communities towards countries of the Central and Eastern Europe: association policy formation and development) *Politologija*, 1996, No. 2 (8), p. 13-30; R. Vilpišauskas, "Europos Bendrijų politika Vidurio ir Rytų Europos šalių atžvilgiu: pasirošimo narystei sampratos formavimas" (Policy of European Communities towards countries of the Central and

From the start of EU and Lithuania's membership negotiations until joining the EU (2000–2004). During this period the number of works dealing with EU accession and the impact of EU membership considerably increased. These works elaborated on legal matters of EU membership, impact of membership on agricultural, regional and cohesion policy as well as foreign policy of Lithuania (e.g., relationship with Kaliningrad Region, which became one of the issues specific to Lithuania's EU membership negotiations). In addition to dealing with separate areas of domestic and foreign policy of Lithuania, the above-mentioned works on the basis of europeanization literature which was becoming increasingly popular in Western studies analysed Lithuania's europeanization, its sources, instruments and implications. A couple of works were also devoted to the analysis of the referendum on the EU membership which completed the process of EU accession³.

From the EU accession until present (2004–until present). During several years after Lithuania's accession to the EU the research on the EU impact continue to dominate. To a certain extent they are devoted to the EU and Lithuania's foreign policy matters, for example, security and defence policy. In addition, the above-mentioned works analyse the countries (e.g., the Ukraine), participating in the EU Eastern Neighbourhood Policy, which since Lithuania's accession to the EU practically became the priority European policy area of the most inten-

Eastern Europe: formation of pre-accession concept) *Politologija*, 1997, No. 1 (9), p. 3-15; K. Maniokas, "Lietuvos ir Europos Sąjungos asociacija" (Association of Lithuania and European Union), *Politologija*, 1997, No. 1(9), p. 32-55; A. Gričius, Europos Sąjungos plėtimasis ir Baltijos šalių saugumas (European Union enlargement and security of the Baltic States), *Politologija*, 1997, No. 2(10), p. 82-97.

³ See, for example, Ž. Šatūnienė, "Lietuvos narystė bendrojoje žemės ūkio politikoje (BŽŪP): politinės ekonomijos" (Lithuania's membership in the common agricultural policy (CAP): aspect of political economy), *Politologija*, 2001, No. 1(21), p. 1-33; I. Stanytė-Toločkienė, "Kaliningrado sritis ES plėtros požiūriu" (Kaliningrad Region within the EU enlargement), *Politologija*, 2001, No. 2(22), p. 26-68; G. Vitkus, "Referendumai dėl narystės Europos Sąjungos: patirtis, problemos ir pamokos Lietuvai" (Referendums on Lithuania's membership in the European Union: experience, problems and lessons), *Politologija*, 2002, No. 1(25), p. 3-21; K. Maniokas, "Europeizacijos sąvoka ir jos vieta Europos integracijos teorijose" (Concept of Europeisation and its role in theories of the European integration), *Politologija*, 2002, No. 2(28), p. 1-26; H. Brožaitis, V. Nakrošis, "Europos Sąjungos regioninės politikos padarinių Lietuvos viešajai administracijai" (Effects of the European Union regional policy on public administration of Lithuania), *Politologija*, 2003, No. 2(30), p. 3-40; L. Mažylis, "Lietuvos referendumas dėl narystės Europos Sąjungoje" (Referendum of Lithuania on its membership in the EU), *Politologija*, 2004, No. 2(34), p. 1-37.

sive diplomatic activities of Lithuania⁴. Concurrently a new tendency of studies is observed – analysis of political integration processes taking place in the EU, for example, negotiations on 2007-2013 financial perspective in which Lithuania also participates, as well as application of new European Union Member States policy coordination instruments, such as, for example, open coordination method, in Lithuania⁵. Consequently, analysis covers not only EU impact on Lithuania and its domestic and foreign policy, but also participation of Lithuania as a Member State of the EU in the common decision-making process, representation of national interests and role of non-governmental actors.

Similar themes are also elaborated in the latest issue of 2007 of Political Science journal devoted to the fiftieth anniversary of the EU. The issue deals with matters of the EU neighbourhood policy and support to acceding EU Member States through exchanges of good practices and other instruments of europeization, also of negotiations on financial perspective, EU CAP reform and its implications for Lithuania, as well as with Lithuania's European domestic policy matters – implementation of the EU law, attitudes of Lithuanian population towards EU. These trends of studies reflect both topical matters of the European agenda of Lithuania as well as theories of international relations and comparative policies which currently are predominating in the literature.

