



Punching Above the Weight: the Baltic States' Energy Security Policy

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Introduction

"The ensuring of energy security will also guarantee the political and economic security and will help create general well-being [...]. We have agreed to cooperate further to achieve the ending of the energy isolation of our countries. Working together we will build a safe, strong and competitive region,"¹
Dalia Grybauskaitė, President of Lithuania in 2009-2019

"We have been in the European Union for five years already but we are still isolated in energy terms; we have to connect Baltic and Western European electricity networks as soon as possible and to create an open Baltic electricity market", said President of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė during her meeting with Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves in 2009.² This quote perfectly epitomises shared aspirations of the Baltic states regarding energy security since the moment of their EU accession. In 2004, the Baltic region was considered an "energy island", part of the EU that was still tightly connected to Russia and Belarus. 18 years after joining the EU, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are resilient, well connected into the European energy network, and were the first EU member states to terminate all energy supplies from Russia, their previous single supplier, in April 2022. The research question stems from these empirical observations: what shaped the Baltic states' energy security policy since their EU accession?

Energy serves as the backbone of well-functioning of economy and society. Yet, in the EU, according to the Association for International Affairs' report, "the debate on energy security has gained new momentum by the accession of Central and Eastern European Countries in 2004"³. The new member states were fully dependent on the single supplier, thus, vulnerable to external shocks. The issue appeared on the European agenda for the first time in 2006, when due to a dispute between Russia and Ukraine, the gas supplies to Europe were temporarily halted.⁴ However, the real point of no return in the EU's energy policy was another crisis in Ukraine that took place a decade

¹ "Energy Security Is a Common Goal of Lithuania and Estonia," Lietuvos respublikos Prezidentas, November 16, 2011, <https://www.lrp.lt/en/press-centre/press-releases/energy-security-is-a-common-goal-of-lithuania-and-estonia/12567>.

² "Energy security – common goal pursued by Lithuanian and Estonian leaders," Lietuvos respublikos Prezidentas, 8 October 2009, <https://www.lrp.lt/en/media-center/news/energy-security-common-goal-pursued-by-lithuanian-and-estonian-leaders/6954>

³ Thim, Michal, Jakub kulhanek, Man-Hua Chen. *Energy Security in Central and Eastern Europe*. Prague: Association for International Affairs, 2008.

⁴ Boersma, Tim. "Dealing with energy security in Europe : a comparison of gas market policies in the European Union and the United States". (PhD diss., University of Groningen, 20130, 198 p.

later, which was followed by a significant deterioration in EU's relations with its biggest energy supplier, Russian Federation. The above-mentioned events triggered EU's deeper concern as regards energy security, and heightened the need for urgent measures towards the diversification of energy suppliers and further integration of energy markets of certain member states⁵.

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 2016.⁶ As it was mentioned above, 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"⁷. In light of 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.

Although much has been written on conceptualising and measuring energy security, both qualitatively and quantitatively,⁸ energy security concerns of the Baltic states,⁹ soft security threats,¹⁰ single case studies, assessing each of the Baltic states' progress towards energy security goals of

⁵ Siddi, Marco, "The EU's Energy Union: A Sustainable Path to Energy Security?", *The International Spectator*, 51:1 (2016), p. 131-144

⁶ European Union Global Strategy, 2016.

⁷ Proedrou, Filippou (2007) "The EU–Russia Energy Approach under the Prism of Interdependence", *European Security*, 16:3-4 (2007), p. 329-355

⁸ Sovacool, Benjamin K., Mukherjee Ishani, "Conceptualizing and measuring energy security: A synthesized approach", *Energy*, Vol. 36-8 (August 2011), p. 5343-5355; Sovacool, Benjamin K., "Defining, measuring, and exploring energy security", in *Routledge Handbook of Energy Security*, 2010, p. 42 ; Ren, Jingzheng, Sovacool, Benjamin K., "Quantifying, measuring, and strategizing energy security: Determining the most meaningful dimensions and metrics", *Energy*, Vol. 76, (November 2014), p. 838-849; Cherp Aleh, "Defining energy security takes more than asking around", *Energy Policy*, Vol. 48, (September 2012), p. 841-842;

⁹ Maigre, Merle, Energy Security Concerns of the Baltic states, *International Centre for Defence Studies* (March 2010) ; see: Literature review;

¹⁰ Crandall, Matthew, "Soft Security Threats and Small States: the Case of Estonia", *Defence Studies*, 14:1 (2014), p. 30-55

European energy union strategy,¹¹ and others, there is no single study which would cover the Baltic states' attempts on national, regional and European levels to shape the EU energy policy to ensure their own security. In addition, the thesis includes new developments that took place since major research papers on the topic were published, and analyses proposals on energy in the Baltic Assembly resolutions.

This remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Next, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks are presented alongside the literature review, highlighting energy policy decision-making, and the small states' role in the EU. Then methodological choices, namely, Qualitative Content analysis and Process-Tracing will be justified. Utilising this framework, The first chapter provides a historical overview of the Baltic states' energy security concerns, and highlights supply disruptions in the region beyond the major gas crises of 2006 and 2009. The second chapter of the thesis analyses decision-making at national, regional and European levels, by examining the national security strategies of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, resolutions of the Baltic Assembly, and the Council presidencies of three states. The final chapter explains recent and increasing role of the EU in energy security policy coordination, and delves into some of the the EU energy security policies, namely, the European Energy Security Strategy, and the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan as the means to enhance energy security of the Baltic states; then, it explores the EU energy crisis management in light of the ongoing Russia's invasion of Ukraine as a window of opportunity deepening integration in the energy domain. The thesis is finalised with the research results and further remarks on potential future of European energy security policy.

Meanwhile, it should be noted that this thesis has several limitations. Most importantly, this thesis does not intend to cover all EU legislation that affects energy. Secondly, due to language constraints, barely any sources in the national languages of the Baltic states have been used. Thirdly, it does not provide quantitative measurements that could be utilised as a way to analyse energy security scores, and does not delve into technical details of energy infrastructure, like electricity or gas grids.

¹¹ Streimikiene, Dalia "Ranking of Baltic States on progress towards the main energy security goals of European energy union strategy", *Journal of International Studies*, Issue 4 (2020), p. 24-37

Literature Review

The aim of this literature review is to provide an overview of existing literature on the Baltic states' energy security policy, the Baltic states as small states, and debates on characteristics and behaviour of small states, identify gaps and unanswered research questions.

What shapes the Baltic states' energy policy? The field of energy security is has always been salient for the EU and its member states. As rightly noted by Goldthau & Sitter, energy is not just a private commodity, but it is also an important public good that is used to protect human welfare, boost economic prosperity, and ensure military security.¹² At the same time, quite a large amount of international conflicts throughout history were caused by energy disputes.¹³ The main challenge to the EU energy security lies not in its dependence on primary energy imports, but rather in unreliability of supply from the third countries, especially Russia, which poses a great risk for European consumers.¹⁴ Bearing in mind the fact that many of the third-country energy suppliers are state-owned, it introduces a strong political dimension to this sector. A plethora of literature highlights third-countries' capacity to "sow disunity in the EU"¹⁵ in case of need of a unified response to common threats: for instance, during the negotiations on sanction packages as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Some scholars have argued that there has been a 'hesitant supranational turn' during the last decade.¹⁶ Since the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, energy policy is a shared competence between the EU and national administrations. Nevertheless, the influence of the EU in energy matters is still rather limited due to the fact that EU energy policy is an area of shared competences, and member states "still pursue national strategies that sometimes are not aligned with the goals of a common energy policy - security of supply, competitiveness, and sustainability"¹⁷. As noted by Baumann and Simmerl, the main challenge to creating a common energy policy is "the gap between the declared

¹² Goldthau, Andreas, Sitter, Nick, "Soft power with a hard edge: EU policy tools and energy security", *Review of International Political Economy*, 22:5 (2015), p. 941-965

¹³ Abdelal, Rawi. "The Profits of Power: Commerce and Realpolitik in Eurasia." *Review of International Political Economy*, 20, no. 3 (2013): 421–56.; Colgan, Jeff "Oil, Conflict, and U.S. National Interests", Policy Brief, *Belfer Centre*, (2013)

¹⁴ Yergin, Daniel. "Ensuring Energy Security." *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 2 (2006): 69–82.

¹⁵ Poitiers, Niclas, Tagliapietra Simone, Wolff Guntram B., and Zachmann Georg. "The Kremlin's Gas Wars." *Bruegel*, February 28, 2022. <https://www.bruegel.org/2022/02/the-kremlins-gas-wars/>

¹⁶ Wettestad, Jørgen, Eikeland, Per Ove, Nilsson, Måns. "EU Climate and Energy Policy: A Hesitant Supranational Turn?", *Global Environmental Politics*, 2012, vol. 12-2, 67-86

¹⁷ Carstei Mihaela "Baltic Energy Security: Building a European Energy Future". *Atlantic Council*, 2011

common goals and the actual compatibility of individual national energy strategies”, as national administrations “differ considerably with regard to the scope of the policies they advocate and the various means they aim to use in the implementation process”¹⁸ For this reason, scholars highlight the need for “further policy harmonisation and coordination is required in order to secure a well-functioning integrated energy market”¹⁹. This is supported by Carstei, Baumann & Simmerl’s argument in favour of regional cooperation among the member states themselves, as “regional approaches to a common energy policy remain a great opportunity for ultimately achieving a unified EU energy policy, as well as ensuring national energy security goals”. This is a very important conclusion, as it exemplifies the overall bottom-up strategy of the Baltic states towards ensuring their energy security objectives in light of lack of common EU energy policy.

The concept of small state is a highly contested, as ‘the borders between such categories as ‘micro state’, ‘small state’ and ‘middle power’ are usually blurred and arbitrary’²⁰. According to Thorhallsson, the most straightforward way of defining small states is to ‘see them as those states that are not great powers’²¹, and their capacities are defined by insufficiency of resources to exert power²². However, this research does not take into account the so called “middle powers”, e.g those that belong to G20. In turn, other scholars, such as Steinberg, point to economic power as a dividing line between big and small states²³, which is especially relevant in international trade negotiations.²⁴ These views correlate with the realist perspective, according to which small synonymies are weak, as ‘the units of power in realist/neorealist theories are understood as materially measurable, whether in terms of numbers of guns, planes, soldiers or size of GDP’.²⁵ At the same time, empirical

¹⁸ Baumann, Florian, & Simmerl, Georg, “Between conflict and convergence: the EU member states and the quest for a common external energy policy”. (CAP Discussion Paper). *Universität München, Centrum für angewandte Politikforschung*, 2011

¹⁹ Szulecki, Kacper, Fischer, Severin, Gullberg, Anne Therese, and Sartor, Oliver. “Shaping the ‘Energy Union’: between national positions and governance innovation in EU energy and climate policy”, *Climate Policy*, 16:5 (2016), 548-567

²⁰ Neumann, Iver B., Gsthöhl, Sieglinde. “Lilliputians in gulliver's world?”, in “Small States and International Relations”, 2006. p. 3-36.

²¹ Thorhallsson et al. “Small States in the European Union: What Do We Know and What Would We Like to Know?”, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 19:4 (2006), p. 651-668

²² Thorhallsson, Baldur, Steinsson, Sverrir. “Small State Foreign Policy”. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, 2017

²³ Alesina, Alberto. *The size of nations*. MIT Press, 2003

²⁴ Steinberg, Richard H. "In the Shadow of Law or Power? Consensus-Based Bargaining and Outcomes in the GATT/WTO." *International Organization* 56, no. 2 (2002), p. 339-74

²⁵ *Ibid.*

evidence suggests that not all small states are impotent from an economic point of view, e.g. Monaco, Singapore, and others. Thus, it is evident that small states are not always defined by their size, economies, or influence or lack thereof. It is rather a combination of factors: a number of researchers have suggested the importance of such factors as size²⁶, population²⁷, capacity for violence²⁸, and a number of votes in a particular negotiation setting²⁹, whereas, as argued by Panke, ‘size is not an objectively given fact, but a social construction’³⁰. Yet, according to the constructivist perspective, “smallness’ can be constructed differently in different identity narratives, with different narratives in turn entailing different implications for state action’³¹, and they emphasise the importance of the role of ideology and identity and tend to connect state behaviour and state identity, as ideas and values determine the interest of the states.³² However, this stance on small states is challenged by the liberal institutionalist perspective that argues that ‘questions of smallness and greatness are often issue specific such that a small state in one sphere may be a great power possessing considerable influence in a different context’, which is usually backed by the examples of Switzerland, Norway, and Saudi Arabia. ³³ In this thesis, the liberal institutionalist perspective on small states will be utilised.

Moreover, there is lack of consensus in the literature over the small states’ behaviour in their foreign policies, or on the way how they influence international relations³⁴. The debate around small states is inextricably linked to the notions of power and influence, notions commonly found in works grounded in realism or neorealism, as, according to Lamoreaux and Galbreath, ‘size...is frequently

²⁶ Archer, Clive, Neill, Nugent "Introduction: Small States and EU". *Current Politics and Economics of Europe*. 11 (2002). p. 1–10

²⁷ Thorhallsson, Baldur, Steinsson, Sverrir. “Small State Foreign Policy”. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, 2017

²⁸ Récezi, “The Political Aims and Experiences of Small Socialist States”. In Schou, August & Brundtland, Arne Olav “Small States in International Relations”. *Wiley Interscience Division*, p. 76

²⁹ Achen, Christopher H. “Institutional realism and bargaining models” in Thomson, Robert, Stokman, Frans N, Achen, Christopher H. and Koenig, Thomas (eds) “The European Union decides”, *Cambridge University Press*, 2006, p. 86–123

³⁰ Panke, Diana, “Dwarfs in international negotiations: how small states make their voices heard”, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 25:3 (2012), p. 313-328

³¹ Browning, Christopher S. “Small, Smart and Salient? Rethinking Identity in the Small States Literature”, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 19:4 (2006), 669-684

³² Galal, Abdelraouf Mostafa. “External behavior of small states in light of theories of international relations”. *Review of Economics and Political Science*, Vol. 5 No. 1, 2020 pp. 38-56

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Thorhallsson, Baldur, Wivel, Anders “Small States in the European Union: What Do We Know and What Would We Like to Know?”, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 19:4 (2006), p. 651-668

considered when analyzing the potential international influence of a state³⁵, as large states are usually considered influential, while ‘being small has been viewed as a handicap to state action, and even state survival’³⁶. Following this approach, small states, due to their disadvantageous position within the international system, tend to ally with larger, more powerful states, in order to defend themselves³⁷. This idea is contested by the alliance shelter viewpoint, according to which ‘small states need political, economic, and societal shelter (as well as strategic protection) in order to thrive’, and they ‘benefit disproportionately from international cooperation, including institutional membership, compared with large states’, not to mention the importance of domestic as well as international factors³⁸. The vulnerabilities of small states are divided them into three categories: political, economic and societal, in particular, those of military or diplomatic power, access to markets, and recognition by other states³⁹. It is a conventional point of view among scholars that small states are barely capable of influencing the international system⁴⁰. Without any doubt, small states possess less economic capacities, human resources, they are ‘slower in formulating national interests than their bigger counterparts’⁴¹ and more dependent on international institutions⁴², but does ‘small’ always equate ‘weak’? Not necessarily. Moreover, even small states can wield some influence on the international level, and they are more prone to succeed when they prioritise issues of particular importance and invest their available sources in that realm⁴³. This argument is supported by Thorhallsson, who claims that, on the EU level, ‘small states tend to be proactive in

³⁵ Lamoreaux, Jeremy W., Galbreath, David J., “The Baltic States As ‘Small States’: Negotiating The ‘East’ By Engaging The ‘West’”, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 39:1 (2008), 1-14

³⁶ Browning, Christopher S. “Small, Smart and Salient? Rethinking Identity in the Small States Literature”, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 19:4 (2006), 669-684

³⁷ Snyder, G., *Alliance Theory: A Neorealist First Cut*. *Journal of International Affairs*, 44 (1990), 103-123; Vaicekauskaitė, Živilė. “Security Strategies of Small States in a Changing World”. *Journal on Baltic Security*, 2017

³⁸ Bailes, Alyson J. K., Thayer, Bradley A., Thorhallsson, Baldur. “Alliance theory and alliance ‘Shelter’: the complexities of small state alliance behaviour”, *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal*, 1:1(2016), 9-26

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Keohane, Robert. "Lilliputians' Dilemmas: Small States in International Politics". *International Organization*. 23 (2) (April 1969), 291–310.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Thorhallsson, Baldur, Wivel, Anders “Small States in the European Union: What Do We Know and What Would We Like to Know?”, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 19:4 (2006), p. 651-668

⁴³ Panke, Diana. “Small states in the European Union: Structural disadvantages in EU policymaking and counter-strategies”. *Journal of European Public Policy*. 17 (2010), 799-817

EU negotiations where they do have important economic and political interests at stake⁴⁴. Lamoreaux et al. show that ‘small states are able to impact the region regardless of size and the ascribed action capacity’ thanks to their membership in powerful international organizations, such as NATO, the EU, and others⁴⁵. Moreover, according to Schelling, ‘weakness and the threat that a partner will collapse can be a source of bargaining power’⁴⁶.

