

**The “Dependence-Reliance-Pattern” and Lithuania’s
Energy Policy: Tracing the “Securitisation-induced
Europeanisation” Causal Mechanism**

Dissertation

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Abbreviations

BEMIP	Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan
BRELL	Belarus, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania Energy Ring
CCLEAS	Commission for Coordination of Lithuania's Euro-Atlantic Security Policy
CEN	Continental European Network
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CMX	Crisis Management Exercise
CS	Copenhagen School
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
DG COMP	Directorate-General for Competition
DG ENER	Directorate-General for Energy
DG TREN	Directorate-General for Transport and Energy
DG	Directorate-General
EC	European Commission
ECT	Energy Charter Treaty
EDA	European Defence Agency
EP	European Parliament
ESDP	European security and defence policy
FSRU	Floating Storage and Re-gasification Unit
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEUC	Governmental EU Commission
GIPL	Gas Interconnection Poland–Lithuania
HLG	High-Level Group
HU-LChD	Homeland Union — Lithuanian Christian Democrats
IESMA	Innovative Energy Solutions for Military Applications
IGAs	Intergovernmental Agreements
IGC	Intergovernmental Conference
IMS	International Military Staff
INPP	Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant
IPS/UPS	Integrated Power System/ Unified Power System of Russia

IR	International Relations
IS	International Staff
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
LPPU	Lithuanian Peasants People Union
LSDP	Lithuanian Social-Democratic Party
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAC	North Atlantic Council
ENSEC COE	Energy Security Centre of Excellence
NATO PA	NATO Parliamentary Assembly
NI	New Intergovernmentalism
OMC	Open Method of Coordination
PCA	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander for Europe
SSDL	State Security Department of Lithuania
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
TTE	Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNSC	UN Security Council
US	United States
VNPP	Visaginas Nuclear Power Plant
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Problem

By gaining access to the EU and NATO in 2004, Lithuania achieved its most important foreign policy goal since the restoration of its political independence. The accession was transformative for the country: it symbolised its return to the family of the Western states after decades it had spent as an integral part of the Soviet Union¹, and was identified with the beginning of a new, prosperous, and secure era in its history. In more practical terms the accession meant a transformation of the roles of the EU and NATO, from foreign policy goals to powerful instruments of Lithuania's foreign policy.² As a result, through the membership in these organisations Lithuania acquired important political leverages allowing it to accelerate the implementation of structural reforms on the national level and providing it with unique opportunities to exert influence on the international stage.

However, Lithuania's general orientation towards the Euro-Atlantic community notwithstanding, the level of its integration proved to be incomplete in some policy areas. Energy constitutes an extremely interesting case in this respect. Being a policy field of strategic importance for an undisturbed functioning of any country, energy remained an area with extensive dependence on Russia even after Lithuania's accession to the EU and NATO. The Russian influence on this Baltic country in the energy field was three-fold. First, it manifested in the form of Lithuania's high dependence on energy imports from Russia. Second, Lithuania's ongoing connectedness to the old energy infrastructure network stemming from the Soviet era kept it bound tightly to Russia as its sole energy supplier. Third, increasing activities of Russian interest groups in the Lithuanian energy sector consequently limited Lithuania's room to manoeuvre in the quest for possibilities to reform its energy sector.

As this paradoxical situation in the country's energy sector existed parallel to its membership in the EU and NATO for more than ten years up until 2015, one can de-

¹ Cf. Jonavičius, Laurynas, Geopolitical Projections of New Lithuanian Foreign Policy, in: *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, 2006, 17, p. 35.

² Cf. Vilpišauskas, Ramūnas, The Dilemmas of Transatlantic Relations after EU Enlargement and the Implications for Lithuania, in: *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, 11/12, 2003, p. 90.

scribe this period as Lithuania being trapped between the West and the East. On one hand, Lithuania was a prevalingly pro-European country with both the political elites and general society supporting its EU membership from the very beginning.³ This view was only strengthened by its special relationship with the United States (US) that led to the perception of NATO being a crucial national security guarantor for Lithuania. Seeing both organisations as indispensable partners, Lithuania had high expectations for their support in reforming the policy sectors that had been seen as most vulnerable to pressure coming from the East, namely Russia. Energy sector reform and assurance of national energy security were thus identified as top priorities of both the country's EU and its NATO policies.

On the other hand, Lithuania's willingness to Europeanise its energy policy was marked by political obstacles. First and foremost, by the time of the country's accession, neither the EU nor NATO had formal competences in energy or ready-to-use instruments for this sector's reform. Second, most of the bigger and more influential member states were reluctant towards the transfer of competences of their strategically important energy policies to the European and NATO levels. Third, in order to join the EU, Lithuania had a legal obligation to close its Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant (INPP) due to safety reasons⁴ by the end of 2009. In practice, the country's EU membership led to the increase of its vulnerability in the energy field as it was forced to use even more imported Russian natural gas for the production of electricity. For its own sake Russia raised the selling price formula for the natural gas imported by Lithuania to the "European" level after it became a member of the EU. This constituted a substantial financial burden leading to the estimation that Lithuania was then paying one of the highest prices in Europe for the imported natural gas.⁵

³ Cf. Matonytė, Irmina/ Šumskas, Gintaras/ Morkevičius, Vaidas, Europeanness of Lithuanian Political Elite: Europhilia, Russophobia and Neoliberalism, in: *Historical Social Research* 41 (4), 2016, pp. 152-154.

⁴ Cf. Protocol No 4 (12003T/PRO/04), 23.9.2003 „Act concerning the conditions of accession of the Czech Republic, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Cyprus, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Malta, the Republic of Poland, the Republic of Slovenia and the Slovak Republic and the adjustments to the Treaties on which the European Union is founded - Protocol No 4 on the Ignalina nuclear power plant in Lithuania“, in: *Official Journal L* 236, 23/09/2003, pp. 0944 - 945.

⁵ Cf. Rapoza, Kenneth, „How Lithuania Is Kicking Russia To The Curb“, *Forbes*, 18.10.2015, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrapoza/2015/10/18/how-lithuania-is-kicking-russia-to-the-curb/?sh=561f5dd22006> [Accessed: 10.12.2020].

It can be summed up that starting in 2004 when Lithuania became a member of the EU and NATO, its energy sector remained a highly contested policy area with Russian pressures growing, Western solutions lacking, and Lithuanian chances to reform its energy sector left pending. However, the situation ten years later showed that these constraints notwithstanding, the country managed to achieve considerable progress in reforming its energy sector.⁶ The country liberalised its electricity and gas markets according to the provisions of the Third Energy Package of the EU, diversified its gas supply routes by building a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal, introduced electricity interconnections to Sweden and Poland, and became a host country for the NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence (NATO ENSEC COE). These developments merging Lithuania's persisting dependence on Russia with its political reliance on the Euro-Atlantic organisational structures between 2004 and 2015 motivate finding out the strategy that Lithuania used in this period of time in order to considerably increase its national energy security by 2015.