⁴ See, for example, V. Sirutavičius, R. Lopata, "Ukraina prieš oranžinę revoliuciją ir po jos: demokrati-zacijos ir euroatlantinės integracijos perspektyvos" (Ukraine before and after The "Orange Revolution: perspectives of democratisation and Euroatlantic integration), *Politologija*, 2005, No. 4(40), p. 3-35; G. Miniotaitė, „Europos nornmatyvinė galia“ ir Lietuvos užsienio politika" (Normative Power Europe" and Lithuania's foreign policy), *Politologija*, 2006, No. 3(43), p. 3-19; A. Molis, "Europos saugumo ir gynybos politikos ateities scenarijai bei mažųjų valstybių interesai" (European security and defence policy: future scenarios and interests of the small states), *Politologija*, 2006, No. 4(44), p. 54-83.

⁵ A. Slabokaitė, "Nacionalinių interesų sankirta derybose dėl Europos Sąjungos finansinės perspektyvos 2007-2013 metais" (Conflicts of national interests in the negotiations on 2007-2013 EU financial perspective), *Politologija*, 2006, No. 4(44), p. 84-104; J. Vilčinskas, D. Vijeikis, "Lietuvos grupių interesai Briuselyje: kelionėje be interesų grupių" (Interests of Lithuanian groups in Brussels: in the journey without groups of interest), *Politologija*, 2007, No. 1(45), p. 95-143; V. Nakrošis, R. Vilpišauskas, "Kodėl neveiksmingas Europos Sąjungos atvirasis koordinavimo metodas: silpnas iš prigimties ar dėl netinkamo taikymo Lietuvoje" (What are the reasons of ineffectiveness of the EU open coordination method: weakness by nature or inadequate application in Lithuania), *Politologija*, 2007, No. 3(47), p. 44-70; V. Nakrošis, E. Barcevičius, "Europos Sąjungos Lisabonos strategijos įgyvendinimas Lietuvoje: tarp Vilniaus ir Briuselio" (Implementation of the EU Lisbon strategy in Lithuania: between Vilnius and Brussels), *Politologija*, 2007, No. 3(47), p. 71-111.

Similar tendencies of the European studies are also observable in other scientific publications. For example, about 13 works on the subject of EU were published in the *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review* issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania and VU IIRPS since 1998. Part of them comprised English versions of articles published in *Politologija* or other Lithuanian publications; however, certain issues of this journal were devoted to separate themes of the European Integration and foreign policy of Lithuania, for example, the concept of enlarged Europe (2002, Issue 2) or transatlantic relationship and analysis of EU enlargement (and other factors) implications for them (2003, Issue 1-2). Such special thematic issues combining academic research and statements of Lithuanian and foreign politicians are probably one of the main features of this journal.

Another journal characterised by thematic integrity is *Pinigių studijos* (Monetary studies) issued since 1996 by the Bank of Lithuania. Many articles about adaptation of Lithuania's financial system to the EU regulatory norms, preparations for euro introduction and general analysis of economic implications of Lithuania's membership in the EU were printed in this publication under the heading of integration⁶. Certain articles of the magazine *Ekonomika* (Economics) issued by VU are also devoted to the matters of Lithuania's membership in the EU, but they are of lesser thematic integrity and are predominated by analysis of competitiveness, impact of EU redistributive and regulatory policy instruments on Lithuania.

It should be noted that comparative policy approaches have been applied in the EU studies for quite a long period already, but the publication *Viešoji politika ir administravimas* (Public policy and administration) issued since 2002 by Mykolas Romeris University and Kaunas Technology University published only a few articles on the EU related themes in more than twenty issues of the

⁶ For example, G. Nausėda, "Nacionalinės valiutos atsisakymas: privalumai ir trūkumai" (Giving up the national currency: advantages and disadvantages), *Pinigių studijos*, 1999, No. 2, p. 17-24; R. Vilpišauskas, "Lietuvos integracija į Europos Sąjungą: poveikis ekonominei politikai ir reguliavimui" (Lithuania's integration with the EU: impact on the economic policy and regulation), *Pinigių studijos*, 1999, No. 4, p. 29-45; S. Kropas, "Centrinės bankininkystės konvergencija stojant į Europos Sąjungą" (Convergence of central banking upon accession to the EU), *Pinigių studijos*, 2001, No. 2, p. 5-14.

journal in which the issues of domestic public policy and administration of Lithuania or other European states predominate.

Overall, the approaches of international relations prevailed in the European studies in Lithuania from the very outset of such studies, however, as the European research was developed in Lithuania and after the start of negotiations on the EU membership, which directly impacted on particular public policy areas and institutions, the use of approaches of comparative politics, for example, europeanization approach, analysis of activities of interest groups and regulatory policy also started.

1.2. Monographs and other scientific works

The list of 94 publications is displayed by entering the words “European Union” into the Vilnius University database of publications. In addition to monographs this list comprises separate articles printed in academic journals, conference reports and teaching material. Meanwhile, the number of monographs of scientific value or collective European studies published in Lithuania is quite small – about 10-15 works.