The limitation of states’ power is determined not only by size, the studies of Buzan and Wæver suggest, but also by geographic location in certain ‘regional security complexes’. In this light, the case of the Baltic states as small states is of particular interest for a number of reasons. First of all, scholars, including Lamoreaux and Galbreath, point to the region’s geopolitical location: that is to say, that the Baltic region is the place where several states, cultures, and ideologies meet. Therefore, the region plays an important role in foreign and security policies of these neighbouring countries such as Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Germany, Poland, Russia. In addition, Lamoreaux argues, and the Baltic states’ “actions do not match European Security expectations as such”. In addition, Lamoreaux and Galbreath claim that the Baltic states, after having joined the EU and NATO, increased their capacity to be influential both within and without the organisations. For instance, researchers tend to point to increased activity of the Baltic states in promoting the Eastern Partnership cooperation. For this reason, Lamoreaux argues, ‘more focus should be spent on researching just how similar states all act regardless of size’.

In conclusion, scholars tend to generally agree over the importance of energy security, however, little can be done, as energy is a shared competence between the EU and member states, which might lead to conflicting priorities and disunity. Yet, there is no consensus whether there is a trend towards deepening integration, or it is rather guided by intergovernmental decision-making. This institutional layout may pose a threat to small states, which might lack capacities to participate in policy-making and advocacy as efficiently as big states. At the same time, despite a conventional view that small states are “weak”, empirical evidence suggests that it is not always the case, and small states can exert influence in the domains of high priority. Finally, a research gap has been identified: there is no study that would examine the process of consistent changes in the energy security of the Baltic states, as the latest broad analytical paper on energy (in)security of the region

⁴⁴ Thorhallsson, Baldur, Wivel, Anders “Small States in the European Union: What Do We Know and What Would We Like to Know?”, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 19:4 (2006), p. 651-668

⁴⁵ Lamoreaux, Jeremy W. & Galbreath, David The Baltic States As ‘Small States’: Negotiating The ‘East’ By Engaging The ‘West’, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 39:1 (2008), 1-14

⁴⁶ Schelling, Thomas C.. *Strategy of Conflict*. Harvard University Press. 1960

was published in 2012. Since then, many developments and dramatic shifts took place, and they need to be pointed out.⁴⁷

Theoretical Framework

There are several competing approaches to European integration, the most prominent ones being neofunctionalism liberal intergovernmentalism (LI). This paper is going to be based on the liberal intergovernmentalist (LI) approach to the European integration in order to test whether it adequately fits the context of the Baltic states' energy security policy. Being one of the grand theories of European Integration, neofunctionalism understands integration as a process that is driven by state and non-state actors who might cooperate on the transnational level.⁴⁸ Integration may vary in its level, scope, breadth, and depth: [t]he level of integration captures the degree to which an issue or policy is governed by supranational institutions and rules, while the scope of integration refers to the breadth of issues dealt with at the European level⁴⁹. Within the neofunctionalist framework, two types of spillover are usually identified: functional, where cooperation and interdependence in one are creates incentives for integration in other policy domains, and political, which is of particular interest. Ernst Haas, the founder of neofunctionalism and one of the major contributors to the theory of European integration, has described political spillover as a process “whereby (national) elites come to perceive that problems of substantial interest cannot be effectively afforded at the domestic level”, thus fostering integration on a European level.⁵⁰

According to the neofunctionalist perspective, supranationalism emerges when there are common and overlapping goals and interests of the member states, which might be driven by coalition-building. Such policy of forging positions and allocating duties to a supranational institution is aimed at increasing “collective bargaining power of Community vis-a-vis the outside world”⁵¹. In addition, neofunctionalism claims to comprehensively explain “the interactive dynamics of

⁴⁷ Grigas, Agnia. “Legacies, Coercion and Soft Power: Russian Influence in the Baltic States”, *Chatham House*, August 2012.

⁴⁸ Haas, E.B. *Technocracy, pluralism and the new Europe*, 1964.

⁴⁹ Bergmann, Julian. “Neofunctionalism and EU external policy integration: the case of capacity building in support of security and development (CBSD)”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 26:9 (2019), 1253-1272; Niemann, A. *Explaining Decisions in the European Union*, Cambridge University Press, 2006.

⁵⁰ Haas, Ernst. *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social, and Economic Forces 1950-1957*, Stanford University Press, 1958.

⁵¹ Schmitter, Philippe C. “Ernst B. Haas and the legacy of neofunctionalism”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 12:2 (2005), 255-272

European institutions that cannot be grasped from an intergovernmental perspective”⁵². Yet, energy policy of the EU has been characterised by conflicts between attempts to create a common and coherent policy and divergent national interests, that is why previous efforts to europeanise this policy domain have been marked by various scholars as unsuccessful.⁵³ Yet, focusing on EU measures to strengthen its supranational authority in policy-making, one might argue that energy does not fit neatly into intergovernmental framework. For instance, Bocquillon & Maltby claim that national administrations “operate within a hybrid institutional framework combining supranational and intergovernmental elements, in which formal and informal authority distribution is unstable and contested”⁵⁴. Citing Ahner, “the EU is actually equipped with the necessary tools to step in and finally lead the Member States to a unified *modus operandi* in foreign energy policy may it either be based on implied powers or due to the cooperation duty of the Member States”, which she illustrates by the Transparency Decision.⁵⁵ This could be illustrated by an increasing number of procedural competences of the European Union. That being said, empirical evidence does not seem to support these claims. Such approaches failed to recognise an emerging process of “de-Europeanisation”⁵⁶, which “relates to situations where EU foreign policy-making runs against the grain of certain Member States’ declared values and interests; where Member States are less willing to engage in collective foreign policy-making at the EU-level, prioritising other multilateral frameworks or (unilateral) national actions; and where the results of that policy-making are, on occasion, explicitly undermined by Member State practice”⁵⁷.

Liberal intergovernmentalism, founded by Andrew Moravcsik, understands the process of the European integration as “a series of pragmatic bargains among national governments based on

⁵² Szulecki, Kacper, Fischer, Severin, Gullberg, Anne Therese, Sartor, Oliver “Shaping the ‘Energy Union’: between national positions and governance innovation in EU energy and climate policy”, *Climate Policy*, 16:5 (2016), 548-567

⁵³ Andersen, Svein S. “EU Energy Policy: Interest Interaction and Supranational Authority”, *ARENA Working Papers*, 2000; Usherwood, Simon, *The European Union: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford Union, 1998

⁵⁴ Bocquillon, Pierre, Maltby, Tomas “EU energy policy integration as embedded intergovernmentalism: the case of Energy Union governance”, *Journal of European Integration*, 42:1 (2020), 39-57

⁵⁵ Ahner, Nicole, “EU foreign energy policy : from intergovernmentalism to supranationalism”, *European Energy Journal*, 2012, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 20-31

⁵⁶ Weiss, Tomas, “De-Europeanisation of Czech Policy Towards Eastern Partnership Countries under Populist Leaders.” *Journal of European Integration* 43 (5) (2021): 587–602; Raimondo, António, Tsardanidis Charalambos, and Stavridis Stelios. “The Eurozone Crisis’ Impact: A De-Europeanization of Greek and Portuguese Foreign Policies?” *Journal of European Integration* 43 (5) (2021): 535–550. Dyduch, Joanna, and Müller, Patrick. “Populism Meets EU Foreign Policy: The de-Europeanization of Poland’s Foreign Policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.” *Journal of European Integration* 43 (5) (2021): 569–586

⁵⁷ Müller, Patrick, Pomorska, Karolina, Tonra, Ben “The Domestic Challenge to EU Foreign Policy-Making: From Europeanisation to de-Europeanisation?”, *Journal of European Integration*, 43:5 (2021), 519-534.

concrete national interests, relative power, and carefully calculated transfers of sovereignty”.⁵⁸ According to Moravcsik, neofunctionalist perspective provides an “unsatisfactory account of European integration” do to lack of empirical data, which leads to the theory’s misprediction of “the trajectory and the process of European Community evolution”.⁵⁹ Another point of criticism of neofunctionalism is the claim that “interested member governments or private individuals, not supranational officials, initiated and mediated major EC discussions”.⁶⁰

Governments remain the main actors in the International Relations and are the main drivers of the European Integration. According to Moravcsik, governments are more superior to supranational actors, as they possess several competitive advantages: they are “better informed, have more technical expertise, greater legitimacy, and consistently accurate political intelligence”.⁶¹ Within this theoretical framework, Member States are driven by commercial interests, e.g. to reduce transaction costs.⁶²⁶³ The process of European integration within the LI framework is described by Pollack as a “two-step, sequential model of preference formation”.⁶⁴ In short, this model works as follows: during the first stage, “national governments aggregate the interests of their domestic constituencies, as well as their own interests, and articulate national preferences towards European integration”, while the second stage is characterised by national governments’ bringing “their preferences toward European integration”, “intergovernmental bargaining table”, where “agreements reflect the relative power of each member state and where supranational organisations as the European commission exert little or no influence”⁶⁵.

This theory is especially relevant in the context of energy policy and energy security, as there is an overwhelming consensus that energy policy is mostly perceived as a prerogative of a nation state, as

⁵⁸ Moravcsik, A. *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*, Routledge, 1998

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² “[t]he most persistent and powerful source of varying national preferences concerning integration over the past four decades has been economic, in particular commercial, interest”: Moravcsik, A. *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*, Routledge, 1998

⁶³ Szulecki, Kacper, Fischer, Severin, Gullberg, Anne Therese, Sartor, Oliver “Shaping the ‘Energy Union’: between national positions and governance innovation in EU energy and climate policy”, *Climate Policy*, 16:5 (2016), 548-567

⁶⁴ Pollack, Mark A. *International Relations Theory and European Integration*, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, 2000

⁶⁵ Ibid.

is “key national sovereignty and even national security”, and Member States are “reluctant to cede authority to the supranational level on issues that have direct and important consequences for their citizens’ welfare”.⁶⁶ Thus energy still has not developed into a “a fully-fledged and coherent common energy policy”, despite being “central to the European project since its beginnings”.⁶⁷ The Lisbon Treaty made energy a non-exclusive competence, yet the role of the EU institutions in this domain is rather limited.⁶⁸

The Conceptual Framework

A concept that is often linked with the process of European integration is that of Europeanisation. It goes without saying that Europe “has hit virtually all policy areas penetrating the lives of its citizens in many respects”, and has “fundamentally affected core institutions and political processes of the member states, accession countries, and third countries”.⁶⁹ According to Ladrech, one of the earliest scholars of Europeanisation, it is “an incremental process of re-orienting the direction and shape of politics to the extent that EC political and economic dynamics become part of the organisational logic of national politics and policy making”.⁷⁰ Then, the definition was elaborated by Radaelli, who described Europeanisation as “a process involving a) construction, b) diffusion and c) institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, ‘ways of doing things’ and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the EU policy process and then incorporated in the logic of domestic (national and subnational) discourse, political structures and public choices.”⁷¹ Liberal intergovernmentalism understands Europeanisation as a bottom-up process, hence, in case of energy security policy-making, the Baltic states take consistent steps to influence European decision-making starting from national level, then through regional cooperation and the Council presidencies.

⁶⁶ Bocquillon, Pierre, Maltby, Tomas “EU energy policy integration as embedded intergovernmentalism: the case of Energy Union governance”, *Journal of European Integration*, 42:1 (2020), 39-57

⁶⁷ Szulecki, Kacper, Fischer, Severin, Gullberg, Anne Therese, Sartor, Oliver “Shaping the ‘Energy Union’: between national positions and governance innovation in EU energy and climate policy”, *Climate Policy*, 16:5 (2016), 548-567

⁶⁸ Maltby, Tomas. European Union energy policy integration: A case of European Commission policy entrepreneurship and increasing supranationalism. *Energy Policy*, 55 (2013), 435–444.

⁶⁹ Cini, Michelle, *European Union Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2007

⁷⁰ Ladrech, Robert, “Europeanization of Domestic Politics and Institutions: The Case of France”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 1994, vol. 32, issue 1, p. 69-88

⁷¹ Cini, Michelle, *European Union Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2007

A **hypothesis** of this thesis that stems from the above-mentioned observation goes as follows: in case of the Baltic states' energy security policy, there is clearly a two-way street approach, that is to say that top-down and bottom-up Europeanisation is simultaneously taking place. This is justified by the fact that "member states are not merely passive takers of EU demands for domestic change; they proactively shape European institutions, policies, and processes, which they have to download and to which they have to adapt"⁷². Top down approach might be relevant in case of non-EU member states, which have no say in the EU decision-making, but using it in case of member states might lead to a false assumption that member states are deprived of agency. While, according to Lavenex, national administrations "can use the EU for their own ends and can introduce domestic changes in the name of Europe"⁷³. That is to say that is often hard to discern a clear top-down or bottom-up approach, as a bi-directional process is taking place. For this reason, the Baltic states are capable to exert influence within the EU institutions to foster their energy independence, while the EU might support regional and national initiatives that are strategically important for the Union.

Methodology

For researching purposes, this study will conduct a qualitative content analysis combined with explaining-outcome process-tracing in order to examine the way energy security is framed by the Baltic authorities and to trace the Baltic states' attempts to influence the state of energy security in the region at the EU level. In this research, 'influence' is understood as 'a causal relation between the preferences of an actor regarding an outcome and the outcome itself', that is to say, 'an actor's ability to shape a decision in line with his preferences', while causality "concerns relationships where a change in one variable necessarily results in a change in another variable"⁷⁴.

According to the definition coined by Beach, "[p]rocess tracing is a research method for tracing causal mechanisms using detailed, within-case empirical analysis of how a causal process plays out in an actual case."⁷⁵ This method is particularly valuable in social sciences as it helps "to update the degree of confidence we hold in the validity of a theorised causal mechanism"⁷⁶. Out of three types

⁷² Cini, Michelle, *European Union Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2007

⁷³ Lavenex Sandra, "The Europeanization of Refugee Policies: Normative Challenges and Institutional Legacies", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 39 (2001), p. 851-874

⁷⁴ Appeal Harmen, "Concept of Causality and Conditions for Causality", 2010

⁷⁵ Beach, Derek, "Process-Tracing Methods in Social Science", Oxford Research Encyclopaedias, 2017

⁷⁶ Ibid.

of process-tracing identified in the literature, this research will be based on explaining-outcome process-tracing. The aim of this approach is to “craft a minimally sufficient explanation of a puzzling outcome in a specific historical case”⁷⁷. This type is characterised by Gerring as a “single-outcome study, defined as seeking the causes of a specific outcome in a single case”.⁷⁸ This seems applicable to the chosen case, as it is well-accepted in the academic literature that there is no single theoretical explanation of the process of small states’ policy-making. Explaining-outcome process-tracing is characterised by its case-centric design and case-specific mechanisms, which gives room for manoeuvre and a more nuanced explanation. In addition, it allows us to theorise and potentially make generalised claims and assumptions.