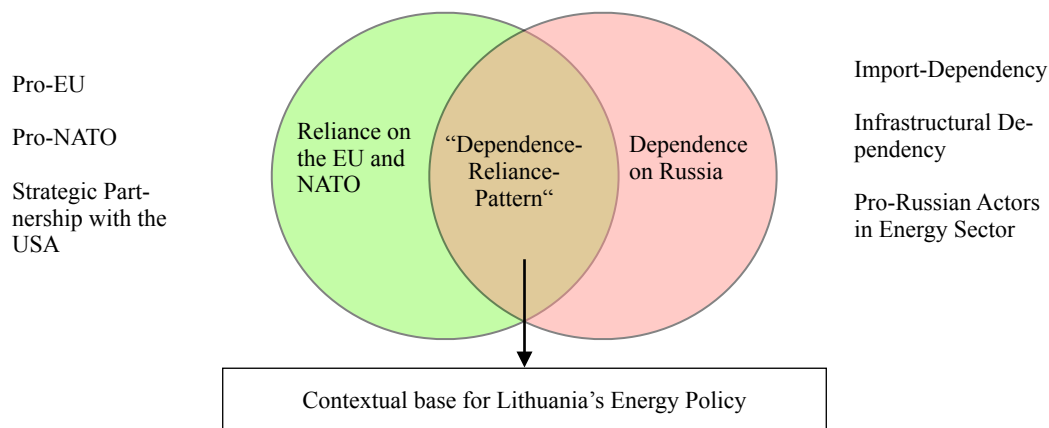
1.2. Research Question and Hypotheses

Lithuania's simultaneous long-lasting dependence on Russia in terms of energy supplies and infrastructure combined with its reliance on the EU and NATO as crucial international partners is referred to as "*dependence-reliance-pattern*" in this research. Whereas dependence on Russia is understood as Lithuania's historically conditioned and unintended bind to Russia in the energy field, reliance on the EU and NATO reflects Lithuania's prevailing view of these Euro-Atlantic structures as ultimate guarantors of its socioeconomic stability and national security. As a result, the "dependence-reliance-pattern" merges simultaneous policy impulses coming from the East and the West and represents the main contextual base for formation and implementation of Lithuania's energy policy between 2004 and 2015. The Figure 1 below illustrates the relationship

⁶ Cf. Johnson, Keith, „Lithuania Cheers ‚Independence‘“, Foreign Policy, 27.10.2014, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/10/27/lithuania-cheers-independence/> [Accessed: 10.12.2020]; Kanter, James, „Lithuania Offers Example of How to Break Russia's Grip on Energy“, The New York Times, 27.10.2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/28/business/energy-environment/lithuania-offers-example-of-how-to-break-russias-grip-on-energy.html> [Accessed: 10.12.2020].

between Lithuania’s dependence on Russia, reliance on the EU and NATO, and its energy policy.

Figure 1: “*Dependence-Reliance-Pattern*”



Source: Author’s own compilation

Having identified the “dependence-reliance-pattern” as the main contextual base for Lithuania’s energy policy, the following **main research question** is raised:

How has Lithuania managed to increase its national energy security in the time frame between 2004 and 2015 in the context of its conflicting dependence (Russia) — reliance (EU, NATO) relationship to Russia, the EU, and NATO?

Resulting from this research question and in compliance with the chosen methodological approach (see subchapter 1.2.4.) the **main components of the research** are defined as follows:

- the “dependence (Russia) — reliance (EU, NATO) pattern” is understood as **the cause** shaping Lithuania’s energy policy in the time frame between 2004 and 2015;
- the reform of Lithuania’s energy sector is understood as **the outcome** of Lithuania’s energy policy during the aforementioned time frame;
- the strategy that allowed Lithuania to reform its energy sector under the conditions of the “dependence (Russia) — reliance (EU, NATO) pattern” represents the “**black box**” and thus the main unknown of this research.

The **main goal** of the research is to open the “black box” and to reveal the strategy that led to the reform of Lithuania’s energy sector under the conflicting conditions of the “dependence-reliance-pattern”. While pursuing the main research goal the focus is on discovering plausible links between policy impulses from the East (Russia) and the West (EU, NATO) that led to the reform of Lithuania’s energy sector. Figure 2 below shows the main components of this research.

Figure 2: *Components of the Research*



Source: Author’s own compilation

Lithuania being a fully-fledged member state of the EU and NATO had a chance to participate in the formation and implementation of the respective energy policies of these organisations. As a result, it is assumed that by seeking to reform its national energy sector, Lithuania might have added to the development of the EU’s and NATO’s energy policies. This assumption motivates raising **additional research questions** and thus expanding on the effects of the strategy used by Lithuania to reform its national energy sector to the international level:

1. How and to what extent has Lithuania contributed to the development of the EU’s energy policy?
2. How and to what extent has Lithuania contributed to the development of NATO’s energy policy?

In relation to the main and additional research questions the following **hypotheses** are formulated:

H1: Lithuania's energy policy between 2004 and 2015 was based on a dual strategy of instrumentalising the Russian threat and externalising its national energy security issues in order to seek assistance from the EU and NATO to solve them.

H2: Repeating instances of Russian power politics in its "near abroad" can be understood as facilitating conditions for Lithuania's strategy in the EU and NATO, allowing the country to instrumentalise the Russian threat in order to legitimise unpopular decisions related with energy sector reform on the domestic level and to promote its "energy security vision" on the international level thus increasing the support of the EU and NATO for its national energy security issues.

H3: Resulting from the prevailing Atlanticist political orientation and NATO-centric national security vision, Lithuania was seeking to actively involve the Alliance in the debate on its energy security. Lithuania's strategy in NATO was based on the consolidation of its status as an energy expert country.

H4: Despite being a small state in the EU and NATO, Lithuania managed to exert influence on the agenda setting processes of these organisations, which led to decisions that were favourable towards Lithuania's national energy security. In this respect, Lithuania managed to influence development of the EU's energy policy and NATO's energy dimension to some extent.

1.3. Literature Review

There have been several waves of academic interest in the matters of Lithuania's energy policy in the timeframe between 2004 and 2015. The first wave was encouraged by the country's accession to the EU which resulted in the closure of its INPP, and also by the "gas wars" between Ukraine and Russia (2006 and 2009). The closure of the INPP meant that Lithuania's immediate dependence on energy imports from Russia was set to grow dramatically. As a result, some academics started asking what the growing dependence on a single supplier meant for the country's economic and security situati-

ons. The Ukraine-Russia gas crises when natural gas supplies to Ukraine were halted in the middle of winter certainly provided a hint towards possible economic and political implications of over-dependency on one energy supplier. As a result, these internal and external developments encouraged political researchers to ask whether the Ukrainian scenario might be repeated in Lithuania as well.⁷

Thus the initial scholarly tendency was to investigate Lithuania's domestic energy security conditions. This phase of research allowed identifying two major sources of vulnerabilities prevailing in the country's energy sector. The first one, as argued by Vitkus, was the Soviet infrastructural legacy of one-way pipelines and electricity networks which tightly bound Lithuania to Russia.⁸ The second source of vulnerability, as identified by Balmaceda, stemmed from the highly non-transparent national energy business structure which created favourable conditions for local pro-Russian political actors to influence political processes in the country.⁹ These two arguments combined led to the general conclusion that Lithuania's energy sector was extremely hard to reform: the rigid energy infrastructure excluded all alternative supply options, and as long as the actors involved in the supply activities were also controlling the distribution pipelines, they were successfully blocking the quest for alternative supply options through their political connections.

As a result of Russia's active involvement in Lithuania's energy sector, the scientific analysis of Lithuania's energy policy between 2004 and 2015 was hardly possible without considering the Russian factor as well as Lithuania's responses to it. However, despite univocally recognising the key role played by Russia, the opinions differed on the question concerning the type of energy relations that prevailed between the two countries during the time span of the current research. According to the leading view, Lithuania's energy relations with Russia had to be understood as dependence or even

⁷ Cf. Jakniūnaitė, Dovilė, A Small State In The Asymmetrical Bilateral Relations: Lithuania in Lithuanian-Russian Relations Since 2004, in: *Baltic Journal of Political Science*, 2015 (4), p. 76.

⁸ Cf. Vitkus, Gediminas, Russian Pipeline Diplomacy: A Lithuanian Response, in: *Acta Slavica Iaponica*, Tomus 26, 2009, <http://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/publicn/acta/26/02Vitkus.pdf>, pp. 25–46; Janeliūnas, Tomas/ Molis, Arūnas, Energy Security of Lithuania: Challenges and Perspectives, in: *Lithuanian Political Science Yearbook*, 2005, pp. 200-223; Česnakas, Giedrius, Energy Security in the Baltic-Black Sea Region: Energy Insecurity Sources and their Impact upon States, in: *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review 2011-2012*, pp. 155-197.