Several monographs are doctor’s dissertations which earlier were published in a shortened form in academic journals. It should be noted that from the very start of VU IIRPS activities until present five doctor’s dissertations on the theme of the European studies were defended (also including the dissertation of Gediminas Vitkus on regional integration theories). These dissertations make up 20 per cent of all dissertations defended at IIRPS. Three out of five dissertations devoted to the subject of EU studies treat EU as an independent variable – analyse its influence on Lithuania’s foreign and domestic policy and institutions⁷. Two of them later were published in the form of monographs.

⁷Dissertation of Ramūnas Vilpišauskas “Regional integration: cooperation of the Baltic states in the context of EU integration” (defended in 2000), Dissertation of Klaudijus Maniokas “Accession to the EU of the Central and Eastern European countries: EU enlargement and europeisation” (defended in 2002) and dissertation of Vitalis Nakrošius “Adaptation of Lithuania to the European Union cohesion policy: institutional and public policy change” (defended in 2004). In addition, the first dissertation defended at the institute by Gediminas Vitkus was devoted to integration theories (“Development of international integration theories”, defended in 1993), and dissertation defended in 2007 by Margarita Šešelgytė “Problem of common defence identity of the European Union”.

The impact of changes in political agenda and, in particular, relationship between Lithuania and EU on the themes under consideration can also be seen from the analysis of scientific studies published in Lithuania. It should be noted that as the number of prepared monographs is considerably smaller than articles published in periodical publications their classification into separate periods is not useful in analytic terms. The general tendencies, however, are similar. Until negotiations on the EU membership, the works concerning Lithuania's integration in the EU analysing the association with EU and accession strategy issues predominated. The publication *Lithuania's integration into the European Union: summary of the study on the status, perspectives and impact* issued in 1997, which was prepared by the group of authors on the initiative of the European Integration Studies Centre (EISC), might be considered the main scientific publication of that time.⁸ This book of obvious interdisciplinary nature was important not only because it covered the analysis of Lithuania's association with the EU and prospects of its EU membership, but because of the attempts to assess membership implications in particular areas of public policy already at that time. Also, until opening of Lithuania's negotiations with the EU, several collective works were published on the initiative of EISC, which analyse political, economic and legal issues of Lithuania's integration into the EU⁹.

⁸ K. Maniokas, G. Vitkus (compilers) *Lietuvos integracija į Europos Sąjungą: būklės, perspektyvų ir pasekmių studija* (Lithuania's integration into the European Union: summary of the study on the status, perspectives and impact). Vilnius: Europos integracijos studijų centras, 1997.

⁹ *Lietuvos integracijos į Europos Sąjungą strategija: tarptautinės konferencijos medžiaga*, (Strategy of Lithuania's integration into the EU: material of the international conference), Vilnius, 1995, 15-16 December / [chief editors: K. Maniokas, G. Vitkus; material prepared by: European Integration Studies Centre]. Kaunas: Naujasis lankas, 1997. *Lietuvos integracija į Europos Sąjungą: pasiekimai ir problemas* (Lithuania's integration into the EU: achievements and problems) [R. Vilpišauskas, V. Nakrošis, V. Miškinis ... et al.]; European Integration Studies Centre. Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2000; *Stojimas į Europos Sąjungą ir Konstitucija: seminario medžiaga, 1999 06 29-30: 420-osios Vilniaus universiteto metinėms*, Europos teisės departamentas prie LR Vyriausybės, Europos komitetas prie LR Vyriausybės, Vilniaus universiteto Teisės fakultetas, Europos Sąjungos studijų asociacija – Lietuva.; (Accession to the EU and Constitution: workshop material, 29-30 June 1999: for the 420th anniversary of Vilnius University, European Law Department under the Government of the RoL, European Committee under the Government of the RoL, Law Faculty of Vilnius University, European Union Studies Association, Lithuania) Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2000; *Europos Sąjungą: Institucinė sąranga ir politikos aktualijos*, Europos integracijos studijų centras ("European Union: institutional structure and current policy issues", European Integration Studies Centre); [project manager A. Gričius; project executors: D. Žeruolis ... et al.], Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2000 .

Later, from the beginning of the EU membership negotiations, the impact of EU on Lithuania in separate policy areas and Europeanization themes were analysed. The collective volume *Lithuania's Road to the European Union. European association and Lithuania's accession negotiations* prepared by a group of scientists and analysts who participated in the negotiations, which however was published already after completion of the negotiations and Lithuania's accession to the EU, and which later was translated into the English language, might be considered the main publication¹⁰. Until now it represents probably the most detailed analysis of the EU negotiations with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe published in English language, which is worth attention of representatives of other countries seeking EU accession and is also of scientific value for those who are interested in the international negotiations and process of EU enlargement.

Other scientific papers published during the recent years dealt with the institutional and political changes taking place in the EU, for example, the process of drafting the Constitution for Europe, and its contents¹¹, EU neighbourhood policy¹², EU impact on the public policy process in Lithuania or particular stages of policy circle (e.g., implementation)¹³. Although this analy-

¹⁰ K. Maniokas, R. Vilpišauskas, D. Žėruolis (editors), *Lietuvos kelias į Europos Sąjungą. Europos susivienijimas ir Lietuvos derybos dėl narystės Europos Sąjungoje* (Path of Lithuania to the European Union. European association and negotiations of Lithuania on EU membership), Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2004.

