

The topic of the thesis and the research problem are highly relevant for the EU as a whole. Energy security remains one of the main challenges of the EU, and it was identified as “one of Europe's main external vulnerabilities” in the Union’s Global Strategy of 2016. As it was mentioned above, 6 the issue has strong regional characteristics within the EU, that is to say, heavy dependence on Russian fossil fuels is more sensitive for some EU member states than others: more precisely, those that are in a relative proximity to the Russian borders, namely, Central and Eastern European states, Finland, and the Baltic States, as they have few or virtually no alternatives to the Russian gas due to their lesser energy integration with the rest of the EU. Their position is aggravated by the fact that the Kremlin “systematically uses its dominant position in the energy field vis-a-vis its ex-Soviet allies in order to exploit their high vulnerability and serve wider foreign policy goals” . In light of 7 this, it is particularly interesting to examine how the Baltic states, usually identified in the literature as typical small states, have enhanced their energy security by looking into their steps on various levels to raise awareness in the EU and shape the Union’s policy-making.