⁹ Cf. Balmaceda, Margarita M., Corruption, Intermediary Companies, and Energy Security: Lithuania's Lessons for Central and Eastern Europe, in: *Problems of Post- Communism*, 55:4, 2008, pp. 16-28; Grigas, Agnia, *The Politics of Energy and Memory between the Baltic States and Russia*, Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013.

“structural dependence”¹⁰. In this respect, according to Švedas, a threefold dependence on Russia prevailed in Lithuania’s energy field until 2014: dependence on Russia as a sole supplier, dependence on natural gas exclusively provided by Russia as the prevailing energy source, and dependence on a single supply route which also came from Russia. This situation led to the identification of Lithuania as an “energy island”.¹¹

By contrast to the aforementioned leading opinion concerning Lithuanian-Russian relations in the energy field, an alternative assessment existed claiming that these two neighbouring countries’ energy relations until 2014 should rather be described in terms of interdependence.¹² The main argument behind this thesis stemmed from Lithuania’s transit country function for Russian gas through its territory to the Russian exclave Kaliningrad. In this respect Mišík and Prachárová argued that because of the gas transit through Lithuania to Kaliningrad, Lithuania had important leverages to tame Russian willingness in exploiting its role as energy supplier for political motives.¹³ However, this argument has been disputed by researchers such as Jakniūnaitė claiming that Lithuanian and Russian relations, also in the field of energy, were asymmetrical, meaning that the sizes of the countries and their abilities to spread influence were simply not comparable.¹⁴ In addition to that, it has been argued that it was a question of self-respect that would have never allowed Lithuania to use such methods as halts of energy flows.¹⁵

Academics following the “dependence argument” raised the question of economic and political implications that the prevailing energy relations between these two countries had on Lithuania. A broad consensus prevailed concerning the negative eco-

¹⁰ Šatūnienė, Živilė, Energy (In)Dependence and National Security of Lithuania, in: Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review 2003, Volume 2, Issue 1, 2004, p. 260. See also: Budrys, Kęstutis, EU–Russia Energy Dialogue and Lithuania’s Energy Security, in: Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review, Issue No. 18, 2006, pp. 1-48; Česnakas, Energy Security in the Baltic-Black Sea Region, pp.165-168; Janeliūnas/ Molis, Energy Security of Lithuania: Challenges and Perspectives, pp. 204-209.

¹¹ Švedas, Romas, EU Energy Island – Characteristics, Threats, and How to Break out of it: A Case Study of Lithuania, in: Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review 2016-2017, Vol. 15, p. 184.

¹² Cf. Mišík, Matúš/ Prachárová, Veronika, Before ‘Independence’ Arrived: Interdependence in Energy Relations between Lithuania and Russia, in: Geopolitics, 21:3, 2016, pp. 579-604; Balmaceda, Margarita M., The Politics of Energy Dependency: Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania between Domestic Oligarchs and Russian Pressure, 1992-2012, University of Toronto Press, 2013, pp. 208-209.

¹³ Cf. Mišík/ Prachárová, p. 579; Grigas, Agnia, Energy Policy: The Achilles Heel of the Baltic States, in: Grigas, Agnia/ Kasekamp, Andres/ Maslauskaitė, Kristina/ Zorgenfrei, Liva (eds.), The Baltic States in the EU: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, Notre Europe, Jacques Delors Institute, Studies & Reports, July 2013, p. 68.

¹⁴ Cf. Jakniūnaitė, A Small State In The Asymmetrical Bilateral Relations, pp. 70-93.

¹⁵ Cf. Švedas, p. 195.

economic effects of Lithuania's dependence on Russia: it has been argued that since its accession to the EU and NATO Lithuania was paying one of the highest prices for imported Russian gas in the whole of Europe¹⁶, which in turn caused cross-sectoral vulnerabilities through increasing prices in other interrelated economic sectors such as transport.¹⁷ In addition to the negative economic implications, Hedenskog and Larsson found out that dependence as the prevailing structure of energy relations between Russia as a supplier and Lithuania as a consumer led to 17 politically motivated interruptions of energy supply to Lithuania between 1999 and 2006.¹⁸

Thus, it has been stressed that politically motivated supply interruptions have been harming not only the economic sector but also potentially shaking the foundation of the Lithuanian state as a whole. As a result, there were scores of academic articles analysing the connections between Lithuania's energy and its national security¹⁹, some of them such as Janeliūnas and Tumkevič coming to the conclusion that the country's energy policy was securitised to a great extent.²⁰ Similarly, it was argued in other contributions that together with the military and information/ cultural security, energy security belonged to the three main pillars of the Lithuanian security strategy²¹ or that Lithuania's security policy relied on two key principles: collective defence and comprehensive security, which among other issues included energy security.²² These features of Lithuanian attitudes towards energy security allowed Urbelis to conclude that in the

¹⁶ Cf. Molis, Arūnas/ Česnakas, Giedrius/ Juozaitis, Justinas, *Rusijos geoenergetika ir Baltijos šalių atsakas: integracijos ir bendradarbiavimo iniciatyvų reikšmė/ Russia Coerces, but the Baltic States Persist: the Importance of Initiatives for Integration and Cooperation* (full article in Lithuanian only, abstract also in English), in: *Politologija*, 91 (3), 2018, p. 11.

¹⁷ Cf. Švedas, p. 193.

¹⁸ Cf. Hedenskog, Jakob/ Larsson, Robert L., *Russian Leverage on the CIS and the Baltic States*, Defence Analysis, Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), 2007, p. 50.

¹⁹ Cf. Šatūnienė, pp. 259-278; Česnakas, Giedrius, *Energy Security Challenges, Concepts and the Controversy of Energy Nationalism in Lithuanian Energy Politics*, in: *Baltic Journal of Law & Politics* 6:1, 2013, pp. 106-139.

²⁰ Cf. Janeliūnas, Tomas/ Tumkevič, Agnija, *Securitization of the Energy Sectors in Estonia, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine: Motives and Extraordinary Measures*, in: *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, Issue 30, 2013, pp. 65-90.

²¹ Cf. Kojala, Linas/ Keršanskas, Vytautas, *The Impact of the Conflict in Ukraine on Lithuanian Security Development*, in: *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review 2014-2015*, Volume 13, p. 178.

²² Cf. Šešelgytė, Margarita, *A Midget Warrior: Security Choices of Lithuania*, in: Rublovskis, Raimonds/ Šešelgytė, Margarita/ Kaljurand, Riina (eds.), *Defence And Security For The Small: Perspectives from the Baltic States*, Reykjavik, Centre for Small State Studies, Institute of International Affairs, University of Iceland, 2013, p. 39.

case of Lithuania the lines between the foreign/ military sphere and economic security, including energy, were extremely blurred.²³

Having identified the economic and security conditions that prevailed in Lithuania's energy field, the academic discussion concerning possible solutions for the country's energy issues began, marking the second wave of academic interest in this topic. One strand of academic research included the contributions of Janeliūnas²⁴, Lang²⁵, and Gabrielsson and Sliwa²⁶, who analysed the options of closer regional cooperation in the energy field. Although emphasising the importance of such cooperation, most of the researchers came to the general conclusion that a regional solution for Lithuania and its neighbours' energy issues was not easy to achieve. It was argued that the reasons thereof included vastly different supply patterns and energy mixes²⁷, as well as differing understandings of energy security. A highly securitised vision was being promoted by Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Poland, which contrasted with the de-securitised business-oriented view prevailing in Germany.²⁸

In addition, it has been emphasised that even within the group of the Baltic states and Poland, who traditionally shared similar security-oriented energy visions, important national divisions existed, preventing a common approach on energy matters. These divisions included different energy dependency rates among the Baltic states with Lithuania being the most import-dependent, and therefore most reform-oriented country

²³ Cf. Urbelis, Vaidotas, *Lithuanian Strategic Culture*, in: *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review 2006*, Vilnius: Lithuanian Military Academy, 2007, pp. 199-200.

²⁴ Cf. Janeliūnas, Tomas, *Lithuanian Energy Strategy and its Implications on Regional Cooperation*, in: Sprūds, Andris/ Rostoks, Toms (eds.), *Energy: Pulling the Baltic Sea Region Together or Apart?*, Latvian Institute of International Affairs, "Zinātne" Publishers, 2009, pp. 190-222.