¹¹ *Konventas, Konstitucija ir Europos Sąjungos ateitis, 2002-2003*, Europos integracijos studijų centras ("Convent, Constitution and the future of the EU. 2002-2003", European Integration Studies Centre), [editorial board R. Kalonaitis (chief editor) ... [et al.]. Vilnius: UAB Firidas, 2004. *European Union and Ukraine: Lithuanian perspective*, J. Daniliauskas, R. Lopata, V. Sirutavičius, Ž. Šatūnienė, R. Vilpišauskas; [translated from the Lithuanian to the English language by A. Matulytė]; Ukrainos institutas, Vilniaus universiteto Tarptautinių santykių ir politikos mokslų institutas (Ukraine Institute, Vilnius University Institute of International relations and Political Science), Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2003; *European Union and its new neighbourhood: volume of papers*, Mykolas Romeris University; [editorial staff: H. Kobeckaitė ... [et al.]. – Vilnius: Publishing House of Mykolas Romeris University, 2005.

¹² *European Union and Ukraine: Lithuanian perspective* / J. Daniliauskas, R. Lopata, V. Sirutavičius, Ž. Šatūnienė, R. Vilpišauskas; [translated from the Lithuanian to the English language by A. Matulytė]; Ukraine Institute, Vilnius University Institute of International relations and Political Sciences, Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2003; *European Union and its new neighbourhood: volume of papers* / Mykolas Romeris University; [editorial staff: H. Kobeckaitė ... [et al.]. – Vilnius: Publishing House of Mykolas Romeris University, 2005.

¹³ R. Vilpišauskas, V. Nakrošis, *Politikos įgyvendinimas Lietuvoje ir Europos Sąjungos įtaka* (Implementation of Policy in Lithuania and impact of the European Union), Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2003; R. Vilpišauskas, V. Nakrošis, *Ko verta politika? : viešosios politikos vertinimas Lietuvoje ir Europos Sąjungoje* (Value of policy: assessment of public policy in Lithuania and European Union [teaching aid]), Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2005.

sis does not cover teaching materials (textbooks), but the Encyclopaedic Directory *European Union*, the third edition of which is under preparation now, is worth mentioning here¹⁴.

Finally, the *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review* published by the Military Academy of Lithuania and VU IIRPS since 2003 and the *Lithuanian Political Science Yearbook* issued by VU IIRPS since 2000 (both can be read in English) where a great number of articles on the subject of EU were published should be mentioned here¹⁵. However, except a few cases, these articles usually were translations of works written and published in the Lithuanian language or papers drafted during scientific internship abroad.

By the way, the authors of many above-mentioned publications devoted to the European studies are scientists of VU IIRPS. VU IIRPS separately or jointly with other institutions (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Military Academy) form the institutional environment in which most analysts of European studies work in Lithuania. The European Integration Studies Centre established more than ten years ago by VU IIRPS and MoFA organised numerous scientific discussions before accession of Lithuania to the EU and issued a number of joint studies mentioned above. Other publishing activities of EISC, which should be mentioned here, is for example, publication of documents highlight-

¹⁴ G. Vitkus (compiler) *Europos Sąjunga. Enciklopedinis žinyras* (European Union. Encyclopaedic Manual), Vilnius: Eugrimas, 1999.

¹⁵ For example, A. Gricius, K. Paulauskas, "Europos Sąjungos bendroji užsienio ir saugumo politika ir Lietuva" (Common foreign and security policy of the European Union and Lithuania), *Lietuvos metinė strateginė apžvalga 2003*, Vilnius: Lietuvos karo akademija, 2004, p. 75-102; R. Vilpišauskas, "Glaudesnio bendradarbiavimo perspektyvos ir pasekmės Lietuvai" (Perspectives and consequences of closer cooperation in EU for Lithuania), *Lietuvos metinė strateginė apžvalga 2003*. – Vilnius: Lietuvos karo akademija. – 2004. – P. 131-148; V. Nakrošis, "Lithuania's Administrative and Political Adaptation to the European Union", *Lithuanian Political Science Yearbook 1999*. – Vilnius: Institute of International Relations and Political Science, 2000, p. 117-152; K. Maniokas, "Methodology of the EU Enlargement: A Critical Appraisal", *Lithuanian Political Science Yearbook 1999*, Vilnius: Institute of International Relations and Political Science, 2000, p. 182-210; R. Vilpišauskas, "Regional Integration in Europe: Analyzing Intra-Baltic Economic Cooperation in the Context of European Integration", *Lithuanian Political Science Yearbook 1999*, Vilnius: Institute of International Relations and Political Science, 2000, p. 211-265; R. Vilpišauskas, "The Political Economy of Transatlantic Relations: The Implications of EU Enlargement", *Lithuanian Political Science Yearbook 2003*, Vilnius: Institute of International Relations and Political Science, 2004, p. 141-160; K. Maniokas, "Lithuania's European Policy and its Co-ordination", *Lithuanian Political Science Yearbook 2003*, Vilnius: Institute of International Relations and Political Science, 2004, p. 161-187.