Explaining-outcome process-tracing is defined as a “bottom-up type of analysis”, meaning that empirical data is used as a ground for establishing a “plausible explanation of causal mechanisms whereby X (or multiple Xs) produced the outcome”.⁷⁹ In this sense, explaining-outcome process tracing is broader than the two theory-centric variants of process tracing (theory-building or theory-testing), and allows more room to manoeuvre.

As the object of the research has gained little attention of scholars, the case of the Baltic states’ energy security policy-making is a little-studied outcome. Thus, empirical material will be used as a foundation for building a plausible explanation in an inductive way. As outlined earlier, there is a certain limitation to the research, as there is usually a bi-directional process of influence, and it is challenging to define who defined whom. How do we make sure that the answer to the question is sufficient? According to Beach, “a minimally sufficient explanation is based on an assessment of whether all of the relevant facets of the outcome have been accounted for adequately while ensuring that the evidence is best explained by the developed explanation instead of plausible alternative explanations”.⁸⁰

While we use process-tracing to identify the plausible explanation of a a single case, qualitative content analysis is needed to examine the documents, resolutions, strategies that are relevant to the topic of the research, and help us analyse the decisions made on the state, regional and European levels. In this study, qualitative content analysis is understood as a “research method for the

⁷⁷ Beach, Derek, & Pedersen, Rasmus Brun. *Process-tracing methods: Foundations and guidelines*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013

⁷⁸ Gerring, John. *Case study research*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press., 2007

⁷⁹ Beach, Derek, & Pedersen, Rasmus Brun. *Process-tracing methods: Foundations and guidelines*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013

⁸⁰ Beach, Derek, “Process-Tracing Methods in Social Science”, Oxford Research Encyclopaedias, 2017

subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns⁸¹. Even though content analysis is usually quantitative in its nature, the selected case implies that the study be based not on counting and measuring of particular codes, but rather on interpreting and understanding them. Utilising qualitative content analysis helps us clarify the context and the conditions of document creation, and provides more room for interpretation and analysis. The qualitative content analysis comprises several steps. First, preparation of data and defining the unit(s) of analysis. Then, it is necessary to develop categories, which will be done inductively, i.e. the codes will be developed upon analysing the text, not by looking for appropriate codes that are linked to existing theories. The final steps are assessing the consistency of coding employed, drawing inferences on the basis of findings, and presentation of results.

Trustworthiness of qualitative content analysis is an important matter that needs to be addressed separately. The research data in this thesis is drawn from official, transparent and open-sourced information, namely, the Baltic Assembly final documents and resolutions, national security strategies, speeches at the European Parliament, European Union Energy Security Strategy, and other pieces of legislation. Thus, the data is credible and authentic. The codes outlined in Chapters 2 and 3 are transferable, and the coding procedure is well-documented and transparent, which allows for testing the findings by other fellow researchers.

⁸¹ Hsieh, Hsiu-Fang, Sarah E. Shannon. "Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis." *Qualitative Health Research* 15, no. 9 (November 2005): 1277–88.

Chapter 1:

The main aim of this chapter is to identify the drivers of energy policy change on the regional and European level, and track down the series of “triggering” events via explaining-outcome process tracing. As it will be shown in the first subchapter, the Baltic states were isolated “energy islands” due to the total technical infrastructure connectivity and energy dependence on Russia and partly Belarus, which was a potent economic leverage of Russia, one of main energy suppliers to Europe. However, thirty years afterwards after regaining their independence in 1991, the Baltic states were the first to cease purchasing energy supplies from Russia. Such shift was grounded in several crucial prerequisites: political will, support of the citizens, strategic mindset, and advocacy efforts. For this reason, it is especially interesting to note the “triggering events” that served as the drivers of policy change in the Baltic states and the rest of the European Union. In the second subchapter, I will focus on the cases of energy disruption in the Baltic region itself, as they are often overlooked by scholars as a consequence of major Russia-Ukraine gas disputes that led to supply disruption on a much broader scale. Then, I will analyse the change in the EU’s energy security policy after the above-mentioned conflict, or lack of thereof. It should be separately noted that this chapter does have a number of limitations. This study does not include quantitative analysis of any kind, which is also applicable in measuring energy security and interconnectivity levels, e.g by using energy security indicators⁸², MULTIMOORA method⁸³, or causal classification of energy risks⁸⁴, and other research design strategies.

⁸² Juozas Augutis, et al. “Analysis of energy security level in the Baltic States based on indicator approach”, *Energy*, Volume 199, 2020

⁸³ Indre Siksnyte, et al. “Implementation of EU energy policy priorities in the Baltic Sea Region countries: Sustainability assessment based on neutrosophic MULTIMOORA method”, *Energy Policy*, Volume 125, 2019, p. 90-102.

⁸⁴ Laura Rodríguez-Fernández, Ana Belén Fernández Carvajal, Luis Manuel Ruiz-Gómez, “Evolution of European Union's energy security in gas supply during Russia–Ukraine gas crises (2006–2009)”, *Energy Strategy Reviews*, 2020 Vol.30

1.1 “No man is an island”? The main problem of the Baltic states’ energy security

Almost every text on the Baltic states, be it for academic or journalistic purposes, starts with the fact that these three countries used to be part of the USSR. As cliché as it sounds, this historical flashback helps us better understand the roots of the energy security challenges in the region.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania regained independence and commenced to pursue their own national energy policies.⁸⁵ Yet, the technical infrastructure and operational conditions in the region were still bound to the Soviet-time developments. While Europe was developing its own energy interconnection system over the course of the second half of XX century, the Baltic states that joined the EU only in 2004, were exclusively connected to Russia and Belarus, which made them isolated from the rest of Europe in terms of energy. As Radziukynas et al. put it, “three Baltic systems have not been developed on a national basis, but actually as one consolidated transmission system”.⁸⁶ For this reason, the Baltic states had “no control over sources of gas supply and their gas imports are highly concentrated, so that practically all consumption comes from a single supplier”, which, meant higher prices for end-consumers, energy supply insecurity, and lack of market development.⁸⁷ Thus, the Baltic states were often characterised as an ‘energy island’.

Despite the dependence on Russian fossil fuels and tight connection to Russia’s energy infrastructure like electricity grids and pipelines, some differences across the sectors exist. According to Grigas, “oil is traded internationally and all three Baltic states have the capacity to import non-Russian oil and oil products via their terminals on the Baltic Sea. In contrast, their gas import infrastructure is limited to Soviet-era pipelines and wholly dependent on Russia. Second, unlike in the oil relationship, Russia does not depend on the Baltics for gas transit to foreign markets, leaving the three states effectively as ‘gas islands’. As a result, Russia could cut off gas supplies to them without interrupting supplies to other European countries”⁸⁸.

⁸⁵ Radziukynas, Virginias et. al, “Challenges for the Baltic Power System connecting synchronously to Continental European Network”, *Electric Power Systems Research*, Vol. 140 (2016), 54-64

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Laura Rodríguez-Fernández et al. “Evolution of European Union's energy security in gas supply during Russia–Ukraine gas crises (2006–2009)”, *Energy Strategy Reviews*, 2020 Vol.30

⁸⁸ Grigas, Agnia. “Legacies, Coercion and Soft Power: Russian Influence in the Baltic States”, *Chatham House*, August 2012.

In addition, the Baltic states, unlike the “friendly nations”, paid full market prices without any discounts, which was profitable for Gazprom.⁸⁹ Moreover, in the 2000s, Gazprom would own significant amount of shares in the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian gas companies, which could be a way to exert influence on the highest-level decision-making within the companies.

1.2 Energy supply disruption beyond Ukraine: a series of “wake up calls” for the Baltic States?

The 2000s have been characterised by a number gas crises in Central and Eastern Europe. While most scholars and politicians have identified the Ukraine gas crises of 2006 and 2009 as “wake up call”⁹⁰ and “game changer” in the literature, speeches and personal evaluations,⁹¹ the scope of Russia’s instrumentalisation of energy as a tool of “intimidation and blackmail” of its neighbours, as quoted by a former U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney,⁹² went far beyond the disputes with Ukraine.

The gas disputes between Russia and Ukraine were definitely not one-off events. All three Baltic states had to face temporary gas disruptions as a response to domestic policies that were deemed controversial or unacceptable by the “single supplier”. Herein it is important to make an observation that such ways of exerting pressure on the Baltic states did not emerge in the 2000s. Back in 1990, amid the decline of the Soviet Union and the surge in independence movements all across the Soviet republics, Russia introduced a full economic blockade of Lithuania after the Lithuanian Supreme Court declared independence of Lithuania on March 11, 1990. The blockade included oil and gas embargo, which lasted between April to July 1990. Being an energy island tightly linked to Russia, Lithuania suffered great economic losses and, after becoming excruciatingly exhausted by the blockade, was persuaded by the Western governments to find a compromise with the Soviet

⁸⁹ Grigas, Agnia. “Legacies, Coercion and Soft Power: Russian Influence in the Baltic States”, *Chatham House*, August 2012.

⁹⁰ Pérez-Cejuela, Laura, “The Ukraine crisis: An energy wake-up call for the EU”, Ecojesuit, 15 September 2014, <https://www.ecojesuit.com/the-ukraine-crisis-an-energy-wake-up-call-for-the-eu/>; Petersen Alexandrox, “Energy-Hungry Europe Misses Another Wake-Up Call”, RFERL, 2 February 2009, https://www.rferl.org/a/EnergyHungry_Europe_Misses_Another_WakeUp_Call/1378022.html; Chew, Edward, “Europe’s Gas Crisis: Don’t Act Surprised”, Brookings, 7 January 2009 <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/europes-gas-crisis-dont-act-surprised/>

⁹¹ Gardner, Andrew, “Ukraine turns to EU for gas”, Politico, 26 March 2015 <https://www.politico.eu/article/ukraine-turns-to-eu-for-gas/>; Demicco Pasqual, “A cold winter to come? The EU seeks alternatives to Russian gas” European Parliament Study, October 2014 [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2014/536413/EXPO_STU\(2014\)536413_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2014/536413/EXPO_STU(2014)536413_EN.pdf)

⁹² Dmitry Zhdannikov, “Russia Halts Estonia Fuel Transit amid Statue Row,” Reuters, May 2, 2007, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-estonia-energy-idUSL0264696120070502>.

leadership. Then, after the introduction of a one hundred day moratorium on the legal actions arising from the 11 March Declaration of Independence, Moscow agreed to negotiate and eventually lift the embargo.⁹³

Yet, gaining independence was not the remedy when it comes to energy security. The Baltic states were still depended on Russian fossil fuels. Then, it comes as no surprise that the issue of energy supply disruption hit one more time in 1993, when the delivery of natural gas to Estonia was halted amid the Kremlin's accusations of Tallinn of "apartheid policy".⁹⁴ What was considered to be an "apartheid policy" by the former Russian president Boris Yeltsin was a newly passed nationality law which required non-Estonians to pass the language test in order to apply for a passport, while Estonians who lived in the country prior to 1940 were granted the citizenship and the voting rights automatically.⁹⁵ Even though the formal pretext of the shutoff was the debt to Russia that amounted to \$11 million, the gas disruption came in force after the statement of Yeltsin.⁹⁶ In addition, Russia threatened⁹⁷ to suspend the Treaty on the Foundations of Interstate Relations between Russia and Estonia, in which Russia recognized the independence of the Estonian Republic⁹⁸. "Russia will not be able to remain in a position of indifferent onlooker," President Yeltsin claimed.⁹⁹

As stated by Agnia Grigas, "Russian influence in the Baltics aims to constrain their independence and undermine the political, economic, and civilisational choices they have made".¹⁰⁰ Thus, the practice of halting energy supplies as an attempt to interfere into the Baltic states' internal affairs became a consistent policy. Energy disruptions have been used as "methods to display [Russian]

⁹³ Rich, Vera, "Focus: Baltic states struggle for total power - Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have won their political independence from Moscow and are racing towards the free market. But energy to drive their economies still comes from Mother Russia", *New Scientist*, 25 April 1992. URL: [\[REDACTED\]](#)

⁹⁴ Efron, Sonni, "Angry Russia Cuts Off Gas to Estonia : Embargo: The stoppage comes a day after President Yeltsin threatened reprisals for what he called the Baltic state's 'apartheid' policy.", *LA Times*, 1993 <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1993-06-26-mn-7413-story.html>

⁹⁵ Bohlen, Celestine "Russia Cuts Gas Supply To Estonia in a Protest", *New York Times*, 26 June 1993, <https://www.nytimes.com/1993/06/26/world/russia-cuts-gas-supply-to-estonia-in-a-protest.html>; Estonian Citizenship Act, 1995

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ «Закон об иностранцах принят Госсобранием Эстонии», *Независимая Газета* 1993. — 25 июня, 1993 — № 117 (23972), вебсайт "Ельцин Центра": <http://www.yeltsincenter.ru/digest/release/den-za-dnem-25-iyunya-1993-goda>

⁹⁸ Заявление Б.Н. Ельцина в связи с введением в Эстонии "закона об иностранцах", июнь 1993 <https://docs.cntd.ru/document/1901980>

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Grigas, Agnia. "Legacies, Coercion and Soft Power: Russian Influence in the Baltic States", *Chatham House*, August 2012;

hard power”, simultaneously with “different subtle tactics, such as creating networks and diplomacy, to conceal the nature of the more overt methods”¹⁰¹.

In 2000s, all three Baltic states had to face energy supply disruptions within a timespan of four years. In Latvia, 2003 started with the shutoff of oil supply to the port of Ventspils, the largest terminal for the export of crude oil in the Baltic states.¹⁰² The Russian officials cited “a lack of pipeline capacity” as a justification of the halt. Yet, the regional and international media speculated about “a row over Russian allegations Latvia was mistreating its ethnic Russian minority” as the real reason behind it.¹⁰³ At the same time, Grigas insists that in 2003, the question of the Ventspils Nafta privatisation was on top of the agenda, when “the Latvian government resisted investment attempts by Russian companies, including Transneft and Lukoil”¹⁰⁴. As a response, Russia cut off supplies to the port and rerouted the oil flows to its local port of Primorsk. Likewise, Russia cut oil supplies to the Lithuanian station Mažeikiu Nafta in 2006, arguably for the identical reasons as in 2003. Moscow cited technical difficulties at the pipeline as the official reason. Yet, citing Grigas, the Kremlin’s move was “punitive as Lithuania authorised the sale to the Polish company [PKN Orlen], instead of Russia’s choice [Lukoil]”¹⁰⁵, however, Lithuania, like Latvia in 2003, did not succumb.

The issue of the arguable maltreatment of ethnic Russians in Estonia was the main reason behind the supply disruptions in April 2007, when the Soviet World War II monument was relocated from a park in central Tallinn to the Defence Forces Cemetery.¹⁰⁶ The move was met with harsh criticism in Moscow and was considered as an act of Russophobia. Then the Russian Russian Railways halted the oil and coal supply for purely “technical reasons”.¹⁰⁷ Russian officials made claims that sanctions against Estonia were off the table, yet the halt coincided with the ban of Estonian products

¹⁰¹ Ibid; Hanson, Zachary, *Russia’s Energy Diplomacy in the Baltic States*, Virginia Commonwealth University, 2003

¹⁰² Russia: Moscow Halts Oil Exports To Latvia's Ventspils, Seeks Ownership, RFERL, 10 January 2003 <https://www.rferl.org/a/1101862.html>

¹⁰³ “FACTBOX: Russian oil and gas as political weapon?”, *Reuters*, 2 May 2007, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-estonia-energy-idUSL0211261020070502>

¹⁰⁴ Grigas, Agnia. “Legacies, Coercion and Soft Power: Russian Influence in the Baltic States”, *Chatham House*, August 2012.