²⁵ Cf. Lang, Kai-Olaf, *Energy in the Baltic Sea Area — Glue Or Separating Agent?*, in: Sprūds, Andris/ Rostoks, Toms (eds.), *Energy: Pulling the Baltic Sea Region Together or Apart?*, Latvian Institute of International Affairs, "Zinātne" Publishers, 2009, pp. 283-299.

²⁶ Cf. Gabrielsson, Risto/ Sliwa, Zdzislaw, *Baltic Region Energy Security — the Trouble with European Solidarity*, in: *Baltic Security & Defence Review*, Vol. 15, Issue 1, 2013, pp. 144-184.

²⁷ Cf. Sprūds, Andris, *Energy and Regional Cooperation: Towards the Baltic Energy Rim?*, in: Nurick, Robert/ Nordenman, Magnus (eds.), *Nordic-Baltic Security in the 21st Century: the Regional Agenda and the Global Role*, Atlantic Council, 2011, p. 36; Nowak, Zuzanna, *The Baltic Sea Region*, in: Stang, Gerald (ed.), *Securing the Energy Union: Five Pillars and Five Regions*, European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), 2017, pp. 33-34.

²⁸ Cf. Lang, Kai-Olaf, *Energy Security in the Baltic Sea region: EU Members of the Region between Integration and Discord*, in: Andžāns, Māris/ Bruģe, Ilvija (eds.), *The Baltic Sea Region: Hard and Soft Security Reconsidered*, Latvian Institute of International Affairs, Riga, 2016, p. 72.

after the closure of the INPP.²⁹ Moreover, the prevailing political mistrust among the Baltic countries and Poland, especially towards Latvia, which was seen as extremely unresistant to the spread of Russian interests in its energy sector, has been identified as an important obstacle to overcome for their cooperation.³⁰

Moreover, it has been argued that difficult bilateral political relations prevailing between Lithuania and Poland had several negative regional consequences. First, according to Budrys, the countries' differing geo-strategic orientations hindered their cooperation. Lithuania's integration into the Western European energy networks was possible only through Poland, which at the same time regarded its neighbour's open access to its energy system as economically counter-productive.³¹ Second, according to Fuksiewicz and Łada, ongoing political conflicts between Lithuania and Poland concerning the Polish minority rights in Lithuania fuelled their overall bilateral relations, reducing the willingness of Poland to cooperate with Lithuania in the energy field.³² Thus these scientific contributions provided important insights into rejecting the traditionally prevailing, but rather trivial view of the Baltic unity and the close relations between Lithuania and Poland, demonstrating that there was no easy regional solution for the countries' energy related issues.

An alternative view concerning possible solutions for Lithuania's energy issues focused on the internationalisation/ Europeanisation thesis. In this respect Miniotaitė argued that Lithuania preferred the involvement of its Western partners in the search for solutions for its energy issues.³³ The academic interest in this research area naturally reflected the strengthening political focus on the international dimension of energy policy which was influenced by the newly launched energy policies of the EU and NATO.

²⁹ Cf. Pedersen, Jesper Packert, *Bolstering European Energy Security: Baltic Sea Regional Energy Policy Case Study*, German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2014, p. 9.

³⁰ Cf. Noël, Pierre/ Findlater, Sachi/ Chyong, Chi Kong, *Baltic Gas Supply Security: Divided We Stand?*, in: *Economics of Energy & Environmental Policy*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Published by International Association for Energy Economics, 2013, pp. 1-2.

³¹ Cf. Budrys, Kęstutis, *Bendradarbiavimo su Lenkija įtaka Lietuvos energetiniam saugumui/ The Impact of Cooperation with Poland on Energy Security of Lithuania (in Lithuanian only)*, in: *Lietuvos metinė strateginė apžvalga 2007*, Vilnius, 2008, pp. 213-240; Vaščenkaitė, Galina, *Lithuanian-Polish Relations after 2004: Good Old Cooperation in Regretfully Bad New Wrapping*, in: *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, Vol. 32, 2014, pp. 91-92.

³² Cf. Fuksiewicz, Aleksander/ Łada, Agnieszka, *Baltic Group: Poland, Lithuania Latvia and Estonia in Search of Common Interests*, Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw, 2015, pp. 57-60.

³³ Cf. Miniotaitė, Gražina, *Europeanization Tendencies of the Foreign and Security Policy of the Baltic States*, in: *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review 2010-2011*, Vilnius, 2011, p. 115.

In this research field the most important questions were Lithuania's interests in and its impact on the development of the EU's and NATO's energy policy, Lithuania's willingness to use the EU as a leverage in its energy relations with Russia, and the country's achievements in promoting its "energy vision" within the EU and NATO.

Concerning Lithuania's interests in the EU's energy policy, Vaičiūnas suggested that its general preference was a horizontally organised, non-sectoral European energy policy, with its provisions stretching to the areas of foreign relations and competition.³⁴ The academic literature identified how this general aim consequently differentiated into four main areas of Lithuania's interest: first, liberalisation and integration of the EU's energy market; second, development of a common EU position vis a vis external energy suppliers; third, hierarchisation of the EU's goals in the energy field, giving priority to energy security over competitiveness and sustainability; fourth, increasing the role of the European Commission (EC) in the EU's energy policy.³⁵

Having identified the areas of Lithuania's national interest, a considerable bulk of academic literature was preoccupied with investigation of the country's abilities to influence the decision-making processes in the EU, and thus achieve its national energy policy goals. Vaičiūnas emphasised that the prevailing structural circumstances have been favourable for Lithuania's upload: the EU's energy policy emerged as an independent policy field after Lithuania had already become a full-fledged member, therefore allowing it to participate in the development of this policy from the very beginning.³⁶

Generally, it has been recognised that Lithuania has successfully exploited these structural circumstances and achieved considerable influence through its involvement in the EU's energy policy. This positive record included the adoption of the Baltic Energy

³⁴ Cf. Vaičiūnas, Žygimantas, *Europos Sąjungos Bendros energetikos politikos formavimasis ir Lietuvos interesai/ Common European Union Energy Policy in the making and the Interests of Lithuania* (in Lithuanian only), in: *Politologija*, Vol. 55 (3), 2009, pp. 95-96.

³⁵ Cf. Molis, Arūnas, *Rethinking EU-Russia energy relations: What do the Baltic States want?*, SPES Policy Papers, February 2011, p. 18; Vaičiūnas, pp. 96-100; Vilpišauskas, Ramūnas, *National Preferences and Bargaining of the New Member States since the Enlargement of the EU: the Baltic States – Still Policy Takers?*, in: *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, Issue No 25, 2011, p. 26; Wisniewski, Anna, *Lithuania*, in: Krisztina Vida (ed.), *The Impact Of the 10 New Member States on EU Decision-Making. The Experience of the First Years*, Foundation for European Progressive Studies, Budapest, 2010, pp. 65-66.

³⁶ Cf. Vaičiūnas, pp. 93-95.