ing the development of relationship between Lithuania and EU and its main dates¹⁶. However, after the start of negotiations of Lithuania with the EU and in particular after accession into the EU, academic and publishing activities of EISC were less visible. From Lithuania's accession to the EU they were partly compensated by activities of the Centre for Strategic Studies (CSS) attracting students graduating from IIRPS, irrespective of its specifics, which is limited publication of performed studies and prepared analyses. Moreover, the European studies represent only one of the foreign policy areas of Lithuania analysed by the Centre, whereas its routine analyses are more focused on the neighbouring countries of the EU.

Activities of such consulting institutes as the Public Policy and Management Institute (PPMI), or European Social, Legal and Economic Projects (ESLEP) established by analysts who participated in Lithuania's negotiations with the EU work mostly in the area of studies commissioned by public authorities, as well as of the Lithuanian Free Market Institute (LFMI), especially before Lithuania's membership in the EU, when LFMI was actively involved in the network of analysts of the Bertelsmann Foundation aimed at analysing the enlargement of the EU are also worth mentioning here. It should be noted that these consulting bodies were either established by analysts who cooperate with, or are employed by, VU IIRPS, and who work for such bodies. The main activities related with the EU studies in combining academic work with consulting assignments focused on the improvement of practical policy are carried out within this institutional network. Kaunas University of Technology has set up the Institute of Europe and other institutions also have branches that engage in the European studies, but their academic activities are either narrowly specialised or more oriented towards organising educational material.

To summarise the above, the analysis of EU themes in academic publications in Lithuania reveals clear direct connection between political agenda of Lithuania and EU and the subjects of academic studies. The present article will further highlight that this is also consistent with the tendencies of scientific works

¹⁶ Europos integracijos studijų centras, "Lietuvos ir Europos Sąjungos santykių dešimtmetis. Faktai ir dokumentai. 1990-1999" (European Integration Studies Centre, The decade of relationships of Lithuania and European Union. Facts and Documents. 1990-1999), Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2001.

of scientists from North America and old Member States of the EU. Also, in line with the trends in Western academic community, analytic models of both international relations and comparative politics as well as of the particular sub-disciplines, such as political economy, political analysis are used for the purpose of studies conducted in Lithuania.

However, one feature of the European studies is specific to Lithuania- they are mostly one-case studies, i.e. practically limited only to the analysis of the case of Lithuania (except for certain cases when analysis covers all Baltic States or some other countries). In other words, systematic comparative studies of the EU Member States are not undertaken in Lithuania neither for the purpose of analysing the impact of the EU on public policy and institutions of the countries, nor the impact of individual Member States on political processes of the EU. The principal reason is relatively low participation of Lithuanian scientists in the international networks. As a result Lithuanian scientists have less possibilities to publish their articles in the main periodicals of the European studies, for example, in the *Journal of Common Market Studies* or *Journal of European Public Policy*, and quite rarely manage to submit their work to the main publishing houses printing books in the English language. Nevertheless, some works of the Lithuanian authors were published in collective volumes, but such cases are the result of personal initiatives and networking with scientists from other countries, rather than from a systematically functioning research system in Lithuania¹⁷.

Unfortunately, meanwhile there is no possibility to identify Lithuanian scientists whose works are cited most often, because attempts to find the citing index of such type were not fruitful. The most often cited works of the Western scientists devoted to the analysis of EU are indicated in the next chapter which introduces the main trends and characteristics of the European studies in North America and incumbent Member States of the EU.

¹⁷ For example, scientific work of R. Vilpišauskas and V. Nakrošis at the European University Institute, 1999, research by K. Maniokas at the Oxford University, etc., as well as participation in the events organised by the European Studies Associations of North America and Europe.

2. Transatlantic European studies

It would be useful to assess European Studies in Lithuania in a wider context, i.e. development of EU studies in the Western academia. The question of the development of European studies, theories and approaches applied and objects of analysis has been analysed in many studies, the following part of the article will mostly rely upon the study by John Keeler *Mapping EU Studies: The Evolution from Boutique to Boom Field 1960-2001*¹⁸ presented several years ago. This choice is based not only on exclusive comprehensiveness of this study in terms of time, but also on the analysis of themes of doctor's dissertations and periodical publications which are wider than usual reviews of the European integration theories and scientific works.