¹⁰⁵ Dmitry Trenin in “*Pipelines, politics and power: The future of EU-Russia energy relations*”, The Centre for European Reform, 2008

¹⁰⁶ “FACTBOX: Russian oil and gas as political weapon?”, *Reuters*, 2 May 2007, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-estonia-energy-idUSL0211261020070502>

¹⁰⁷ “Российские железные дороги” перестали поставлять нефть в Эстонию”, *lenta.ru*, 2 May 2007, <https://lenta.ru/news/2007/05/02/rzhd/>

imports.¹⁰⁸ The move was identified as “a well-coordinated and flagrant intervention with the internal affairs of Estonia” by the Prime Minister Andrus Ansip.¹⁰⁹

With the above-mentioned cases in mind, several inferences regarding energy supply disruptions could be made. They tend to take place during disputes with neighbours, usually based on commercial reasons or on the grounds of alleged discrimination of ethnic Russians. As a rule, they are used as a way to exert influence and pressure into shaping Russia-friendly domestic policies. In the late cases, the disruptions were cited to be caused by technical or commercial reasons.¹¹⁰ Yet, sometimes they were openly punitive. Thanks to EU and NATO accession in 2004, the Baltic states could strengthen their independence in decision-making and reduce Russia’s “ability to influence these countries’ domestic policies, which have been a source of concern for Moscow”¹¹¹. But what about energy security? The issue was still to be tackled.

It has been strongly outlined in various analytical papers that it is in the greatest interest of the Baltic States to pursue their energy security needs by collective actions and ensure “that both Brussels and Berlin understand what is at stake: a strong and united Europe”¹¹². Thus, the Baltic states’ efforts to Europeanise energy security will be discussed in the next chapter. In the following subchapter, I will proceed to the analysis of energy security policy of the EU after Russia-Ukraine gas disputes.

1.3 Back to business as usual? The EU’s energy security policy after Russia-Ukraine gas disputes in 2006-2009

The renewal of interest in energy security on the European level was sparked by the gas crises between Russia and Ukraine in 2006 and 2009. Much has been said on the political arena and written in the academic literature about the price dispute between Gazprom and Naftogaz, which led to a series of supply disruptions in several EU member states from Central and Eastern Europe: Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary. Yet, for the sake of the context, it is necessary to briefly outline the essence of the dispute.

¹⁰⁸ “Россия отказалась от эстонских конфет, а Эстония осталась без нефти и туров в РФ” [newsru.com](https://www.newsru.com/finance/03may2007/notrade.html), 3 May 2007, <https://www.newsru.com/finance/03may2007/notrade.html>;

¹⁰⁹ “ФАКТБОХ: Russian oil and gas as political weapon?”, *Reuters*, 2 May 2007, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-estonia-energy-idUSL0211261020070502>

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Baran, Zeyno *Lithuanian Energy Security: Challenges and Choices*, Hudson Institute, 2006

In brief, Ukraine was not only the largest single importer of Russian gas, but also a crucial gas transit route to Central and Eastern Europe.¹¹³ Due to a series of unpaid debts and increasing world gas prices, Gazprom insisted on settling a new price per cubic meter - up to 180\$, which would have posed a grave threat for Ukraine's economy. As a result, Russia cut off Ukrainian import gas volumes, while Ukraine diverted gas destined for Europe, which resulted in a drastic reduction and then a complete cutoff of supplies to Europe.¹¹⁴ An interesting conclusion drawn from the assessment of 2006-2009 gas disputes goes as follows: "Over the next 10–20 years, European companies and governments will have options in relation to decisions from where their additional gas supplies should be sourced; and options to reorient energy balances away from gas towards other sources of energy, particularly for power generation. It is certainly possible that choices will include non-gas alternatives, and non-Russian gas supplies reaching Europe via non-Russian routes. The extent and speed with which such alternatives may be realised in the 2020s will tell us how much damage this crisis has caused in Europe to the image of gas in general, and to Russian gas in particular"¹¹⁵.

Yet, after the crisis the gas security in the European Union hardly improved and arguably even worsened.¹¹⁶ According to the analysis by Rodríguez-Fernández et al., "energy security turns out to have improved by just 0.21% in the period analysed [in 2005-2010], representing very limited progress"¹¹⁷. Moreover, the lack of policy response to an emerging energy security risk resulted in an increasing vulnerability to supply interruption risks.¹¹⁸ In 2005, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia hit from 90% to 100%.¹¹⁹ As for Weighted Energy Security Index for gas in 2005-2010, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania accounted for 5.88%, 33%, and 1.74% accordingly.

Nevertheless, the analysis has illustrated that Latvia was one of the few countries that significantly improved its energy security. Indeed, after the Ukraine gas crises the Baltic states have "faced

¹¹³ Druzhba pipeline.

¹¹⁴ Pirani, Simon et al., "The Russo-Ukrainian gas dispute of January 2009: a comprehensive assessment", *Oxford Institute for Energy Studies*, 2009

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Laura Rodríguez-Fernández et al. "Evolution of European Union's energy security in gas supply during Russia–Ukraine gas crises (2006–2009)", *Energy Strategy Reviews*, 2020 Vol.30

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Laura Rodríguez-Fernández et al. "Evolution of European Union's energy security in gas supply during Russia–Ukraine gas crises (2006–2009)", *Energy Strategy Reviews*, 2020 Vol.30

essential changes in the energy sector”.¹²⁰ Several papers argue in favour of better energy security performance of each of the Baltic states. In 2008-2010, the overall level of energy security was 65.4% in Estonia, 63.5% in Latvia and 54.2% in Lithuania. By 2016, this level grew up to 78.5%, 68.9% and 66.4% accordingly.¹²¹ In light of this, Estonia is the country that performed best among the three between 2010-2016. The result was achieved mainly due to “domestically extracted oil shale as local fuel, high share of RES, low energy dependency, good fulfilment of EU commitments and low dependency on natural gas”.¹²² Meanwhile, Latvia and Lithuania also did well and improved their energy security level by 2016, yet both countries were highly dependent on the single energy supplier and Latvia, in particular, had faced obstacles in implementing the Third Energy Package. That being said, such result can be attributed mainly to the Baltic states’ own efforts. In the 2018 the World Energy Trilemma Index (WETI), which is based on the evaluations of three dimensions: energy security, energy equity, and environmental sustainability, the Baltic states did rather well out of 125 countries. Latvia ranked as 11th, Estonia was 19th, and Lithuania was 46th. In the latest report of 2021, the positions of the Baltic states rather deteriorated. Latvia and Lithuania are ranked as 20th, while Lithuania scored the best among the three, being 14th. However, the rank has some limitations, as it only shares limited information about each country’s performance but does not provide the values of index dimensions, the context and the history of the country’s performance.¹²³

It should be noted that there is a clear divergence of interests and policy priorities between the supranational and the member state levels. At the EU level, “the anxiety surrounding the prospects for a physical cut-off of Russian gas galvanised support for an EU Energy Union to harmonise, integrate, and diversify the internal market”¹²⁴. According to Hasanov et al., “some events from the recent past that have threatened energy supplies to the EU include the Russia-Ukraine natural gas dispute in 2009 and the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014. Such events highlight the need for a more substantive energy policy to overcome possible energy supply disruptions and to mitigate

¹²⁰ Juozas Augutis, Ričardas Krikštolaitis, Linas Martišauskas, Sigita Urbonienė, Rolandas Urbonas, Aistė Barbora Ušpurienė, “Analysis of energy security level in the Baltic States based on indicator approach”, *Energy*, Volume 199, 2020

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ World Energy Trilemma Index. <https://www.worldenergy.org/transition-toolkit/world-energy-trilemma-index>; Juozas Augutis et al, “Analysis of energy security level in the Baltic States based on indicator approach”, *Energy*, Volume 199, 2020

¹²⁴ Laura Rodríguez-Fernández et al. “Evolution of European Union's energy security in gas supply during Russia–Ukraine gas crises (2006–2009)”, *Energy Strategy Reviews*, 2020 Vol.30

security challenges, particularly by diversifying supply options”.¹²⁵ The European Union's Third Energy Package, proposed by the European Commission in September 2007 and finally adopted by the Parliament and the Council in July 2009, were partly or wholly a response to the gas crises followed by supply disruption. It aimed to strengthen energy diversification and security of supply, but also increase energy solidarity in emergency situations, e.g. “in the event of "severe disruptions" of gas supply.”¹²⁶

At the same time, 2010-2016 is the time when the notorious Nord Stream project was commissioned, and Nord Stream 2 was launched. Both pipelines are aimed at bypassing traditional transit countries and therefore reducing Russia’s dependence on transit countries, most notably Ukraine, and linking the gas supplies directly to Germany and further into Western Europe. There were innumerable outcries of criticism regarding the potential usage of the pipeline against CEE countries and Ukraine. In addition, the project would violate the EU energy diversification strategy and pose a security problem for the whole community. Yet, the project was launched due to the support of countries like Germany, France, Austria. Especially notable is the advocacy by former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, who would then become an independent director of the board of Russia’s biggest oil company Rosneft, and the head of the shareholders' committee of Nord Stream AG. What did the project mean for the Baltic states? According to Grigas, Nord Stream was a means to exert influence on small states, or even “punishment for their policies”. She argues: “Russia was able to increase its leverage on the transit states because it was no longer dependent on them, while the transit states remained dependent on Russia for their oil supply. Without the risk of endangering its exports, Moscow was able to implement oil cut-offs to transit states such as the Baltics”.¹²⁷

1.4 Conclusions

In this chapter, we identified the essence of the Baltic states’ energy security challenges, and looked back upon the events that influenced the policy making of the Baltic states. Thanks to the explaining outcome process-tracing, we could identify that the drastic changes in energy security policy in the Baltic states as well as on the European level took place 2010 and 2016. Following the

¹²⁵ Hasanov, et al. “The role of Azeri natural gas in meeting European Union energy security needs”, in: *Energy Strategy Reviews, Elsevier Ltd*, 2020, p. 100464

¹²⁶ “3rd Energy Package gets final approval from MEPs”, *European Parliament, 2009* <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+IM-PRESS+20080616FCS31737+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

¹²⁷ Grigas, Agnia. “Legacies, Coercion and Soft Power: Russian Influence in the Baltic States”, *Chatham House*, August 2012

framework of triggering events, we can discern a pattern of politically- and security-driven changes after major European crises. As a matter of fact, the main policy shifts in the Baltic states have been caused by the 2006-2009 gas crises in Ukraine, supply disruption in the region, and the crisis in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine in 2014. Yet, it was by no means a unequivocal trend. For some EU member states with strong bargaining power, it was quite reverse: with the help of German authorities, two major ambiguous projects were launched: Nord Stream and Nord Stream 2 (suspended), which, according to many experts and politicians, would pose a grave threat for energy security of Central and Eastern European countries. In this sense, the improvement of the external dimension of EU energy security was quite meagre. Such striking dissimilarity between responses to the above-mentioned crises shows a liability to the unity of the EU regarding the perception energy security and the policy-making. For both parties, security of supply meant absence of supply interruptions. However, for the 'big states' like Germany, the root of the issue was instability of Ukraine as an energy transit partner. For the Baltic states, it was dependence on the single supplier.

Chapter 2:

Introduction

How do small states pursue their interests on the EU level, and are they capable to change the direction of the Union's policies? The aim of this chapter is to shed light on the energy security policy-making of the Baltic states and examine attempts to europeanise decision-making in this realm, which will be conducted by a multi-level analysis: nation-state, regional, and European. The chapter is commenced with qualitative content analysis of national security strategies, then the Baltic Assembly resolutions, and is completed with an examination of the Council presidencies of three Baltic states.

2.1. Energy security as an indispensable part of national security: an analysis of the Baltic states' national security strategies

The aim of this subchapter is to analyse the provisions regarding energy policy and energy security in national security strategies of three Baltic states. In this thesis, national security strategy is defined as “a key framework for a country to meet the basic needs and security concerns of citizens, and address external and internal threats to the country”.¹²⁸ As stated by Stolberg, “the concept of national security is directly related to the notions of both security and nation or state, and their relationship to each other”, and such document contributes to the country's effort to “best cause security for itself.”¹²⁹ “[Security] points to a degree of protection of acquired values, to include the absence of threats to those values and the absence of fear that those values will be attacked”¹³⁰.

Why is it important to study the national security strategies of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania? First, according to Caudle, it communicates the values, priorities and goals of a nation state; provides an outlook to the current security settings, as well as gives a comprehensive overview of existing threats. Moreover, it presents “prioritised and measurable goals and objectives with timelines”, which allows researchers and policy-makers to make inferences about a nation-state's desired course of action.¹³¹ Secondly, scholars and politicians tend to agree that energy is an indispensable

¹²⁸ “National Security Strategies: Towards a New Generation”, Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, <https://issat.dcaf.ch/Learn/SSR-in-Practice/Thematics-in-Practice/National-Security-Strategies>

¹²⁹ Stolberg, Alan, *How Nation-States Craft National Security Strategy Documents*, 2012

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Sharon L. Caudle, “National Security Strategies: Security from What, for Whom, and by What Means,” *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management*, Vol. 6, Issue 1, 2009, p. 8.

part of national security, and to a greater extent, foreign policy, “when energy insecurity affects a country's governing policies”.¹³²

Judging by each of the Baltic states’ national security strategies, several common broad themes could be identified. Firstly, all three Baltic states share unequivocal support for deepening Euro-Atlantic cooperation. By being EU and NATO member states, they benefit from cooperation in defence and “additional guarantees of security”¹³³. Latvia, for instance, regards EU and NATO membership as an “important basic element of national security”¹³⁴, like Lithuania and Estonia, that fully support the EU, and call for “cohesion” and further “joint actions for common interests”.

It goes without saying that the Baltic states recognise precariousness of a small state. For instance, Estonia openly recognised its dependence on “global trends, including economic crises and the instability of important international markets”, especially “changes in the global energy market, as well as in the established structure of energy supply between the European Union and Russia”.¹³⁵ For this reason, all three Baltic states explicitly call for “joint actions to reduce the existing vulnerabilities” (Lithuania). Thus, collaboration is one of the major themes related to energy security: requests for “joint planning and promotion of regional strategies” and “international and regional cooperation” are supported by Latvia and Lithuania. Sometimes it was framed like enhancing “security of energy infrastructure and supply systems” and calling for “integrated Europe” (Estonia), “diversification”, “supply strategy”, “reduction of dependence” (Latvia), and “full integration into EU energy markets” (Lithuania). As a rule, most attention has been paid to the gas market, which can be explained by the fact that oil can be traded internationally, while gas is transferred via existing pipelines tied to Russia.

When it comes to Russia as the main energy supplier to the EU, it is recognised as the main concern and potential source of threat. Lithuania expresses its concerns in a vocal and articulate way: “[c]apacity of the Russian Federation to use military and economic, energy, information and other non-military measures in combination against the neighbouring countries, ability to exploit and create internal problems of the states located in the Eastern neighbourhood of the Republic of Lithuania as well as preparedness of the Russian Federation to use a nuclear weapon even against

¹³² “How the United States uses and produces energy is a national security issue”, *American Security Project*: <https://www.americansecurityproject.org/issues/energy-security/#:~:text=Energy%20becomes%20a%20national%20security,securing%20both%20distribution%20and%20access>.