Market Interconnection Plan (BEMIP)³⁷, as well as Lithuania's achievement in linking the closure of its INPP with the debate on allocation of emissions that resulted not only in additional quotas for Lithuania, but also in the allocation of financial support for the construction of a power bridge between Lithuania and Sweden.³⁸ Moreover, as stressed by Vilpišauskas, the concerns raised by Lithuania regarding the issues of its infrastructural isolation and over-dependence on Russia emerged in a number of official EU documents, thus showing that these issues have been officially recognised.³⁹

On the other hand, it was also acknowledged that Lithuania was not able to achieve all of its goals. It was argued that one of its main priorities in the EU's energy policy, namely development of a common EU position vis a vis external suppliers, first and foremost Russia, failed.⁴⁰ The best illustration for this was the successful construction of the Nord Stream pipeline, which Lithuania strongly opposed. In addition to that, it has been highlighted that the country's strategic energy infrastructure projects such as construction of the power bridges to Sweden and Poland, as well as construction of a new nuclear power plant in Visaginas, stagnated over time, or have been canceled altogether.⁴¹ According to the commentators, the reasons for these failures stemmed from the inconsistency of the country's domestic energy policy along with the strong influence of pro-Russian economic interest groups.⁴² Finally, it has been argued that Lithuania's continuous neglect of the already accepted EU-level priorities in terms of energy efficiency and sustainability reduced its credibility as a country strongly concerned with energy related issues.⁴³

³⁷ Cf. Pacevičiūtė, Irma, *Towards the Energy Union: The BEMIP and the Case of Lithuania*, Istituto Affari Internazionali, IAI Working Papers 17, January 2017, pp. 7-12; Vilpišauskas, Ramūnas, *The Management of Economic Interdependencies of a Small State: Assessing the Effectiveness of Lithuania's European Policy since Joining the EU*, Centre for Small State Studies, Institute of International Affairs, University of Island, 2012, p. 35.

³⁸ Cf. Vilpišauskas, *The Management of Economic Interdependencies of a Small State*, p. 34.

³⁹ Cf. Vilpišauskas, *National Preferences and Bargaining of the New Member States*, p. 27.

⁴⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

⁴¹ Cf. Vilpišauskas, *The Management of Economic Interdependencies of a Small State*, p. 35.

⁴² Cf. Vilpišauskas, *National Preferences and Bargaining of the New Member States*, p. 28.

⁴³ Cf. Vilpišauskas, Ramūnas/ Vandecasteele, Bruno/ Vaznonytė, Austė, *The Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union Advancing Energy Policy and Eastern Partnership Goals: Conditions for Exerting Influence*, in: *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, Issue: 29, 2013, p. 30.

Some failures notwithstanding, the question, to what extent has Lithuania, being a small state and thus belonging to those who are “doomed to be policy takers”⁴⁴, managed to exert influence on the formation of the EU’s energy policy, remained. In this respect academics identified the importance of both Lithuania’s uploading and downloading strategies. In terms of uploading, Jakniūnaitė stressed Lithuania’s successful institutional game within the EU⁴⁵, and Vilpišauskas — its role as a selective policy initiator⁴⁶. It has been identified that there were several important channels through which Lithuania worked through in order to initiate the development of the EU’s energy policy according to its national vision: first, active organisation of international conferences which have been used to highlight Lithuania’s interests in this field; second, its influence on the partner countries’ EU Council presidency priorities in the area of energy.⁴⁷

In terms of downloading, Pakalkaitė argued that Lithuania’s strategic use of the EU’s energy policy tools such as the Third Energy Package of 2009 and the Security of Supply Regulation of 2010 allowed changing of domestic opportunity structures and thus emerged as a key for the energy sector’s reforms.⁴⁸ Similarly, it has been claimed that Europeanisation of Lithuania’s energy policy had important broader implications on the national level, as it worked “as a protective shield to justify unpopular decisions of both domestic and foreign policy.”⁴⁹

In addition to Lithuania’s continuous attempts to keep energy security high on the EU’s agenda, the academic literature also discussed the impact of Lithuania’s EU Council presidency in 2013 for the promotion of its energy goals. According to Vilpišauskas, Vandecasteele and Vaznonytė, as Lithuania had no leverage to change the timing of the EU’s legislative process, energy security was included in Lithuania’s presidency agenda without having any expectations for major decisions on the EU level in

⁴⁴ Vilpišauskas, *National Preferences and Bargaining of the New Member States*, p. 11.

⁴⁵ Cf. Jakniūnaitė, *Dovilė, A Small State in the Asymmetrical Bilateral Relations*, p. 81.

⁴⁶ Cf. Vilpišauskas, *National Preferences and Bargaining of the New Member States*, pp. 26-30.

⁴⁷ Cf. Vaičiūnas, pp. 106-109.

⁴⁸ Cf. Pakalkaitė, *Vija, Lithuania’s Strategic Use of EU Energy Policy Tools: A Transformation of Gas Dynamics*, Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, OIES Paper NG 111, September 2016; Pakalkaitė, *Vija, Building the Single EU Gas Market in Hungary, Lithuania and Romania: Domestic Interests and the Dynamics of Europeanisation*, Doctoral Thesis, Central European University, April 2017.

⁴⁹ Miniotaitė, *Europeanization Tendencies of the Foreign and Security Policy*, p. 101.

this field.⁵⁰ However, Molis emphasised that Lithuania had important indirect goals in the energy field during its presidency term, namely to promote its old idea of including aspects of energy security in the agenda of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)⁵¹ and thus broadening the debate on possible implications of energy on European security and defence. It was argued that Lithuania succeeded in achieving this goal, as since 2013 energy constitutes a part of the CSDP routine, with most work being concentrated at the level of the European Defence Agency (EDA).⁵²

In the context of Lithuania's attempts to broaden the international debate on energy security, it revealed its strategic connections with security and defence policies along with the country's achievements in influencing the energy-related debate in NATO. This was discussed in the academic literature, although to a lesser extent than in the case of the EU. It has been argued that from the very beginning of its membership in the Alliance Lithuania has been an outspoken supporter of the inclusion of energy security in NATO's agenda. According to Umbach, the biggest and most visible achievement of Lithuania in this area was NATO's support for its initiative of creating the national Energy Security Centre.⁵³ It has been argued that after this Centre was accredited as a NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence (ENSEC COE) and thus became a part of the wider NATO military structure, Lithuania gained an important window to the Alliance's decision making processes, thus increasing its possibilities to shape its energy strategy.⁵⁴

To sum up the analysis of the already existing academic literature, several critical points can be made. First, although the reviewed contributions have touched upon many important aspects of Lithuania's energy policy, the argumentation used was rather fragmented and often reflected the authors' concentration on actual developments that were taking place in this field during a certain phase. Although this extensive analysis led to the identification of important phenomena that have shaped Lithuania's energy

⁵⁰ Cf. Vilpišauskas/ Vandecasteele/ Vaznonytė, p. 14.

⁵¹ Cf. Molis, Arūnas/ Vaišnoras, Tomas, Energy Security through Membership in NATO and the EU: Interests and Achievements of Lithuania, in: Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review, Issue: 32, 2014, p. 27.

⁵² Cf. Urbelis, Vaidotas, The Relevance and Influence of Small States in NATO and the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy, in: Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review 2014-2015, Volume 13, Military Academy of Lithuania, 2015, p. 75.

⁵³ Cf. Umbach, Frank, EU-NATO Cooperation on Energy: Dream or Reality?, in: Energy Security Forum, Quarterly Journal, Vol. 2, September 2011, p. 4.

⁵⁴ Cf. Molis/ Vaišnoras, pp. 29-30.

policy in the time frame between 2004 and 2015 — first and foremost, securitisation and Europeanisation, the existing academic literature did not analyse the relation between securitisation and Europeanisation processes, thus failing to grasp the country’s broader strategy in the energy field.

Consequently, as the reviewed contributions in many cases can be ascribed to the field of policy papers, they were concentrating on the material facts such as concrete proposals that have been made, certain results that have been achieved, or important political opportunities that have been missed. This led to the result that the existing academic literature fails to put the analysed developments in a broader context, prevailing in the case of Lithuania, and therefore to provide a comprehensive explanation of the country’s balancing between the pressures coming from Russia and the windows of opportunity created by the EU and NATO membership that have been characteristic for the period of inquiry. As a result, these shortcomings allow for claims that important questions such as the practical effects of securitising Russia, the role of the USA in Lithuania’s energy strategy, as well as the rationale behind Lithuania’s decision to employ a double internationalisation strategy and to engage both the EU and NATO in its quest for national energy security, still remain unanswered and thus provide an impetus for this research.