Perhaps the most important observation with regard to the European studies in USA and old Member States of the EU is direct relationship between the functioning of the EU, "ups and downs" of the integration and scholarly attention to the EU. According to Thomas Diez and Antje Wiener "for many scientists the principal goal of integration analysis is to achieve better understanding of EU institutions"¹⁹. However, the authors emphasise that EU analysis cannot be limited to mere discussion of empirical facts, it is also necessary to analyse and assess theories of integration, identifying its causes, process, consequences and formulating forecasts. Nevertheless, even though quite intensive discussions on advantages of different theories when explaining certain episodes of the EU history took place²⁰, it must be admitted that the European studies from the very beginning of establishment of the European Communities reflected the status of the European integration and the larger part of works was aimed at providing the best possible interpretation or at least understanding of what is happening within the EU and relationship between the Union and Member States.

J. Keeler's study deals with doctor's dissertations defended in the USA during the period of 1960-2001, which analysed the Western Europe, as well as 24

¹⁸ J. T. S. Keeler, "Mapping EU Studies: The Evolution from Bourique to Boom Field 1960-2001," Paper prepared for delivery at the Ninth Biennial International Conference of the European Union Studies Association (EUSA), Austin, Texas, March 31-April 2, 2005.

¹⁹ Th. Diez, A. Wiener, "Introducing the Mosaic of Integration Theory", *European Integration Theory*. Th. Diez, A. Wiener (eds.), Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. -P. 3.

²⁰ The best illustration of such disputes which sometimes were particularly heated probably are discussions of Andrew Morvcsik, the author of liberal intergovernmental with his opponents as regard the advantage of this theory compared with competing interpretations of integration in the second half of the last decade.

most outstanding periodical scientific magazines of political sciences, international relations and public policy. On the basis of analysis of the number and themes of the defended doctor's dissertations and articles published in periodicals, J. Keeler identifies in his opinion three distinct "eras" or periods of EC/EU studies: the development or launch era, the doldrums era and the renaissance/boom era²¹.

During the European studies development period the interest of scientists in the integration studies firstly emerged due to the establishment of the European Communities and results of the first successful years of existence upon the enlargement of the number of integrated areas. At that time the theory of neofunctionalism, one of the most well-developed theories, which probably had the greatest impact on the European integration analysis, was developed and very soon its alternative emerged from discussions with this theory – the inter-governmental approach of Stanley Hoffmann (which subsequently developed into the liberal intergovernmentalism, which was finally consistently introduced during the renaissance period by Andrew Moravcsik, and later in his EU study *The Choice for Europe* returned back to certain statements of neofunctionalism).

The dark ages of the European studies are associated with the "empty chair crisis" in the EC, which started stagnation of integration which lasted from 1965-66 until mid-1980s, accompanied by concurrent lessening of scientists' interest in the European studies. At that time when the theoretical discussions declined, Ernst Haas, the originator of neofunctionalism declared that the theory of integration was obsolete, and smaller numbers of publications on the themes of the European integration were published. Some analysts, however, argue that material changes both in the EC and its analysis also took place in 1970s, in particular in the area of legal decisions, which subsequently provided instruments for new integration projects²². Nevertheless, quantitative analysis of published scientific works reflects reduced interest in the European integration, excluding publications specialising only in EU studies.

²¹ Opt. cit., p. 5.

²² J. Caporaso, J. Keeler "The European Union and Regional Integration Theory", *The State of European Union*, C. Rhodes (ed.). Boulder, Co.: Lynne Rienner, 1995, -P. 29-62.

Renaissance of the European studies, like during the previous two periods, was caused by political changes, and first of all by the adoption of the Single European Act and the Single Market Programme in the middle of the 1980s. This breakthrough of the European integration reanimated the interest of Western scientists in the European studies. Creation of the Single market followed by the establishment of the European and Monetary Union caused a new wave of works elaborating on the European integration. Part of them turned back to the previously popular neofunctionalism accompanied by parallel development of liberal intergovernmentalism. Moreover, theories of international relations which analysed the causes of integration and which predominated until that time from the middle of the last decade were challenged by the comparative politics theories explaining how the decision-making process takes place in the EU, what is the impact of EU on the public policy of its Member States and their institutions and what predetermines such impact. The past two decades like never before were characterised by abundance of theoretical interpretations in analysing the EU. By the way, discussions between the “grand” integration theories seemed to calm down in recent years and at present the scientists have reached the agreement that different theories can explain or describe different aspects of the EU and consequently can successfully coexist. Moreover, the number of constructivist works about EU increased during the previous decade; however social sciences analysing the EU seem to be predominated by positivistic studies.

According to J. Keeler, during the first two stages of integration studies several themes deserved the greatest attention of scientists – European integration, relationships between the EU and its Member States and EC foreign policy. While during the third period after revival of interest in the EU some more new themes of analysis emerged – Economic and Monetary Union, EU institutions, Single market and multi-level governance. The great majority of studies were devoted to these subjects, but in general diversification of themes of European studies increased during past decades. It should be noted that even though during five decades of existence of the EC, the number of its Member States increased several times, serious interest in the analysis of EU enlargement emerged only with the EU enlargement to the Central and Eastern Europe and enlargement of the EU became one of the most popular themes of both practitioners and theoretical discussions.