¹³³ National Security Strategy of Lithuania

¹³⁴ National Security Strategy of Latvia

¹³⁵ National Security Strategy of Estonia

the states which do not possess it is a challenge to the security of the Republic of Lithuania and the whole Euro-Atlantic community”.¹³⁶ At the same time, Latvia and Estonia do not mention Russia in the context of energy security. In this sense, Lithuania goes even further by proposing specific countermeasures against dominance of a single supplier on the energy market: “preventing one investor of the Republic of Lithuania or a foreign investor from dominating in strategic sectors of the economy and preventing the capital which does not meet the national security interests from penetrating the country’s businesses”, which is clearly a hint at Gazprom, which used to own significant shares in all top energy companies of the Baltic states. Another major theme is broader cooperation in the Baltic region, such as creating “transmission connections” with Denmark and Poland, and Nordic countries, like Finland, in order to “ensure the security of supply, reducing dependence on a single supplier or limited number of suppliers”¹³⁷. Such cooperation would not be limited to energy, but would also cover defence, politics, science and education, culture, economics, finance, transport, environment protection and other fields”.¹³⁸

In fact, such interests regarding cooperation go far beyond regional level. Further integration into the EU energy market and support for the EU Energy Union is an indispensable part of the Baltic states’ energy security. For this reason, they deem it necessary to “actively participate in the decision-making at EU institutions necessary for the effective functioning and stability of the EU, [...] especially in the areas of the internal market, common currency, interconnectivity of energy and transport networks” in order to support solidarity among the member states, diversify the energy market, reduce external vulnerabilities, and ensure a more comprehensive preparation for potential contingencies.¹³⁹ Despite the overall significance of energy security in the national security strategies, the degree of salience varies. Among the three, Lithuania seems to be more outspoken about the challenges of energy security than others, as the issue is more sensitive for her in terms of electricity grids and gas pipelines tightly connected to Belarus and Russia.

Several inferences could be drawn from this subchapter. Firstly, energy security concerns tie the Baltic countries together.¹⁴⁰ Conducting qualitative content analysis could help us identify several prevailing themes tied to energy security: interconnectivity, external vulnerability, regional

¹³⁶ National Security Strategy of Lithuania

¹³⁷ National Security Strategy of Estonia

¹³⁸ National Security Strategy of Lithuania; National Security Strategy of Estonia

¹³⁹ National Security Strategy of Lithuania

¹⁴⁰ “Baltic Security Strategy Report” (ed. Nikers, Olevs, Tabuns, Otto), *The Jamestown foundation*, 2019

cooperation, synchronisation and diversification, support for Euro-Atlantic integration and recognition of Russia as the main source of threat. As it was outlined above, the rhetoric of some countries is less compromising. Another important observation is the fact that in national security strategies and policy papers, there are calls for further supranationalisation of energy policy. Several analytical papers are in agreement that the Baltic states would benefit from common and coherent external European Union energy policy.¹⁴¹ “Interconnection with the rest of Europe should be priority”¹⁴², so They also point to the pressing necessity to coordinate energy policies with the broader Baltic states and Nordic states, especially with Finland and Poland. Hence, regional cooperation has been identified as one of the most efficient tools to diversify and securitise the three countries’ energy sectors.

2.2 Regional cooperation in the realm of energy: the case of the Baltic Assembly

The aim of this subchapter is to analyse energy security policy in the resolutions and final documents of the Baltic Assembly. United by their shared history and many common features, the Baltic states felt the necessity to foster trilateral cooperation in order to find solutions to their most pressing problems and attain common objectives, the main one being the goal of joining the Euro-Atlantic community. Thus, in the period between restoration of the Baltic states’ independence and prior to joining the European Union and NATO in 2004, the Baltic states established a “series of structures which have institutionalized cooperation among the parliaments, governments and heads of state”¹⁴³.

One of such institutions is the Baltic Assembly, which emerged on the ruins of the Soviet Union in 1992. Among other structures as the Baltic Council of Ministers, the Baltic Council, it is an example of intergovernmental cooperation on a regional level. Prior to the Baltic states’ accession to the European Union and NATO in 2004, the Baltic Assembly was one of the principal forums for an open dialogue and trilateral cooperation between the parliamentarians, and a “defender of the national interests of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania”.¹⁴⁴ It is necessary to emphasise that it is an active participant in fostering trilateral cooperation and harmonisation of policies. It is highly

¹⁴¹ Baran, Zeyno *Lithuanian Energy Security: Challenges and Choices*, Hudson Institute, 2006

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ The official website of the Baltic Assembly. URL: <https://www.baltasam.org/>

appreciated by the leaders of the Baltic states, as two of them - Estonia and Latvia - are parliamentary republics, and the parliaments do play an important role in the policy-making process.¹⁴⁵ Despite the consultative nature of the Baltic Assembly, according to the official website, “the evaluation of executive reports on the implementation of Baltic Assembly decisions revealed that approximately 85% of the recommendations issued by the Baltic Assembly were in fact implemented by the Baltic Council of Ministers during this period”.¹⁴⁶ Thus, the Baltic Assembly resolutions could reveal real decision-making patterns and shifts in the agenda.

As stated in the address of the Ambassador of Estonia to Lithuania on behalf of the then-Minister of Foreign Affairs Toomas Hendrik Ilves, “The present and future role of the Baltic Assembly as an instrument in co-ordinating and harmonizing the legislative work of the parliaments of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania towards integration with European and trans-Atlantic structures is of inestimable importance. The Baltic Assembly has also proved to be an excellent opportunity for inculcating and practicing European norms of behaviour and forms of cooperation among the Baltic states and by so doing has served to demonstrate by example to our neighbours and to the rest of the world our maturity and preparedness to reach our goals.”¹⁴⁷

It is important to justify the choice of the collected data and identify the limitations of this subchapter prior to proceeding to the analysis of findings. The final statements and resolutions of the Baltic Assembly have been chosen to examine the regional level policies on energy security. The website of the Baltic Assembly is coherently organised, containing full documents from all 40 sessions in English, which makes it a reliable and transparent source of primary data. In addition, it provides a lot of valuable insights into the history of regional cooperation that facilitates understanding the principles behind the decision-making at the Assembly, and make judgements about the salience of issues in question.

Firstly, no documents before 2004 were included in the analysis, making the time frame from 2004 to 2022. After conducting preliminary examination of primary sources, it was observed that before 2004, energy security policy was not on the top of the agenda of the Baltic Assembly. That being the case, it is important to remember that the aim of the chapter is to analyse the bottom-up Europeanisation efforts and attempts to shift the European Union policy-making. Finally, according

¹⁴⁵ Agreement on Baltic Parliamentary and Governmental Cooperation, https://vm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/web-static/486/1994_06_Kokkulepe_%20parlamentaarsest_ja_valitsustevahelisest_koostoost_eng.pdf

¹⁴⁶ The official website of the Baltic Assembly, <https://www.baltasam.org/>

¹⁴⁷ Address by H. E. Alar Olljum to the 11th Session of the Baltic Assembly in Vilnius, 7 November 1997, <https://vm.ee/ru/node/42660>

to Tosun et. al, no major Europe-wide triggering events like the Russia-Ukraine gas dispute took place before that period of time, and energy dependence was arguably not identified as a grave threat to the Baltic countries.¹⁴⁸ It could also be explained by an assumption that there were other more important issues at stake like joining NATO and the EU; border control, harmonisation of laws, social and economic policies. Secondly, it is important to outline that the Baltic Assembly is not the only means of trilateral cooperation in the region. Other organisations like the Baltic Council of Ministers, the foreign ministers' Cooperation Council, the Baltic Presidents' Council, and others.¹⁴⁹ The documents and resolutions passed at the above-mentioned entities are not openly available, thus it was not possible to analyse them. Therefore, there is a low chance that the findings based on additional primary data could potentially differ from those outlined below.

As mentioned earlier, prior to 2004, energy security was not a major topic of the Baltic Assembly meetings. However, since the 26th session in 2006, it became a persistent theme. From priorities for “energy efficiency” and “saving”, the Baltic Assembly called for for “closer regional cooperation” in energy projects, transport and infrastructure, not only among the three countries, but creating a wider Baltic energy interconnection infrastructure by doing joint projects with Finland and Poland.¹⁵⁰ At last, after 2014, the rhetoric has developed into a recognised necessity to develop a full-fledged “common regional gas and electricity market of the Baltic States” and ensure “full integration of the Baltic States energy market and infrastructure with the rest of Europe”.¹⁵¹ Thus, supply diversification and securitisation also became a prominent topic of the Baltic Assembly agenda. Since the gas crises in Ukraine in 2006 and 2009 and a series of supply disruptions in their own countries, the Baltic states commenced to put effort into doing research on “benefits of common energy markets”, finding “viable long-term regional solutions” and “jointly seek the financial support of the European Union for the implementation of the agreed regional solution”¹⁵². Likewise, to diversify and secure energy supply, the Baltic states delved into energy from renewable sources.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁸ Tosun, Jale, Biesenbender, Sophie, *Energy Policy making in the EU. Building the Agenda*, Springer, 2015

¹⁴⁹ “Baltic Cooperation”, *Republic of Estonia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, <https://vm.ee/en/baltic-cooperation>

¹⁵⁰ Resolutions of the 29th, 30th, 31st Sessions of the Baltic Assembly

¹⁵¹ Resolution of the 37th Session of the Baltic Assembly

¹⁵² Resolution of the 36th Session of the Baltic Assembly

¹⁵³ Resolution of the 33rd Session of the Baltic Assembly

As for Russia, at first it was never clearly identified or explicitly named in the context of energy security — but rather covertly called a “single supplier” or “one energy supplier”.¹⁵⁴ Yet, the tone has changed drastically after 2014. Then, the Baltic Assembly explicitly advocated against the Nord Stream 2 and dependency on Russian fossil fuels in general, which was considered as an existential threat: “to take a unanimous position that the Nord Stream 2 project is not in line with the EU strategy of diversification of sources of supply and routes of transit of imported energy, as well as the EU’s energy security strategy and foreign, security, and Eastern Partnership policy goals, reinforcing the EU’s dependency on Russian gas supply”.¹⁵⁵ Moreover, the Baltic Assembly advocated for comprehensive evaluation of “the compatibility of the Nord Stream 2 project with EU policy aims and ensure that all relevant EU legislation is fully respected”.¹⁵⁶

The analysis of the findings leads us to several important inferences. Firstly, the role the Baltic Assembly in the decision-making should not be underestimated. Among with the Baltic Council of Ministers, the Baltic Assembly helped not only to “resolve[d] internal and foreign policy problems of the Baltic States, ensure[d] regular dialogue between the Baltic States and actors in international policy”, but, more importantly, to also lobby “for the interests of the Baltic States in the EU and NATO both directly and indirectly”¹⁵⁷. Conducting qualitative content analysis has helped use identify prevailing themes and codes: energy security, diversification of supply, energy dependency, interconnection, and deepening cooperation, which have become omnipresent since 2006. Another important observation that has been made is that there has been a shift towards securitisation of energy policy, and a growing perception of energy as a geopolitical tool of influence, and dependency as an existential threat to the Baltic states and the EU as a whole. Moreover, the tone and the rhetoric of the resolutions and final documents have become less compromising, and the policies have become more proactive than reactive.

2.3. Pursuing interests on the European level: agenda-setting and interstate bargaining on the European level

The aim of this subchapter is to study the Council presidencies of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Such examination is relevant for the purposes of the study, as it allows to discern common patterns

¹⁵⁴ Resolution of the 33rd Session of the Baltic Assembly

¹⁵⁵ Resolution of the 33rd Session of the Baltic Assembly

¹⁵⁶ Resolution of the 36th Session of the Baltic Assembly

¹⁵⁷ Address by H. E. Alar Olljum to the 11th Session of the Baltic Assembly in Vilnius, 7 November 1997, <https://vm.ee/ru/node/42660>

of agenda-setting, coalition building, and bargaining of small states during a six-month period, and analyse the countries' objectives and attained results. The Council defines the EU's general political direction, common foreign and security policy, sets the policy agenda, and coordinates member the policies of member states'.¹⁵⁸ One of the main features of the Council is its intergovernmental essence — the member states play the primary role in the decision-making process of this institution, which would eloquently illustrate a relative bargaining power of member states. As it was outlined in the theoretical chapter, within the liberal intergovernmentalist framework, European integration is an “outcome of rational choices made by national leaders on the basis of economic factors”, while the EU “continues to be a tool of achieving individual goals of every state”.¹⁵⁹ Given the rotating presidency every six months, each member state enjoys an opportunity to pursue its priorities and set the agenda on the European level, thus having a chance to shape the course of the EU. It is a window of opportunity particularly for small states.¹⁶⁰ As rightly noted by Gurol and Panke, the existing literature mainly focuses on interstate bargaining at the Council of Ministers, but not the rotating presidency itself. Yet, there seems to be a consensus among the scholars that for the small states, which lack as much capacity and financial resources as their bigger counterparts, it is crucial to select a limited number of topics of high priority — as put by Panke et al.: “the more selective states are on the topics they pursue, the more likely they are to have a lasting and prominent impact on EU policies”.¹⁶¹ To increase the likelihood of success in Council negotiations, another tactic to be employed by small states is coalition-building to enhance their bargaining power. In addition, literature defines two common positions during the presidency: “amplifier” as a tactic to promote own national interests, and “silencer” as a way to concentrate on broader European concerns. According to Jurkynas et al., the latter “is usually ascribed to small and new EU member states that do not want to stand out as black sheep”.¹⁶² At the same time, it is not uncommon for the small states to attempt to “punch above their weight” in order to achieve results in the areas of particular salience, and increase their own visibility.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁸ The Official Website of the Council of the European Union

¹⁵⁹ Tosiek, Piotr, “The European Union after the Treaty of Lisbon – Still a Hybrid Legal and Political System”, in *Beyond Borders: External Relations of the European Union* (ed. Jaroslaw Jańczak), 2008

¹⁶⁰ Panke, Diana, Gurol, Julia, “Small States as Agenda-setters? The Council Presidencies of Malta and Estonia”. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 56 (2018): 142– 151

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Jurkynas, Mindaugas and Daukšaitė, Justina. “A feather in its cap? The Lithuanian presidency of the Council of the EU.” (2014)

¹⁶³ Ibid.

Coming back to the Baltic states, each of them enjoyed the Council Presidency once: Lithuania was the first among the three in 2013, then Latvia in 2015, and Estonia in 2017. It was an important milestone that signified a shift in the EU agenda and transformation of new member states “from takers to shakers and shapers”.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, it would put an end to a “symbolic divide between old and new EU member states”¹⁶⁵

In principle, the Lithuanian presidency has been described in the literature as a success story, and “unexpectedly effective in advancing negotiations on a number of dossiers”.¹⁶⁶ Thanks to rigorous preparation, selection of topics of highest priority, and coalition building, Lithuania managed to “boost its image as a reliable partner and mediator representing the interests of the whole EU”¹⁶⁷. The four priorities for its Council presidency were presented in 2010: energy security, external borders protection, support for the Eastern Partnership initiative, and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea region.¹⁶⁸ As rightly noted by Vilpišauskas, energy security and external border control were on top of the Lithuanian agenda since the country’s accession to the EU in 2004.¹⁶⁹ Jurkynas et al. describe the decision-making process regarding the choice of priorities in the following way: “Lithuania’s priorities in the preparatory stage were selected in line with two main criteria: firstly, issues had to be important to all EU members so that resolutions would provide added value for the whole region; secondly, the selection of priorities presented an opportunity for Lithuania to draw attention to areas that may have been partially overlooked at an EU level or that derived from the country’s national interests”.¹⁷⁰

In the realm of energy security, Lithuania managed to secure a number of high-priority projects during the negotiations on the EU budget. For instance, the first set of strategic European energy infrastructure projects called Projects of Common Interests (PCIs) was adopted, which included a significant number of infrastructure projects in the Baltic region. Moreover, the European

¹⁶⁴ Jurkynas, Mindaugas and Daukšaitė, Justina. “A feather in its cap? The Lithuanian presidency of the Council of the EU.” (2014)

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Vilpišauskas, Ramūnas, “Lithuania's EU Council Presidency: Negotiating Finances, Dealing with Geopolitics”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 52 (2014): 99-108.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Programme of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union 1 July to 31 December 2013, Council of the European Union

¹⁶⁹ Vilpišauskas, Ramūnas, “Lithuania's EU Council Presidency: Negotiating Finances, Dealing with Geopolitics”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 52 (2014): 99-108.