1.4. Theoretical Background

The prime assumption on which this research is based states that in the time span between 2004 and 2015 Lithuania’s energy policy developed in the context of two conflicting patterns: energy dependence on Russia, and political-strategic reliance on the EU and NATO. It is argued that these patterns were reflections of the material reality, manifesting as energy infrastructural connectedness to Russia, ownership of the national energy companies by Russian energy firms, as well as the country’s new membership in the EU and NATO. In addition to this, it is stressed that the “dependence-reliance-pattern” was also deeply entrenched on the ideational level: Lithuanian political elite and the society as a whole perceived Russian domination in the energy field through the prism of enmity, qualifying this domination as an “ongoing occupation” and

thus recalling the country's negative experience of the Soviet occupation in the past. The membership in the EU and NATO, on the other hand, has been described as "returning to the family of Western states"⁵⁵, whereas the organisations themselves have been perceived as guarantors of prosperity and security.

The ontological claim stating that a country's policy is a consequence of not only material but also ideational conditions such as prevailing world views, embedded collective understandings and cognitive schemes⁵⁶, leads to the realm of social constructivism. As Alexander Wendt argues, the middle way of reconciling material and ideational effects has the biggest potential of explaining international politics because "[m]aterial forces are not constituted solely by social meanings, and social meanings are not immune to material effects."⁵⁷

Beside the acceptance of dual — material and ideational — ontology of agents' policy interests by both social constructivist and rationalist IR schools, there is also a tendency of reconciling two once distinct logics of political action — the *logic of appropriateness*⁵⁸ (social constructivism) and *logic of consequentialism*⁵⁹ (rational choice). Active debates between the representatives of social constructivism and rationalism that have taken place during the last two decades resulted in the acknowledgment that the strict dichotomy between these two theories' understanding of actors' rationality can be overcome. As a result, the proponents of the "strategic" or "actor-centered" constructivism suggest that agents should be understood as purposeful actors embedded in ideational structures, which they use in order to achieve their goals. Broadening the con-

⁵⁵ Jonavičius, Geopolitical Projections of New Lithuanian Foreign Policy, p. 35.

⁵⁶ Cf. Saurugger, Sabine, Constructivism and public policy approaches in the EU: from Ideas to Power Games, in: Journal of European Public Policy, Vol. 20, No. 6, 2013, p. 888.

⁵⁷ Wendt, Alexander, Social Theory of International Politics, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 111-112. In this passage the author partially cites Freudenberg, William/ Fricke, Scott/ Gramling, Robert, Beyond the nature/ society divide: Learning to think about a mountain, in: Sociological Forum, 10, 1995, pp. 361-392.

⁵⁸ The *logic of appropriateness* claims that agents interact by following the rules of appropriate behaviour in a specific situation which is compatible with the membership in a specific group or a political community. Cf. March, James G./ Olsen, Johan P., 'The logic of appropriateness', Arena Working Papers, WP 04/09, 2004, p. 2. https://www.sv.uio.no/arena/english/research/publications/arena-working-papers/2001-2010/2004/wp04_9.pdf [Accessed: 30.10.2020].

⁵⁹ The *logic of consequentialism* is based on the idea of utility maximisation and represents the core of rationalist thinking. According to this logic, norms and social structures can by their best only constrain the choices and behaviour of self-interested actors. Cf. Checkel, Jeffrey T., Review: The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory, in: World Politics, Vol. 50, No. 2, 1998, p. 327.

constructivist view of agents' rationality allows tying ideas to political outcomes⁶⁰ and thus introduces causality in the constructivist thinking:

“ideas and norms do not solely constitute the environment in which actors are embedded (constitutive logic) but are also tools consciously used by these same actors to attain their goals (causal logic).”⁶¹

Thus according to the theoretical literature not only the dichotomy prevailing on the ontological level between the materialists and idealists, but also the consequent dualism traditionally entrenched on the epistemological level between the proponents of causal and constitutive logics of explanation can be overcome.

The notion of an actor's rational use of the ideational context it is embedded in is extremely helpful in answering the current research question. Departing from the prime assumption of the research stating that Lithuania's energy policy was developing within a paradoxical “dependence-reliance-pattern” that was characterised by two factors. First being Russia's continual grip on Lithuania's energy sector, and second, Lithuania's goal of involving the EU and NATO in its quest for energy security. One can assume that in order to accommodate these diverging policy impulses, Lithuania had to curve its way through multiple internal and external pressures. On one hand, being a new member of the EU and NATO, it was expected to act according to the generally accepted rules of the Western community (*logic of appropriateness*). On the other hand, it had to seize the moment of intensifying discussions on energy security in order to attract the attention of other, rather sceptical EU member states towards its national energy policy issues (*logic of consequentialism*).

Holding on to the idea of Lithuanian energy policy developing within the “dependence-reliance-pattern” and inspired by the argumentation of the “strategic” constructivism as presented above it is expected that the formation and implementation of this policy between 2004 and 2015 can be explained through a particular causal interaction between two social phenomena: securitisation and Europeanisation. As a result, the theoretical background of this research is based on the combination of the securitisation and Europeanisation theoretical approaches. While applying these theoretical approa-

⁶⁰ Cf. Saurugger, Sabine, Constructivism and Agenda Setting, in: Nikolaos Zahariadis (ed.), „Handbook of Public Policy Agenda Setting“, Cheltenham, Northampton, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2016, pp. 144-145.

⁶¹ Ibid, p. 135.

ches to the case of Lithuania, structural limitations related with Lithuania's profile as a small state are also taken into account.

It is important to stress that there is only a limited amount of scientific research based on the combination of the securitisation and Europeanisation theoretical perspectives.⁶² The most obvious reason for this is their differing disciplinary affiliations: securitisation is an approach most commonly applied in the field of international relations and security studies, whereas Europeanisation stems from the research field of European politics and policy analysis. However, there are several points of conceptual affinity and overlap making a combination of these two approaches a challenging, yet innovative attempt at thinking about the processes taking place among the EU, NATO and certain member countries. In order to proceed with exploring the ways to combine these two approaches, a short introduction into the specifics of each of them, as well as the small state perspective, is presented first.

1.4.1. The Securitisation Theoretical Approach

The securitisation theoretical approach emerged as the “third way” of theorising (international) security. It was originally proposed by the Copenhagen School (CS) in the 1980s and became the consensual option between the proponents of narrow (realist) and broad (postmodernist) concepts of security.⁶³ Contrary to the proponents of the narrow security meaning, the representatives of the CS advocated for the inclusion of additional sectors (environmental, economic, societal) alongside the traditional military-political aspect of the security agenda. At the same time, and in contrast to the so-called “security broadeners”, the CS rejected the idea of introducing individual security as a reference object and thus argued that the focus on analysing security at the traditional level for states and societies should be preserved.

⁶² Most of the existing literature combining the securitisation and Europeanisation approaches is devoted to the analysis of minority issues: cf. Nancheva, Nevena, *Securitization reversed. Does Europeanization improve minority/majority relations?*, in: *Südosteuropa*, 65(1), 2017, pp. 10–34; as well as migration issues: cf. Şemşit, Sühal „Transformation Of Migration Policies In Poland And Turkey In The Eu Accession Process: Europeanized And/Or Securitized?“, *CEU Political Science Journal*, Issue No 4, 2008, pp. 365-387.

⁶³ Cf. Stritzel, Holger, *Security in Translation: Securitization Theory and the Localization of Threat*, Springer, 2014, p. 14.