Returning to J. Keeler's observations regarding European studies attention should be paid to several interesting facts. Keeler argues citing Glenda Rosenthal that "European scholars have looked to the US for leadership, ideas and conceptual tools in this field of study"²³. Though during last decades this gap diminished given the growth of movement of scholars across the Atlantic, participation in joint projects and Europeans departing for temporary assignments at the EU centres at the universities of the USA or Americans arriving to the European University Institute in Florence, it seems however that until present greater attention of USA scholars is paid to theories and general explanations of integration, while the Europeans tend more to engage in descriptive studies.

J. Keeler also introduces the most frequently cited works of the European integration. Until 1988 the most often cited work was S. Hoffmann's response to neofunctionalists *Obstinate or obsolete*²⁴. Between 1988 and 2001 the first place among the most often cited works is occupied by Joseph Weiler's article *The Transformation of Europe* and Andrew Moravcsik's article introducing liberal intergovernmentalism *Preferences and power in the European Communities*²⁵.

Finally, attention should be drawn to the fact that financing of EU centres in the USA universities and other type of financial support to scientists studying in the EU had considerable impact on the development of scientific studies in this area. Financing particularly consolidated mutual networks of transatlantic academic community, organisation of joint research projects, dissemination of ideas in conferences and during short-term study visits. Alongside development of new technologies and internet sources of EU studies, intensifying academic relationship between academic communities of North America and Europe became one of the factors conducive to the development of European studies²⁶.

²³ Opt cit, p. 24.

²⁴ S. Hoffmann, "Obstinate or Obsolete: The fate of the nation state and the case of Western Europe", *Daedalus*, 1966, No. 95(3), -P. 862-915.

²⁵ J. Weiler, "The Transformation of Europe," *Yale Law Journal*, 1991 – 2403; A. Moravcsik, "Preferences and Power in the European Community," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 1993, -P. 473-524.

²⁶ See, for example, M. Baun, P. Wilkin, "Web-Teaching the EU: Online Sources and Online Courses," *The State of the European Union*. Vol. 6. T. Borzel, R. Cichowski (eds.), Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, -P. 334-354.

3. Trends of EU studies of the transatlantic community and Lithuania

Analysis of recent trends of the European studies and forecasting the tendencies and subjects of studies which are likely to dominate in future in Lithuania calls for continuing the analysis of discussions of a wider academic community of analysts interested in the EU. The number of thematic sessions of conferences hosted every two years by the European Union Studies Association (EUSA) is a good illustration of the most recent thematic tendencies in the world of European studies. The table below specifies the number of sessions of the most recent EUSA conference organised in spring 2007 in Montreal by separate themes²⁷.

Table No. 1. Number of sessions of EUSA conference in Montreal

Democracy	7
Economics, political economy	13
Enlargement	11
Europeanization	6
External relationships	20
Governance	15
Institutions	12
Law, courts	3
Parties, interest groups	7
Public policy	13
Integration theories	8
Voting, public opinion	3

Source: EUSA Review, p. 1.

²⁷ L. Hooghe "EUSA Conference: Can big be beautiful?" *EUSA Review*, Vol. 20, No. 3, Summer 2007, -P. 1-24.

EUSA conferences may be considered the most important world's forum of scientists analysing EU, therefore works presented in them can be treated as the illustration of research trends of general European studies. As we can see from the list of sessions specified above, subjects predominating at present include EU external relationships and governance, public policy and economics. By the way, last year's EUSA conference was attended by 650 participants, who introduced 500 works during 120 sessions. This tenth conference was the largest of all EUSA conferences organised until present and it also can be considered a sign of continuously growing interest of scholars. However, scientists from the new Member States of the EU are still insufficiently represented and therefore they are often attended by students from countries of Central and Eastern Europe undertaking PhD studies at universities of the USA.

Going back to the current issues of the European studies in Lithuania it can be expected that in the coming years the greatest attention of analysts will be devoted to several subjects. Themes of studies like before (and like in other countries) will be defined by practical policy changes in Lithuania and EU agenda. In the first instance it is the European energy policy and interests of Lithuania. The second important theme continuously emphasised in the political discourse of Lithuania is the EU neighbourhood policy and the role of Lithuania. After Lithuania's accession to the EU both these themes became dominant in the European (and foreign) policy of Lithuania. This happened as a result of diplomatic efforts of Lithuania responding to external events (problems in the supply of energy sources) and having revised Lithuania's foreign policy goals after accession into the EU. These themes are likely to dominate in the future and should deserve greater attention of analysts. The neighbourhood policy is being analysed already now through the transfer of the best practice of Lithuania to the Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia or Balkan Countries where Lithuanian analysts are working too.