¹⁷⁰ Jurkynas, Mindaugas and Daukšaitė, Justina. “A feather in its cap? The Lithuanian presidency of the Council of the EU.” (2014)

Commission “adopted conclusions on the regional energy-strategy review as a result of consistent and systematic work”.¹⁷¹ These Projects of Common interests will be covered more in-depth in the following chapter.

Latvia’s Council presidency took place two years later, in 2015. The domestic, European and global contexts had changed since Lithuania’s presidency in 2013 — the annexation of Crimea, the military conflict in the East of Ukraine and a migration crisis swept over European agenda and policy-making. Thus, it comes as no surprise that the Baltic states had serious concerns about their own security. For this reason, the question of energy security became even more salient for Latvia.

The Latvian Council presidency focused on three main topics: Competitive Europe, Digital Europe and Engaged Europe. Auers et al., argue that “Latvia has often had no clear national position on European policies that do not directly affect Latvia’s security or economic interests”.¹⁷² Energy policy was not one of these topics. In the contrary, energy policy and energy security provisions belonged to the list of the main priorities of the Latvian presidency, namely, to “launch discussions and start working on the Energy Union”, and create the “energy policy built on solidarity, trust and security, focus on infrastructure, better governance, energy security and energy diplomacy”.¹⁷³

As it was outlined by the official Latvian report on its presidency: “the current geopolitical situation in Europe has led to the need to strengthen the EU’s energy independence”¹⁷⁴. Hence, establishing the Energy Union was the highest priority for Latvia, as after 2014, Latvia was in a much more precarious position than before. For this reason, it was considered as the key to ensuring Latvia’s national security, as according to Auers et al., “70 per cent of Latvia’s energy needs are met by gas, and 100 per cent of Latvia’s gas was imported from Russia”¹⁷⁵. At the same time, the issue was highly relevant for the EU, which was dependent on 50% on energy imports from third countries.¹⁷⁶ The proposals from Latvia included linking the critical infrastructure of the Baltic states to Northern and Central Europe, in addition to diversifying supply and enhancing energy efficiency.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Auers, Daunis, Rostoks, Toms, “The 2015 Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 54 (2016): 83–90

¹⁷³ Priorities of the Latvian Presidency, <https://eu2015.lv/the-presidency-and-eu/priorities-of-the-latvian-presidency>

¹⁷⁴ The results of the Latvian presidency of the Council of the European Union, 2015

¹⁷⁵ Auers, Daunis, Rostoks, Toms, “The 2015 Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 54 (2016): 83–90

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ “Main legislative issues for the Latvian presidency of the Council”, European Parliament Briefing, December 2014 [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2014/539071/EPRS_BRI\(2014\)539071_REV1_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2014/539071/EPRS_BRI(2014)539071_REV1_EN.pdf)

Moreover, it was in Latvia where the Energy Union was officially launched in 2015, and from that moment on Latvia put a considerable effort to keep energy policy on top of the agenda during its presidency and beyond. What is more, the Latvian presidency produced recommendations to enhance regional cooperation, and put forward the Baltic Energy Interconnection plan, which is used as a “model for regional cooperation formats across the European Union”¹⁷⁸. All in all, in the existing literature the presidency of Latvia has been described as successful despite modest agenda.¹⁷⁹

Estonia, taking tenure in 2017, in turn, mostly concentrated on one core theme: digitalisation.¹⁸⁰ Being a European frontrunner in this domain, the core priorities for the Estonian presidency were consistent: innovation in economy, free movement of data, safety and security issues, inclusivity and sustainability.¹⁸¹ At the same time, a significant amount of attention was paid to energy security issues. Even if the overall presidency has been regarded as only partly successful, the proposals of Estonia regarding energy policy proved to be productive.¹⁸² However, Estonia provided an outlook from a slightly different angle: unlike Latvia and Lithuania, which mostly concentrated their efforts on gas, it focused on energy from renewable sources and improvement of the electricity sector.¹⁸³ Nevertheless, there is a hint at reducing energy dependency from the single supplier, as Estonia emphasised the need for “more electricity flows across borders, more competition”, cutting energy imports, and creating new rules that were meant “to prepare for electricity supply risks and step up regional cooperation.”¹⁸⁴ At the same time, the issue was not politicised, and in comparison to its regional counterparts, Estonia has achieved a bit less, which can be attributed to the shift in policy priorities, as Latvia and Lithuania had previously achieved great success in launching the Energy Union and the sets of Projects of Common Interest; possible lack of human resources and capacities to overlook every theme of the EU agenda; decrease in the degree of conflict tension in Ukraine, and other reasons.

¹⁷⁸ The results of the Latvian presidency of the Council of the European Union, 2015

¹⁷⁹ Auers, Daunis, Rostoks, Toms, “The 2015 Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 54 (2016): 83–90

¹⁸⁰ Estonian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, July to December 2017

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² “Estonia's Presidency: How it Went”, *Politico*, 20 December 2017, <https://www.politico.eu/article/estonias-presidency-how-it-went/>

¹⁸³ Priority dossiers under the Estonian EU Council Presidency, European Parliament Briefing, June 2017

¹⁸⁴ Ibid; Jaadla, Andres, “The European Union's climate and energy objectives under the Estonian Presidency – inclusive and sustainable Europe”, *The European Committee of Regions*, 2017

In conclusion, we can draw some common patterns among the three Council of the European Union presidencies. In 2013, right before Lithuania's tenure, Dalia Grybauskaitė the former head of state of the republic, addressed the Seimas: "Together, we will have to seek solutions that are the best not only for Lithuania, but for the whole expanded community of 28 Member States. We are embarking on this task in challenging times when Europe is going through a period of historic change".¹⁸⁵ During the Council presidencies, the Baltic states didn't exclusively seek solutions to their own domestic challenges, but presented their priorities or concerns within a wider context, i.e., showing the salience of energy security and its importance to the EU as a whole. In this sense, we can put Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in-between "amplifiers" and "silencers"¹⁸⁶. In addition, existing literature proves that "even a small country holding the presidency for the first time can advance the EU policy agenda if it acts as an honest broker and is not distracted by 'fire-fighting' [crisis management]".¹⁸⁷

2.4 Conclusions

The aim of the second chapter was to examine a multi-level policymaking of three Baltic states regarding energy security. As it was outlined before, all three states clearly outlined their concerns, priorities and aspirations on the subject matter, and their further actions on the regional and European levels were shaped accordingly. The regional cooperation in energy policy domains and beyond was exemplified by the Baltic Assembly, and then lobbying at the wider European level was demonstrated by the Council presidencies of 2013, 2015, and 2017. We could trace the consistent steps of three Baltic states towards ensuring their energy security, and fostering regional cooperation and tighter interconnection with the rest of the European Union.¹⁸⁸ What is more, the third subchapter demonstrated that intergovernmental practices still prevail in the EU governance system.¹⁸⁹ Indeed, there is no united formula to evaluate a presidency success, "that is anticipated to

¹⁸⁵ "Dalia Grybauskaitė, President of the Republic: the Presidency will require smart coordination of actions", Lietuvos respublikos Prezidentas, 11 June 2013, <https://www.lrs.lt/intl/presidency.show?theme=125&lang=2&doc=801>

¹⁸⁶ Jurkynas, Mindaugas and Daukšaitė, Justina. "A feather in its cap? The Lithuanian presidency of the Council of the EU." (2014)

¹⁸⁷ Auers, Daunis, Rostoks, Toms, "The 2015 Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 54 (2016): 83–90

¹⁸⁸ Jurkynas, Mindaugas and Daukšaitė, Justina. "A feather in its cap? The Lithuanian presidency of the Council of the EU." (2014)

¹⁸⁹ Tosiek, Piotr, "The European Union after the Treaty of Lisbon – Still a Hybrid Legal and Political System", in *Beyond Borders: External Relations of the European Union* (ed. Jaroslaw Jańczak), 2008

have results such as quality-oriented outcomes from negotiations, a good atmosphere for trade-offs and the achievement of objectives”¹⁹⁰, however it has been proved that even small states like Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania had a chance to advance their interests. However, the context behind the presidency could significantly influence the overall outcome of a country’s tenure, i.e. geopolitical factors, crisis management, or overall sensitivity of an issue — which would require more coalition-building and help from bigger states or EU institutions.

¹⁹⁰ Jurkynas, Mindaugas and Daukšaitė, Justina. “A feather in its cap? The Lithuanian presidency of the Council of the EU.” (2014)

Chapter 3:

3.1 “Never Again”: the European Energy Security Strategy

“After the gas crises of 2006 and 2009 that left many millions out in the cold, we said: 'Never again'. But the stress tests of 2014 showed we are still far too vulnerable to major disruption of gas supplies. And the political tensions on our borders are a sharp reminder that this problem is will not just go away”.

Miguel Arias Cañete, a former Commissioner
for Climate Action and Energy

It comes as no surprise that much of the EU’s current Energy Security Strategy and Energy Union has been shaped by the gas supply disruptions of 2006 and 2009, but also geopolitics: the annexation of Crimea and the crisis in the Eastern Ukraine in 2014, which put continuous energy supply flows to Europe at grave risk, as “[t]hese crises briefly halted major industrial production in the affected states and caused measurable economic harm. They also highlighted a clear vulnerability on the part of NATO [and EU] countries, which could be exploited in future crises on the Eastern flank”.¹⁹¹ According to Miguel Arias Cañete, a former Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy, “After the gas crises of 2006 and 2009 that left many millions out in the cold, we said: 'Never again'. But the stress tests of 2014 showed we are still far too vulnerable to major disruption of gas supplies. And the political tensions on our borders are a sharp reminder that this problem is will not just go away. Today's proposals are about a reliable, competitive and flexible system in which energy flows across borders and consumers reap the benefits. They are about standing together to protect the most vulnerable. And they are about securing our clean energy future: I can assure that our commitment to a clean energy transition is irreversible and non-negotiable.”¹⁹²

¹⁹¹ Batruška, Vaclav et al. “The Geopolitics of Energy Security in Europe”, Carnegie Europe, November 28, 2019, <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2019/11/28/geopolitics-of-energy-security-in-europe-pub-80423>

¹⁹² “Towards Energy Union: The Commission presents sustainable energy security package”, European Commission Press Release, 16 February 2016 https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_16_307

For this reason, the agenda of the newly elected Juncker Commission was shaped by “the stress tests of 2014”, and energy security became a key priority for the EU and “one of the cornerstones of the Energy Union strategy”.¹⁹³ As put by Maroš Šefčovič, a former Vice-President responsible for Energy Union: “The Energy Union Strategy, launched one year ago, promised to provide all Europeans with energy which is secure, sustainable, and competitive. Today’s package focuses on the security of our supply, but touches upon all three overarching goals. By reducing our energy demand, and better managing our supply from external sources we are delivering on our promise and enhancing the stability of Europe’s energy market.”¹⁹⁴

The European Energy Security Strategy has several major themes. First, it recognises that in “the winters of 2006 and 2009, temporary disruptions of gas supplies strongly hit EU citizens in some of the eastern Member States”, which was a “stark wake up call”. The EU, whose “prosperity and security hinges on a stable and abundant supply of energy”, is “vulnerable to external energy shocks”.¹⁹⁵ For this reason, supply disruption is one of the main threats to the Union. Secondly, it clearly calls for deepening integration in the domain: the Energy Security Strategy calls for “*a hard-headed strategy*”, including “a more collective approach”, “solidarity”, and a “common European energy policy”.¹⁹⁶ It is needed to address the challenges to the Union and reduce dependency more successfully by energy saving, which is put as “moderating energy demand”¹⁹⁷, diversifying “energy sources, suppliers and routes”.¹⁹⁸ Another common theme that unites the Energy Security Strategy and the Commission’s energy security package is the theme of resilience. At the same time, there is a strong echo of the Paris agreement adopted in 2015, which is a “strong signal to businesses and policy-makers placing clean energy on an irreversible pathway and setting the scene for a global energy transition.”, which could be explained by the fact that EU had adopted a Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Policy, and has

¹⁹³ “Towards Energy Union: The Commission presents sustainable energy security package”, European Commission Press Release, 16 February 2016 https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_16_307

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ European Energy Security Strategy, COM/2014/0330 final

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ “Towards Energy Union: The Commission presents sustainable energy security package”, European Commission Press Release, 16 February 2016 https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_16_307

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

been pursuing carbon neutrality. That is to say that energy policies should be effective and sustainable both in short and long terms.¹⁹⁹

Clearly, we can infer that securitisation of energy has been taking place since 2014. Meanwhile, the European Energy Security Strategy and the Energy Union, as well as a Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union, take advantage of the crises and incline towards further supranationalisation of energy policy. For instance, since 2017 the Commission has the right to observe energy deals of member states with third countries and provide advice, while the member states themselves have to “inform the EU Commission of their plans to negotiate energy supply deals with third countries before opening negotiations”.²⁰⁰ According to the EU Commission: “[t]he EU needs to ensure that intergovernmental agreements signed by its Member States with third countries and relevant to EU gas security are more transparent and fully comply with EU law. To that end it introduces an ex-ante compatibility check by the Commission. This ex-ante assessment makes it possible to check compliance with competition rules and internal energy market legislation before the agreements are negotiated, signed and sealed. The Member States will have to take full account of the Commission's opinion ahead of signing the agreements.”²⁰¹ Thus, one might claim that such provisions mean “a slight supranational turn”, however, the following subchapters will provide arguments in favour of persistent intergovernmental mode of decision-making.