One of the key premises of the securitisation theoretical approach as developed by the CS is the rejection of prevailing objectivist understanding of security.⁶⁴ Therefore according to the representatives of the CS school, Buzan, Weaver and de Wilde, there was no such thing as objective security that could be measured according to material parameters such as defence expenditure or the size of a country's armed forces. Instead, the CS argues that security should be understood as an inter-subjective "agreement" among individuals involved in the security debate:

„Security“ is [...] a self-referential practice, because it is in this practice that the issue becomes a security issue — not necessarily because a real existential threat exists but because the issue is presented as such a threat.”⁶⁵

As a result, securitisation can be understood as a move by which a particular issue is presented as an existential threat to a reference object (state, society) thus legitimising the use of extraordinary measures in order to handle it.⁶⁶ In doing so the CS introduced a constructivist turn in security studies and gradually transformed the research agenda from the realist focus on the question of "what security is" to the question of "what security does".⁶⁷

The core assumptions constituting the essence of the securitisation theoretical approach are the following: (1) the notion of intersubjectivity between the audience (a target group for the securitising moves) and securitising actor in "translating" social facts into threats; (2) the notion of co-dependence between securitising moves and the context in which they take place; (3) knowledgeable claims about an existential threat to a referent object as drivers of securitising moves; (4) the notion of power relations prevailing between the securitising actor and audience; (5) securitising moves' embeddedness in social mechanisms such as persuasion, learning, socialisation, practices, instruments; (6) policy changes allowing exceptional political actions; (7) the notion of responsibility for "speaking security".⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Cf. Guzzini, Stefano, *Securitization As a Causal Mechanism*, Special Issue on The Politics of Securitization, in: *Security Dialogue*, 42 (4-5), 2011, p. 330.

⁶⁵ Buzan, Barry/ Weaver, Ole/ de Wilde, Jaap, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc., London, 1998, p. 24.

⁶⁶ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁶⁷ Cf. Guzzini, p. 330.

⁶⁸ Cf. Balzacq, Thierry, „The 'Essence' of Securitization: Theory, Ideal Type, and a Sociological Science of Security“, in: Balzacq, Thierry/ Guzzini, Stefano, Williams, Michael C./ Wæver, Ole/ Patomäki, Heikki, „Forum: What kind of theory – if any – is securitization?“, in: *International Relations*, Vol. 29 (1), 2014, p. 11.

With the introduction of the securitisation theoretical approach the CS detached security from the military/political sector and demonstrated that every societal issue had the potential of becoming a security issue. In this respect Balzacq et al. argued that identity and migration, environment and energy, global health, religion and cyber security have generated the most active debates in the securitisation literature.⁶⁹ However, the popularity of energy security as a research topic notwithstanding, Balzacq et al. recognised that there was only limited number of systematic analyses of this issue through the “lenses of securitization theory”⁷⁰. The following subchapter explains how the theoretical lenses provided by the securitisation theory are applied to this research.

1.4.2. The “Many Faces” of Securitisation and Its Sociological View

Although having proposed a new and innovative way of thinking about security, securitisation turned out to be far away from a homogenous theoretical perspective. As with the time application of the securitisation approach became increasingly widespread, it was recognised that its theoretical scope was ambivalent, allowing listing it as a conceptual move, a framework for analysis, and as an empirical and political theory at the same time.⁷¹ As it is not possible to talk about the “securitisation theory” in the singular anymore, the theorising on securitisation is often split into two periods: (1) the securitisation theory of the CS and (2) the securitisation theory of the post-Copenhagen School (post-CS).⁷²

In their initial formulation the representatives of the CS developed a merely constitutive securitisation theory based on the speech act theory of John L. Austin. From the perspective of this theory, nothing was security in itself. Austin claimed that the utterance of the word “security” represented an act which moved particular political developments into a specific security area and thus allowed the use of extraordinary measures.⁷³

⁶⁹ Cf. Balzacq, Thierry/ Léonard, Sarah/ Ruzicka, Jan, ‘Securitization’ Revisited: Theory and Cases, in: *International Relations*, Vol. 30(4), 2016, p. 508.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 511.

⁷¹ Cf. Guzzini, p. 330.

⁷² Cf. Stritzel, pp. 38-39.

⁷³ Cf. Weaver, Ole, „Securitization and desecuritization“, in: Lipschutz, Ronnie D. (ed.), *On Security*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1995, p. 55.

Therefore according to this perspective, the word “security” had a performative role and thus the potential not only to describe, but also to transform social reality by introducing a state of exception.⁷⁴

Although in itself being an innovative way of thinking of the emergence of security issues, this approach led to a rather static use of the securitisation concept and to the reduction of security to a conventional procedure having a fixed and permanent role.⁷⁵ At the same time the usage of the speech act theory as a foundation for analysing securitisation meant downplaying both the context that allowed securitisation to happen and the outcomes that may have followed in the aftermath. Thus, the original CS approach denied the possibility that causal relations could constitute a part of the securitisation phenomenon, arguing that:

“[...] the theory is not causal in a traditional sense, because securitisation is conceptualised as a performative act never exhaustively explained by its conditions.”⁷⁶

As a reaction to the explanatory limits of the initial securitisation theory, the post-CS period resulted in the emergence of diverse theories of securitisation, each of them having different centres of gravity.⁷⁷ Although the post-CS scholars generally acknowledge the importance of the speech act theory on understanding how securitisation transforms social reality⁷⁸, they do not limit their research to simply investigating “how securitisation happens” (constitutive strand of theorising on securitisation). The post-CS scholars either focus on the normative dimension of securitisation (philosophical strand) or investigate it as a process that stems from specific contextual circumstances and leads to certain political outcomes (sociological strand).⁷⁹

While focusing on reasons and outcomes of securitisation, the proponents of the sociological strand include several important modifications to the securitisation theory.

⁷⁴ Cf. Balzacq/ Léonard/ Ruzicka, p. 495.

⁷⁵ Cf. Balzacq, Thierry, The Three Faces of Securitization: Political Agency, Audience and Context, in: *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 11(2), 2005, p. 172.

⁷⁶ Wæver, Ole, ‘Securitization: Taking Stock of a Research Programme in Security Studies’, communication presented at BISA Roundtable (unpublished manuscript, 2003), p. 32. <https://docplayer.net/62037981-Securitisation-taking-stock-of-a-research-programme-in-security-studies.html> [Accessed: 17.11.2020]

⁷⁷ Cf. Balzacq, „The ‘Essence’ of Securitization, p. 8.

⁷⁸ Cf. Balzacq/ Léonard/ Ruzicka, p. 497.

⁷⁹ Cf. Balzacq, Thierry/ Guzzini, Stefano, „Introduction: What Kind of Theory - If Any - Is Securitization?“, in: Balzacq, Thierry/ Guzzini, Stefano/ Williams, Michael C./ Wæver, Ole/ Patomäki, Heikki, „Forum: What kind of theory – if any – is securitization?“, in: *International Relations*, Vol 29 (1), 2014, pp. 2-3.

First of all, pledging for its dynamic understanding, they reject the emphasis on the poststructuralist discursive core of the theory and argue that securitisation should be approached as:

“a strategic (pragmatic) practice that occurs within, and as part of, a configuration of circumstances, including the context, the psycho-cultural disposition of the audience, and the power that both speaker and listener bring to the interaction.”⁸⁰

As a result, according to the representatives of this view, the reconceptualisation of securitisation as a strategic (pragmatic) practice allows elevating the phenomenon “above its normative setting”⁸¹, thus increasing the applicability of the theory for empirical analysis.

In addition to that, the sociological strand of the securitisation theory clarifies the very imprecise meaning of audience, which despite being a crucial concept in the theory “tasked” to determine a successful securitisation⁸², simultaneously proves to be impossible to capture in practice⁸³. The post-CS scholars therefore suggest seeing the audience in a broader sense of practices; bureaucratic routines and policy instruments that are established as a result of securitising moves.⁸⁴ Furthermore, the sociological view of securitisation sees the relationship between security and politics in gradual, not absolute terms. This means that the threat construction is understood as a process, not as a specific moment when politics cease to exist and the realm of security begins: “security and politics (re)define, and constantly enter into each other’s orbits.”⁸⁵ All of these modifications introduced by the sociological strand of the securitisation theory lead to its use as a causal theory, thus allowing to increase its explanatory power.

As a result, the proponents of the sociological view, among them Guzzini, argue that a two-directional causality is compatible with the securitisation theory, as securitisation can be seen “either as the process that is triggered by something else or as itself the trigger of certain effects — both explanandum and explanans.”⁸⁶ This way of thin-

⁸⁰ Balzacq, *The Three Faces of Securitization*, p. 172.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, p. 173.

⁸² Cf. Buzan/ Weaver/ de Wilde, p. 31.