Another important theme arising from domestic political priorities of Lithuania is the reforms of the country's public sector and use of EU policy coordination instruments in implementing them. Upon Lithuania's accession to the EU, in particular during EU membership negotiations a major part of public sector resources was allocated for this purpose. Consequently, other relevant spheres of

policy, such as university education and research, health care and adapting these systems to the European and global processes of integration deserved relatively smaller resources (including political attention). After accession to the EU more attention can be paid to the matters of reform of these previously partly ignored areas. This is already happening to a certain extent, however, insufficiently. In future these matters are likely to prevail in all discussions with practices of other EU Member States being used more and more intensively for this purpose. To a certain extent it is reflected in the articles of the *Politologija* issue covering the use of Open Coordination Method in Lithuania. In the future, the connection between domestic reforms of Lithuania (to be more precise, their lack and stagnation existing in the public sector after the accession to the EU) and European policy of Lithuania, in particular in the Eastern neighbouring countries may become more and more obvious. In the long run, due to its experience of unsuccessful public sector reforms Lithuania might lose attractiveness to Eastern neighbours of the EU and which might hinder Lithuania's active neighbourhood policy. In other words, the record of non-reforms since the EU accession, might reduce the credibility of Lithuania's active attempts at assisting reforms in Neighbourhood countries and their integration into the EU.

Finally, some European studies in Lithuania will depend upon political processes and decisions made in the EU. EU budgetary review has already stimulated discussions on this subject in Lithuania and resulted in the preparation of the first study. This issue obviously arising from EU agenda will also be discussed in Lithuania during several coming years. Another theme – EU internal market (and related external economic policy) – is one of priority themes identified in the strategic documents of Lithuania, but in this case official declarations differ from practical policy and attention paid to these matters. Therefore, if irrespective of importance of establishment of the EU internal market to Lithuania this issue within the political agenda will be further limited to the projects of infrastructure (energy, transport), and provision of services, movement of people will be ignored, these issues are likely to lack attention on the part of analysts too.

Conclusions

Summarising this assessment of the European studies in Lithuania several most important observations can be provided. First of all it is likely that future trends of the European studies in Lithuania will also be predetermined by topical issues of the policy of Lithuania (and EU) and sources of financing (education reform, commissioned studies). If the education reform does not take place during the nearest coming years and the situation in higher schools does not materially change (in terms of continuous project financing and quality of work), it is possible, that the European studies and research will be mostly financed by public authorities (and to a certain extent – available resources of universities).

Due to relatively low participation in the international academic networks European studies will be further focused on the case analysis of Lithuania. As in Lithuania scholars studying in the EU as a rule also engage in consulting activity or engage in public service, insufficient time is paid to the contacts with academic community of other countries. This, in its turn, means that in future analyses will also be mostly focused on topical issues of the European policy, which will preclude wider dissemination of Lithuanian research in foreign academic publications (issued in the English language).

Preparations of Lithuania for the EU Presidency and related analysis of the national interests of Lithuania and their representation in the EU might provide the main impetus to the European studies. It is likely to be the first stimulus after EU accession to carry out a significant reassessment of Lithuania's interests in the EU, and this will be impossible without serious analysis of the EU and place of Lithuania in it. But scientific research exclusively oriented towards the EU Presidency of Lithuania might in the first instance call for the analysis oriented towards practical institutional needs and definition of Lithuania's interests in the EU.

Such research is of course very significant, however, in the context of the long-term perspective a question should be asked whether European studies in the future should also be almost exclusively focused only on practical policy needs? Until now there were too little discussions on essential issues of the

EU and Lithuania's place in it arising from practical policy analysis or disputes of medium-level theories. Upon establishment of Lithuania's positions within the authorities of EU and deliberating the Reform Treaty the essential discussion on the matters of achieved status of integration and EU relationship with Member States and their institutions would be useful. By the way, after several years sufficient time would have passed already for making the first and more detailed evaluation of Lithuania's experience in the EU linking initial expectations related with membership with social processes taking place since the EU accession and analysing the matters of political, economical and cultural participation of Lithuania in the EU. In other words, the European studies should provide sufficient space for scientific research of different level and nature from those focused on assessments of practical issues of political agenda and analysis for policy improvement to constructive studies raising fundamental (including value) questions.

However, the number of Lithuanian scientists of different profile interested in the European matters "who will fill this space" will depend upon further existence of the academic community engaged in the European studies and upon the nature of activities – attention devoted to purely academic research, and contacts with communities of EU researchers from other countries. The relevance of the issue of financing of studies in the future is not likely to diminish. Naturally, if the reform of education, which can create conditions for ongoing academic activities in implementing continuing projects awarded by way of tender is not carried out, the themes of European studies will depend mostly upon orders of public institutions focussed on the practical policy needs. In the event of the failure to implement the reform of higher education and research, European studies in Lithuania might another (another) field of unused possibilities or promises unfulfilled.