¹⁹⁹ A Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy, COM(2015) 80 final

²⁰⁰ “Energy deals with third countries: MEPs approve rules on EU Commission help”, European Parliament News, 2 March 2017, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20170227IPR64158/energy-deals-with-third-countries-meps-approve-rules-on-eu-commission-help>

²⁰¹ “Towards Energy Union: The Commission presents sustainable energy security package”, European Commission Press Release, 16 February 2016 https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_16_307

3.2. Projects of Common Interest and The Baltic Interconnection Plan — ending dependency on a single supplier?

“Today’s interconnection is another step in helping this region to be fully integrated into the internal EU energy market, diversifying away from Russian gas. This has become all the more important following Russia’s unilateral decision to disrupt gas supplies to Poland and the decision of the Baltic States not to import Russian gas...”²⁰²

Kadri Simson, Commissioner for
Energy

2014 was one of the turning points for the European energy security not only due to the annexation of Crimea and the crisis in the Eastern Ukraine, but also due to the 2014 European Parliament election and the subsequent Juncker Commission. From the very beginning of the mandate, the newly elected Commission paid special attention to energy policy, including the objectives of ending “energy isolation” and increasing “solidarity and energy security”.²⁰³ The Baltic states were in the centre of the policy of integration into the European energy market, and the Baltic region was one of the six major infrastructure projects: “[t]he synchronisation of the three Baltic States’ electricity grid with the continental European network is of key importance for the achievement of the Energy Union. This is reaffirmed by the signature of the Political Roadmap, expressing true European solidarity on energy among EU Member States”.²⁰⁴ Such acknowledgement of the significance of ending the Baltic states’ energy isolation has been persistent ever since, and was acknowledged as an “emblematic project”, “a major contribution to the unity and energy security”, and “a concrete expression of solidarity”.²⁰⁵

For this reason, a number of the Baltic energy synchronisation projects were included in the European Union Energy Security Strategy under the name “Priority Corridor Baltic Energy Market

²⁰² “Inauguration of gas interconnection between Poland and Lithuania”, European Commission News, 5 May 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/inauguration-gas-interconnection-between-poland-and-lithuania-2022-may-05_en

²⁰³ “Juncker Commission ends energy isolation and increases solidarity and energy security”, European Commission, https://energy.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2018-06/energy_solidarity_security_0.pdf

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ “Energy Union: Synchronisation of the Baltic States’ electricity network with the European system will strengthen solidarity and regional security of supply”, 22 March 2018, European Commission Press Release, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/STATEMENT_18_2142

Interconnection Plan” (both related to gas and electricity), which entails constructing internal and interconnection lines in the Baltic states and beyond: namely, Poland, Sweden, and Finland.²⁰⁶ An emblematic project that epitomised the collective aspirations of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and would connect the three states with the wider Baltic region, was the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan. As stated in the Memorandum of Understanding in 2009, which reflects the political intent of the undersigned member states, the ultimate goal is to “find the most economic solution to strengthen security of supply by further increasing integration and diversifying of sources where needed”.²⁰⁷ The rhetoric surrounding the interconnection projects resembles the one enshrined in the national security strategies and the Baltic Assembly resolutions (see Chapter 2): the frames as “synchronisation”, “ensuring effectiveness”, “increase the competitiveness”, “increasing security of gas supply and energy solidarity in the region”, “enhancing the competition on the market”, “reducing gas prices”, “strengthening independence”, “ending isolation” are persistent.²⁰⁸ Attaining these objectives would also lead to more sustainable projects that would help the EU become carbon-neutral by 2050.²⁰⁹ In addition, the interconnections are said to be “so important in the current geopolitical context”, and are seen as “one of the main objectives that will contribute to the stability and economic growth of the Baltic Sea Region”.²¹⁰

The participants of the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan are Finland, Sweden, Poland, and the Baltic states. Launched during the Swedish Council presidency in 2009, the plan aims to ameliorate the integration of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania with the Nordic electricity market by 2025 at latest, and “complete the synchronisation of the three Baltic States with European networks”.²¹¹ Synchronisation of the electricity and gas grids would significantly enhance the resilience of the energy sector in the region in light of potential “interruption of [Russian] gas imports”. As of June 2022, the project is reaching its final stage, with some promising intermediate results: according to the European Commission evaluation, “Estlink 1 and 2, Nordbalt and the LitPol Link, connecting the three Baltic States with Finland, Sweden and Poland respectively,

²⁰⁶ THE UNION LIST OF PROJECTS OF COMMON INTEREST (‘UNION LIST’), https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/default/files/fifth_pci_list_19_november_2021_annex.pdf

²⁰⁷ Memorandum of Understanding on the Baltic Energy market Interconnection Plan, 2009

²⁰⁸ “Inauguration of gas interconnection between Poland and Lithuania”, European Commission News, 5 May 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/inauguration-gas-interconnection-between-poland-and-lithuania-2022-may-05_en

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ “Baltic energy market interconnection plan”, European Commission, https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/infrastructure/high-level-groups/baltic-energy-market-interconnection-plan_en

significantly improved the Baltic countries' integration in the EU energy market, and their security of supply”, and the Balticconnector, the Klaipeda LNG Terminal, and the Świnoujście LNG “have already ensured market integration and decreased dependence on Russian gas in a region historically dependent on a single supplier”.²¹²

Even though the project was envisaged in 2008 and launched during the Council presidency of Sweden, the most significant progress was made during the Juncker Commission. In 2015, during and after the Latvian presidency, the European Commission presented the Energy Union Strategy, which emphasised “enhanced regional cooperation within a common EU framework” and reinstated support to “end the energy isolation of the Baltic Sea Region and to integrate it fully into the EU energy market”.²¹³ Then, in June 2015, the Commission set intentions to “to modernise and strengthen the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan”.²¹⁴ Then, first grants were awarded for the pipeline connecting Poland and Lithuania,²¹⁵ and the Balticconnector, which would connect Estonia and Finland. Moreover, within the same timeframe the list of Projects of Common Interests was updated, adding more proposals regarding the Baltic region.²¹⁶

Thanks to the above-mentioned Roadmap and the analysis of the policies at the European Union, we could identify a causal mechanism — after the annexation of Crimea and the Eastern Ukrainian crisis of 2014, the synchronisation and interconnection projects were implemented in full force, including those that had been launched in 2008 and 2009, following the infamous gas disruptions of 2006 and 2009, and the supply cutoffs in the Baltic region in early 2000s. In this sense, the events of 2014 were much more convincing than those of 2006-2009.

It bears mentioning that the Juncker Commission did a lot to enhance energy security of the EU, adopted the Energy Union, the European Union Energy Security Strategy, and invested extensively in interconnection projects. He stated: “My Commission has always been committed to have full integration of the Baltic States' grids with the rest of Europe, and we will do our utmost to facilitate decisive progress on synchronisation, and work towards implementing strategic energy

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ “Juncker Commission ends energy isolation and increases solidarity and energy security”, European Commission, https://energy.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2018-06/energy_solidarity_security_0.pdf

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ “Inauguration of gas interconnection between Poland and Lithuania”, European Commission News, 5 May 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/inauguration-gas-interconnection-between-poland-and-lithuania-2022-may-05_en

²¹⁶ “PCI examples and their benefits”, European Commission, https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/infrastructure/projects-common-interest/pci-examples-and-their-benefits_en

infrastructure of the Baltic Sea region”.²¹⁷ However, we should not underestimate the agency of the Baltic states themselves, who have persistently advocated for enhancing their energy security and terminating the dependence on a single supplier even before 2014, especially during their Council presidencies.

3.3 Energy Security in Times of Crisis: a window of opportunity for the Commission, or still intergovernmental interplay?

*“Global and European energy markets are going through turbulent times, particularly since the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Europe needs to take swift action to ensure our energy supply for next winter, and to alleviate the pressure of high energy bills on our citizens and businesses. Today's proposals are another step forward in our intensive work on this front.”*²¹⁸

Kadri Simson, Commissioner for
Energy

It goes without saying that Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has had a tremendous global impact. Several media outlets have referred to it as *zeitenwende* (ger.)— a (historical) turning point when talking about implications for German foreign policy, but the term surely applies to other spheres of politics, including energy policy and energy security.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has opened a Pandora’s box for European energy security. As it was outlined in countless analytical papers, it exposed the outcomes of dependency on a single supplier anew. Thus, it comes as no surprise that Russia, being an energy giant, could take advantage of Europe’s vulnerability, utilise it as a potent leverage, and profit immensely from its “divide and rule” strategy. Needless to mention, it is a sensitive issue for the whole Union, but especially for the the Central and Eastern European countries, including the Baltic states. The EU was determined to reduce the dependence, and deemed it as “an urgent imperative”. For this reason, “EU leaders

²¹⁷ “Energy security: The synchronisation of the Baltic States' electricity networks - European solidarity in action”, European Commission News, 20 June 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_3337

²¹⁸ “Commission outlines options to mitigate high energy prices with common gas purchases and minimum gas storage obligations”, European Commission Press Release, 23 March 2022 https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_1936

agreed in the European Council to phase out Europe's dependency on Russian energy imports as soon as possible"²¹⁹, which was followed up by the Commission's REPowerEU plan.

Overall, the plan contains provisions regarding energy saving, which would reduce energy bills for households and businesses; implementing reduced VAT rates for high efficiency heating systems; diversifying energy supplies, including common purchase of gas; accelerating Europe's clean energy transition, and further supporting European energy interconnection projects. As for the rhetoric of REPowerEU plan, it clearly demonstrates the urgency of the matter, constantly reiterating words and phrases like "urgent imperative", "as soon as possible", "accelerate", "quickly substitute", or by promising to implement the plan "already this year". Previously, it was uncommon to verbalise the threat coming from dependency on Russian fossil fuels, but it was rather conveyed as "single supplier". From 2022, it was clearly expressed that the invasion "disrupted the world's energy system" and "heightened energy security concerns, bringing to the fore the EU's over-dependence on gas, oil and coal imports from Russia".²²⁰

Apart from the REPowerEU plan, the European Union and other states have imposed a set of sanctions on the Russian economy and the country's political elites to stop the aggression of Russia. This, however, has become a division line between certain member states. According to Josep Borrell, "Since the start of the war, we've [the EU] given him €35 billion, compared to the €1 billion we've given Ukraine to arm itself." "The Kremlin regime uses this money to finance the destruction of Ukrainian cities and attacks on peaceful civilians", said Gitanas Nausėda to his counterparts.²²¹ Even though that terminating would pose significant financial problem for Russia, which would halt or terminate the invasion in the mid-term, there is no unanimity among the member states on the subject matter. The dependency of the EU on Russian fossil fuels is so strong that cutting off the supplies would pose an imminent threat for the well-functioning of member states' economies. As of June 2022, the European Union has imposed six sanctions packages. The latest includes, among other, measures against the oil sector: a ban on all Russian seaborne crude oil and petroleum products, which counts for 90% of oil imports from Russia.²²² At the same time, to secure alternative supplies and take precaution against the rise in oil prices, "[t]he ban is subject to

²¹⁹ REPowerEU Plan, COM/2022/230 final

²²⁰ REPowerEU Plan, COM/2022/230 final

²²¹ "Baltic states end Russian gas imports – but can the rest of Europe follow suit?", *France24*, 5 April 2022, <https://www.france24.com/en/business/20220405-baltic-states-end-russian-gas-imports-%E2%80%93-but-can-the-rest-of-europe-follow-suit>

²²² "Russia's war on Ukraine: EU adopts sixth package of sanctions against Russia", *European Commission Press Release*, 3 June 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_22_2802

certain transition periods to allow the sector and global markets to adapt, and a temporary exemption for pipeline crude oil to ensure that Russian oil is phased out in an orderly fashion”.²²³ The embargo would take full effect by the end of 2022.

The Baltic states, in turn, were the first EU member states to terminate Russian gas imports completely in April 2022. The invasion of Ukraine was a point of no return, according to Uldis Bariss, CEO of Conexus Baltic Grid: “If there were still any doubts about whether there may be any trust in deliveries from Russia, current events clearly show us that there is no more trust”.²²⁴ “If we can do it, the rest of Europe can do it too!”²²⁵ At the same time, the Baltic states officials, like the Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda, reiterated that the European Union has to “break their energy ties with Russia”²²⁶, and change its attitude to the country; and have shown ardent determination to be path-pavers in that regard.²²⁷ Despite the efforts, the sanctions on the energy sector, especially gas, remain the most sensitive and rather fruitless. On the global gas market there is no shortage of supply, however the main challenge is logistics.

An exception that would confirm the intergovernmental nature of decision-making would be the position of Hungary on sanctioning the energy sector of Russia. During the negotiations at the EU level, Hungary stalled the negotiations and demanded that some points from the package be excluded. According to the Euractiv, “[t]o win Budapest over, other EU countries agreed to water it down by exempting oil delivered by the Druzhba pipeline going to landlocked Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic”.²²⁸ Hungary’s position was met with disappointment of Lithuania’s ambassador to the EU, Arnoldas Pranckevičius, who later tweeted: “Very disappointing and hardly acceptable that the agreement reached by European leaders was not fully respected by some. We will not retreat. I suggest to name 7th package #KGB: Kirill, Gas & Banks”.²²⁹ Intergovernmental

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ “Baltic states become first in Europe to stop Russian gas imports”, [EURACTIV.com](https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/baltic-states-become-first-in-europe-to-stop-russian-gas-imports/), 4 April 2022 <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/baltic-states-become-first-in-europe-to-stop-russian-gas-imports/>

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ “Baltic states become first in Europe to stop Russian gas imports”, [EURACTIV.com](https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/baltic-states-become-first-in-europe-to-stop-russian-gas-imports/), 4 April 2022 <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/baltic-states-become-first-in-europe-to-stop-russian-gas-imports/>

²²⁸ Brzozowski, Alexandra “Pyrrhic victory for Hungary as EU approves sanctions targeting Russian oil and Sberbank”, [EURACTIV.com](https://www.euractiv.com/section/europe-s-east/news/pyrrhic-victory-for-hungary-as-eu-approves-sanctions-targeting-russian-oil-and-sberbank/), 3 June 2022 <https://www.euractiv.com/section/europe-s-east/news/pyrrhic-victory-for-hungary-as-eu-approves-sanctions-targeting-russian-oil-and-sberbank/>

²²⁹ @APranckevicius, 2 June 2022, <https://twitter.com/APranckevicius/status/1532370500164403200?s=20&t=Y8xCXE7upWv71u7cl6XX7A>

bargaining for cost reduction and the most favorable terms still takes place, which demonstrated the prevalence of nation-states' position and the lack of unanimity on energy security issues.

3.4 Conclusions

The third chapter has provided an overview of main European policies regarding energy security. The analysed provisions point to several "wake up calls" - 2006-2009, and 2014, the latter being the true game changer. Securitisation of energy has been taking place ever since. In addition, several core themes were identified, which correlate with the ones outlined in the previous chapter: solidarity, diversification, harmonisation, ending energy isolation, reducing dependency, ensuring energy policy competitiveness and security of supply. On the EU level, however, there is more emphasis on the agency of the European Commission, as well as calls for further europeanisation of energy.

Conclusion

As of March 2022, the war in Ukraine has put security of energy supplies under risk. Given the geopoliticised matter of energy supply in Europe, dependency of the EU on the Russian oil and gas poses a source of insecurity for member states, thus the response requires collective action. In line with emerging and overlapping interests of the member states to ensure security of supply, the crisis offers potential for further supranationalisation of energy policy-making.

Yet, research findings have shown that liberal intergovernmentalism does not fully explain the Baltic states' Europeanisation of energy security. The motives of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania would rather fit into the neorealism framework, which regards small states' behaviour as driven by the security concerns.²³⁰ Economically speaking, remaining an 'energy island' and maintaining energy networks tied to Russia, an oil and gas giant, would without doubt be more financially advantageous, while sponsoring energy interconnection projects is a more costly matter. If we deem intergovernmental bargains as the primary driver of cooperation, then it is evident that the lack of a common and coherent energy policy shows an asymmetrical dependence of the EU member states on energy, as a consequence, varying degrees of salience. Thus, following Moravcsik, where integration gains are uncertain, there will be little mobilisation and "more room for leaders to follow

²³⁰ Snyder, G., Alliance Theory: A Neorealist First Cut. *Journal of International Affairs*, 44 (1990), 103-123; Vaicekauskaitė, Živilė. "Security Strategies of Small States in a Changing World". *Journal on Baltic Security*, 2017

different, even personal motives”.²³¹ Moreover, bigger Member States did not suffer from being “energy islands” and potential threats to the state security.

Nevertheless, this is not to argue that the attempts of the Baltic states’ regarding enhancing their energy security has been unsuccessful. By the means of coalition building, collective action and bargaining, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania managed to achieve their goals. The Baltic States took consistent steps towards ensuring their energy security since the very start of their EU accession, which is proved by using qualitative content analysis of their National Security Strategies, the Baltic Assembly resolutions and final documents throughout the years, the Baltic states’ Council presidencies and participation of MEPs from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the European Parliament debates. Judging by the persistent presence of codes such as “energy security”, “interconnectivity”, “independence”, “collective action” and others, we can draw conclusions of salience of the subject matter, as well as see the concrete policy solutions.

Their actions and trilateral cooperation go in line with the “two-step model” offered by the liberal intergovernmentalism: at first, “national governments aggregate the interests of their domestic constituencies, as well as their own interests, and articulate national preferences towards european integration”, then they bring “their preferences toward European integration”, “intergovernmental bargaining table”, where “agreements reflect the relative power of each member state and where supranational organisations as the European commission exert little or no influence”²³². At first, the Baltic states aggregated their own interests and priorities in the National Security Strategies, and articulated their interest in taking advantage of the EU accession to deepen energy interconnectivity with the rest of Europe and enhance their own energy security. Then, as shown in Chapter 2, the Baltic states cooperated on the regional level and coordinated their policy positions and preferences towards the EU, and brought them to the “intergovernmental bargaining table” during their Council presidencies and the European Parliament sessions.

Analysis of the Baltic Assembly resolutions has shown that prior to 2004, energy security was not the most salient issue for the Baltic states, despite several cases of energy disruptions in all three countries. It has been assumed that the main priorities of the Baltic states were the EU and NATO accession. Process-tracing has proved that after 2004, the EU and national policies were driven by “triggering” events, such as Russia-Ukraine energy disputes in 2006 and 2009, as well as the

²³¹ Moravcsik, A. *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*, Routledge, 1998

²³² Pollack, Mark A. *International Relations Theory and European Integration*, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, 2000

annexation of Crimea and the crisis in Eastern Ukraine in 2014. At the same time, the above-mentioned events were used as the window of opportunity by the European Commission. The above-mentioned crises have become a “wake up call” for the supranational authorities. Thanks to the European Commission, the Baltic states were granted with the Baltic Interconnection Plan, and several other projects in electricity and natural gas, aimed at enhancing interconnectivity with other Member States were funded by the EU funds. These were identified as “project[s] of common interest”²³³, “key security of supply infrastructure projects”²³⁴ that needed to be implemented within a short or medium term.

At the same time, Chapter 3 has shown that within the energy realm, the decision-making at the EU level is mostly driven by the Member States themselves. It is the Baltic states that were the drivers of energy integration process, while the EU policies were mostly reactive than proactive. Empirical evidence shows that the power of the supranational authorities is quite limited, and is still mostly consultative, despite the claims in favour of ongoing supranationalisation, grounded in the example of the decision that requires Member States to “submit draft intergovernmental agreements with non-EU countries in the field of energy to it before they are signed”²³⁵, and other pieces of legislation, which amount up to 350 energy policy legal instruments.²³⁶

As stated eloquently in the European Energy Security Strategy, “[M]ore coordination of national energy policies is necessary to respond credibly to the challenge of energy security. National choices over energy mix or energy infrastructure affect other Member States and the Union as a whole. Member States should better inform each other and the Commission when defining their long-term energy policy strategies and preparing intergovernmental agreements with third countries. Further efforts are needed to ensure better synergies between energy objectives and foreign policy and to speak to our partners with a single voice”²³⁷.

The initial hypothesis that the Baltic states exert influence within the EU institutions to foster their energy independence, while the EU might support regional and national initiatives that are

²³³ Baltic energy market interconnection plan, European Commission Website, https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/infrastructure/high-level-groups/baltic-energy-market-interconnection-plan_en

²³⁴ EU Energy Security Strategy, COM(2014) 330 final

²³⁵ “Energy deals with third countries: MEPs approve rules on EU Commission help”, *European Parliament News*, 2 March 2017, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20170227IPR64158/energy-deals-with-third-countries-meps-approve-rules-on-eu-commission-help>

²³⁶ Szulecki, Kacper, Fischer, Severin, Gullberg, Anne Therese, Sartor, Oliver “Shaping the ‘Energy Union’: between national positions and governance innovation in EU energy and climate policy”, *Climate Policy*, 16:5 (2016), 548-567

²³⁷ EU Energy Security Strategy, COM(2014) 330 final

strategically important for the Union has proved to be true, yet with some nuances. It is empirically evident that top-down and bottom-up Europeanisation is simultaneously taking place. Even so, it is still challenging to measure the exact influence of the member states and the supranational authorities in decision making, or “who influenced whom”. There is clearly a top-down element of Europeanisation, namely, the European Union Energy Security Strategies, projects of common interests, and energy policy legal instruments. At the same time, some of the policies and projects would be unimaginable, if it had not been for the interstate cooperation, bargaining and advocacy work of the Baltic states.

In conclusion, deeper integration with the European Union in energy policy matters would be invaluablely beneficial for the Baltic states, and they have shown readiness and determination to delegate a pool of sovereignty to the European Union, as it will enhance their energy security and resilience.

Discussion

The findings of this thesis lead us to a much broader debate on grand theories of European Integration, and the future dynamics within the EU. In spring 2022, the war in Ukraine gave root to another round of discussions about the future of the European Union. Some, like Mario Draghi, talked in favour of deepening integration and creating “pragmatic federalism”. In his speech to the European Parliament, Draghi emphasised the need to deepen the integration process, which would help Europe prepare for future crises.²³⁸ In essence, it was pointed out that the current conflict tests resilience of the EU, and poses challenges in the domains of energy, economics, migration, security — and collective action is needed to tackle them. Considering that it is still an ongoing crisis with a high degree of uncertainty, and new developments may unfold, it is hard and even vainly to make a prediction about the future in mid- or long term. Yet, we can still theorise potential outcomes on the EU level. The main question is: as soon as the crisis is averted, would it set stage for the integration process to move forward, namely, a major Treaty change and more supranational competences, or back to intergovernmental “business as usual”?²³⁹

²³⁸ “Il Presidente Draghi interviene al Parlamento europeo (video completo)”, European Parliament, 3 May 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUZQA8R_TVc

²³⁹ Jones, Erik, Kelemen, R. Daniel & Meunier, Sophie “Failing forward? Crises and patterns of European integration”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 28:10 (2021), 1519-1536

On the one hand, the crisis can be described as a triggering event that undermines energy security of the EU. Energy is a universal commodity, which makes it a highly sensitive issue. If the crisis affects more member states than those that are usually considered as more vulnerable, then more cooperation can be anticipated. Then, considering the fact that energy is a shared competence between the EU and member states, there is a chance that it will be brought to the table in case of review of Treaties. However, it is still highly debatable whether the war and its implications for energy security and defence will provoke a “spillover effect”, which will lead to further supranationalisation and strengthening the EU authority. On the one hand, there have been opinions in favour of speaking “with one voice” for the sake of security supply, reducing the Union’s dependence on external suppliers, and maintenance of the EU’s unity.²⁴⁰ The EU, in turn, could take advantage of the crisis and “step up to provide comprehensive support and “potentially rethink the structure of European energy markets”.²⁴¹ However, as Kelemen et al. have noted, crises are not automatically followed by deeper integration.²⁴² That being said, the liberal intergovernmentalist approach to energy has clearly proved to be an Achilles’ heel of the European Union’s collective action. Without doubt, not all European Union member states are equally dependent on fossil fuels from Russia, and, according to Bruegel, “the Kremlin might efficiently take advantage of these differences and seek to sow discord among the Member States” by using the divide-and-rule strategy.²⁴³ Russia’s exports to the EU member states have been described as a “potent economic leverage”, and small states like Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania could have been easy targets.

The Baltic States, as well as other states that are highly dependent on Russia’s energy resources, would enhance their security if the EU was a single buyer that would take into consideration each of the member states’ consumption rates and needs, and allocate supplies accordingly. By implementing this, the EU would increase its bargaining power, and deepen interconnectivity between the member states. Is the crisis strong enough to foster and deepen the European

²⁴⁰ The EU Strategic Energy Review, 2007; Pielow, Johann-Christian, Lewendel, Britta Janina “The EU Energy Policy After the Lisbon Treaty”, in *Financial Aspects in Energy*, 147-166, 2011; Poitiers, Nicolas, Tagliapietra Simone, Wolff Guntram B., and Zachmann Georg. “The Kremlin's Gas Wars.” *Bruegel*, February 28, 2022. <https://www.bruegel.org/2022/02/the-kremlins-gas-wars/>

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Jones, Erik, Kelemen, R. Daniel & Meunier, Sophie “Failing forward? Crises and patterns of European integration”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 28:10 (2021), 1519-1536

²⁴³ Poitiers, Nicolas, et al. “The Kremlin's Gas Wars.” *Bruegel*, February 28, 2022. <https://www.bruegel.org/2022/02/the-kremlins-gas-wars/>;

integration process, or would it rather result in “de-Europeanisation”? It remains an open question, and will be adjudicated by the developments in the weeks, months and years to come.

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Annex: Codebook

The Baltic Assembly

Most often seen themes:

- diversification of energy mix
- solidarity
- reducing dependence on the single supplier
- regional connectivity
- promoting common interests within the EU
- common energy market
- full support for the EU joint energy projects

First Cycle Coding	Second Cycle Coding	Theoretical concepts
<p>“Energy security cooperation”</p> <p>“to increase the cooperation of the Baltic States”</p> <p>“joint energy projects”</p> <p>“continue coordination of activities towards a common regional electricity and gas market of the Baltic states”</p> <p>“develop a united position”</p> <p>“synchronisation of power systems”</p> <p>“need to continue joint efforts”</p> <p>“share the same position”</p> <p>“to intensify cooperation”</p> <p>“a regional approach of the Baltic states”</p> <p>“developing a single Baltic energy policy and strategy”</p> <p>“ensure political solidarity of the region”</p> <p>“develop a common long-term Baltic energy strategy”</p> <p>“developing a coordinated regional approach”</p>	<p>Regional Cooperation</p>	<p>Collective bargaining, Liberal intergovernmentalism</p>

First Cycle Coding	Second Cycle Coding	Theoretical concepts
<p>“look for funding opportunities from the Connecting Europe Facility and other financial support sources”</p> <p>“to utilize the EU instruments”</p> <p>“to ensure the best possible use of different EU budget instruments”</p> <p>“to ensure funding for strategic projects, including synchronisation of electricity networks”</p> <p>“need a financing assistance from the EU”</p>	<p>Need for financial help from the EU</p>	<p>External behaviour of small states</p>
<p>“improving connectivity”</p> <p>“to ensure full integration of the Baltic States energy market and infrastructure with the rest of Europe”</p> <p>“connect Europe with modern energy and transport links”</p> <p>“continuing target-oriented and irreversible integration into Europe’s transport and energy networks”</p> <p>“continue integration of the Baltic Region in the European Energy Network”</p> <p>“deeper integration with other EU countries”</p> <p>“willingness to comply with the EU policy and rules”</p> <p>“development of energy interconnections with other energy markets”</p>	<p>Need for Interconnection with Europe</p>	<p>European integration, Europeanisation</p>
<p>“disruptions in energy supplies is one of the methods used in the hybrid war”</p> <p>“Nord Stream 2 is a geopolitical project”</p> <p>“nothing common with diversification of energy”</p> <p>“nothing common with Energy Union principles”</p>	<p>Position on the Single supplier</p>	<p>Geopolitics of energy, Neorealism</p>

<p>“common regional electricity and gas market of the Baltic States”</p> <p>“common electricity and gas market”</p> <p>“creation of regional energy market”</p> <p>“increase of regional competitiveness”</p>	<p>Common regional energy market</p>	<p>External behaviour of small states, European integration</p>
<p>“to diminish dependency on Russia’s energy market and geopolitical ambitions”</p> <p>“have to overcome dependence”</p> <p>“seek for alternative sources of energy supplies”</p> <p>“integration of the Baltic energy market into the EU energy market as well as diversification of energy supply”</p> <p>“liberalisation of the gas market”</p> <p>“complete opening of the Baltic electricity market”</p>	<p>Ways to reach energy independence</p>	<p>Securitisation of energy</p>
<p>“maximum resilience”</p> <p>“capacity building for the protection of the Baltic electricity market”</p>	<p>Resilience</p>	<p>Securitisation</p>

National Security Strategies of the Baltic States’

Most often seen themes:

- enhancing regional cooperation with the Nordic states, the EU and the US
- Russia’s energy exports as a threat to national security
- need for regional and European energy interconnectivity
- reduction of dependence
- joint energy projects

First Cycle Coding	Second Cycle Coding	Theoretical concepts
<p>"deepening of the co-operation between the Nordic and Baltic States",</p> <p>"seek cooperation in multilateral format", "enhance European Union and United States co-operation",</p> <p>"solidarity of all the states of the Euro-Atlantic community are an important condition for ensuring the national security interests"</p>	International Cooperation	Collective bargaining, Liberal intergovernmentalism
<p>"Countries with extensive energy resources are trying to maximise their international influence."</p> <p>"Russia uses its energy resources as political and economic means in different areas of international relations"</p>	Single external energy supplier	Geopolitics of energy, Neorealism
<p>"Changes in the structure of energy supply established between the European Union and Russia may also affect the functioning of the Estonian economy"</p> <p>"The isolation of electricity and gas supply from the European interconnected energy networks adds to the risks related to the resilience of critical services"</p>	Threats to energy security	Securitisation of energy
<p>"implement joint Lithuanian-Polish energy and transport infrastructure projects"</p> <p>"synchronisation of the electricity system", "connection to the grid of Continental Europe"</p>	Interconnectivity	European Integration
<p>"uninterrupted supply of energy"</p> <p>"protection and resilience of critical infrastructure", "security of supply, the security of infrastructure"</p> <p>"enhance the security of energy supply", "reduce the vulnerability of energy"</p> <p>"interconnection with energy networks of other EU member states, and diversity of sources of energy"</p> <p>"reduction of dependence on import of energy resources, promoting the use of local energy resources and implementing the energy efficiency improvement measures"</p> <p>"self-sufficiency in energy sources and energy in critical situations"</p>	Overcoming energy vulnerability	Securitisation of energy

EU policies (Energy Security Strategy, REPowerEU Plan, the Baltic Interconnection Plan)

Most often seen themes:

- Baltic-Nordic cooperation
- energy market development
- interconnection and integration
- need to avoid supply interruption
- need for more coherent external action

First Cycle Coding	Second Cycle Coding	Theoretical concepts
<p>“to achieve an open and integrated regional electricity and gas market between EU countries in the Baltic Sea region. The BEMIP members are Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Finland and Sweden”</p> <p>“the need to develop the energy markets and integrate them into the wider EU energy market”</p> <p>“coordinate policies and energy infrastructure projects”</p> <p>“roadmap towards an integrated power market between the Baltic Member States and the Nordic Countries”</p> <p>“to connect the "Baltic energy island" with the internal electricity market”</p>	<p>Regional Cooperation</p>	<p>Integration</p>

<p>“Common market monitoring and surveillance rules”</p> <p>“The key to improved energy security lies in a more collective approach”</p> <p>“a more coherent external action”</p> <p>“Improving coordination of national energy policies and speaking with one voice in external energy policy”</p>	<p>Calls for further integration</p>	<p>Spillover effect, neofunctionalism, supranationalism</p>
<p>“strengthen security of supply by increasing integration”</p> <p>“end the energy isolation and decrease dependency from a single external gas supplier”</p> <p>“reduce the number of Member States that are exclusively dependent on one single supplier”</p>	<p>Ways of enhancing energy security</p>	<p>Securitisation of energy</p>
<p>“find the most economical solution”</p> <p>“accelerate market opening”</p> <p>“diversifying sources”, “Full opening of the retail market”</p> <p>“enable market integration and efficient market functioning”</p> <p>“to allow effective power market integration”</p> <p>“diversifying external supplies and related infrastructure”</p>	<p>Energy Market Development</p>	<p>Market economy</p>
<p>“to strengthen the EU's energy security”</p> <p>“resilience to these shocks and disruptions to energy supplies”</p> <p>“increasing the EU's capacity to overcome a major disruption”</p> <p>“improve resilience to sudden disruptions in energy supplies”</p> <p>“strategic infrastructures are protected and that the most vulnerable Member States are collectively supported”</p>	<p>Resilience</p>	<p>Securitisation of energy</p>