⁸³ Cf. Balzacq, „The ‘Essence’ of Securitization“, p. 13.

⁸⁴ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 13.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p. 13.

⁸⁶ Guzzini, p. 337.

king allows raising the originally positivist question “why”: namely why certain securitisation moves are possible in a particular national security discourse, and/or why particular “action-complexes” can follow them.⁸⁷ As this research focuses on securitisation as a strategy employed by the Lithuanian government with the aim to foster debate on its national energy security issues, the sociological view of the securitisation theory represents a useful perspective for this sake. Before turning to the explanation on how securitisation is seen as a part of a causal explanation in this research, an introduction into the Europeanisation theoretical approach is needed first.

1.4.3. The Europeanisation Theoretical Approach

Similar to the case of securitisation theoretical approach, the Europeanisation theory also emerged as a “third way” beside the two traditionally entrenched theoretical perspectives — neofunctionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism — that have been used to analyse the integration process of the EU. Just like in the case of the securitisation theory that modified the research agenda of security studies, the new Europeanisation theoretical approach also changed the analytical perspective traditionally used in the EU studies. As a result, the focus shifted from analysing the driving forces behind the process of European integration (ontological phase of the EU analysis) to the analysis of the relationship between regional and domestic political levels (post-ontological phase of the EU analysis).⁸⁸ Therefore the research question shifted too. During the ontological phase of the EU analysis researchers were preoccupied with the question of *what the EU was* for its member states. Neo-functionalists argued that it was an increasingly supranational political unit gradually overtaking competences from the nation states through spill-over effects, whereas intergovernmentalists stressed the persisting importance of national governments in pursuing national interests at the EU level.⁸⁹ With the entrenchment of the Europeanisation theoretical approach the scholarly atten-

⁸⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 338.

⁸⁸ Cf. Graziano, Paolo R./ Vink, Maarten P., Chapter 2: Europeanization: Concept, Theory, and Methods, in: Bulmer, Simon/ Lesquene, Christian (eds), *The Member States of the European Union*. Second Edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 33.

⁸⁹ Cf. Bieling, Hans-Jürgen, *Integrationstheorien*, in: Woyke, Wichard/ Varwick, Johannes (eds), *Handwörterbuch Internationale Politik*, 13. Auflage, Verlag Barbara Budrich, Opladen & Toronto, 2015, pp. 170-171.

tion was refocused towards the question of *what the EU did* in terms of national policies, politics and political.

Since the 1990s when it became increasingly popular to analyse Europeanisation processes, this theoretical approach underwent several phases of conceptual development. At the initial phase the emphasis was placed on the so-called “top-down” perspective. At this stage, Europeanisation was still strongly interrelated with the traditional integration theories and saw changes of the national policies, politics and political always starting at the EU level, later to be “downloaded” at the national level of the member countries. In this respect some authors understood Europeanisation as an emergence of specific forms of governance associated with political problem solving.⁹⁰ Others vaguely described Europeanisation as “a process of domestic political change caused (somehow) by processes of European integration.”⁹¹

As the research at this stage was limited to tracking the implementation of European politics on the national level, it was strongly criticised as an oversimplification of a very complex phenomenon of policy change. It was argued that this perspective ignored parallel global, regional, and national processes that in reality could have bigger influences on domestic change than the European ones.⁹² As a result, the critics argued that Europeanisation should be rather “seen as a problem, not as a solution”⁹³ or as “‘something to be explained’, not ‘something that explains’.”⁹⁴ This critique led to a transformation in the Europeanisation research, since in order to approach it as a problem — an explanandum — one had to turn the analysis upside down and start at the domestic level.

As a result, the “second-generation” of the Europeanisation analysis called “bottom-up” emerged. The proponents of this perspective placed the emphasis on transformational impulses coming from the domestic level. In this respect, Europeanisation is understood as “a two-way process, which involves the evolution of European instituti-

⁹⁰ Cf. Risse, Thomas/ Cowles, Maria Green/ Caporaso, James, *Europeanization and Domestic Change: Introduction*, in: Risse, Thomas/ Cowles, Maria Green/ Caporaso, James (eds.): *Transforming Europe. Europeanization and Domestic Change*, Ithaca, 2001, p. 3.

⁹¹ Vink, Maarten P., *What is Europeanisation? And other Questions on a New Research Agenda*, in: *European Political Science*, (1), 2003, p. 72.

⁹² Cf. Radaelli, Claudio M., *Europeanisation: Solution or problem?*, *European Integration online Papers (EIoP)*, Vol. 8, No. 16, 2004, p. 5.

⁹³ *Ibid*, p. 2.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 2.

ons that impact on political structures and processes of the Member States.”⁹⁵ The “bottom-up” view argues that Europeanisation should be understood not only as European politics being implemented on the national level (download), but also as the articulation of national interests at the European level (upload). It is argued that through uploading, national governments seek minimising the costs related to the implementation of European politics.⁹⁶

According to this view, the process of uploading can be divided into three strategies. The first one, “pace-setting”, is associated with countries striving to actively push the national political preferences to the European level. The second alternative strategy is called “foot-dragging” and describes the attempts to block or delay the development and implementation of unfavourable European policies. The third uploading strategy is called “fence-sitting” and is used to describe a rather passive stance which neither actively pushes nor blocks specific policies, but is based on observation and building tactical coalitions with “pace-setters” and “foot-draggers”.⁹⁷ In addition to the processes falling into the categories of downloading and uploading, the interload dimension of Europeanisation has also been introduced to the current debate.⁹⁸ In this respect, it has been argued that in some cases member states interact and thus have impacts on each other’s policy processes without the direct participation of the EU, which merely serves as a platform for networking and policy making.⁹⁹

A conceptually different view of Europeanisation is expressed by Radaelli who sees it as:

“processes of 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 policies.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ Börzel, Tanja A., Pace-Setting, Foot-Dragging and Fence-Sitting: Member State Responses to Europeanization, in: *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 40(2), 2002, p. 193.

⁹⁶ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁹⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 194.

⁹⁸ Cf. Varwick, Johannes/ Eichenhofer, Eberhard/ Windwehr, Jana/ Wäschle, Manuel, *Europäisierung der Alterssicherungspolitik: Up-, down- und interload-Prozesse zwischen Mitgliedstaaten und europäischer Ebene*, 1st ed., Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2016, pp. 221-256.

⁹⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 221-256.

¹⁰⁰ Radaelli, *Europeanisation: Solution or problem?*, p. 3.

This perspective distances itself from the “top-down” and “bottom-up” views that are seen as implying the existence of “perfectly linear transmission of public policies from one level to another”¹⁰¹ and broadens the meaning of European impacts to include not only formal rules such as regulations and directives, but also other “opportunities for creative usages of Europe”¹⁰² such as informal rules, styles, shared beliefs and norms. This definition sees Europeanisation as a process of power generation and, namely, not only as an adaptational pressure exercised by the EU, but also as a refraction of this pressure through strategies used by the member states in order to modify domestic power relations.¹⁰³ As a result, investigating the ways particular actors use European integration to increase their power reveals an important link between policies and politics.

Beside the debate on the “top-down” and “bottom-up” perspectives, the theoretical literature is also dealing with the question of the extent of European impacts on member states. In this area two views prevail. The first concept called “goodness of fit” claims that Europeanisation takes place when there is a “misfit” between the European and domestic levels. In such situations the EU’s adjustment pressure is triggered, leading to the policy changes in the member states.¹⁰⁴

By contrast, Radaelli proposed an alternative qualitative instrument for the evaluation of both the magnitude and direction of change caused by the Europeanisation — a continuum consisting of four stages.¹⁰⁵ The first one, “inertia”, describes a situation in which no change occurs as the member countries lag or delay the implementation of the EU-induced rules. “Absorption” manifests as adaptation to non-fundamental EU rules without modifying essential national structures. “Transformation” accounts for paradigmatic change of political behaviour. Lastly, “retrenchment” describes a situation, in

¹⁰¹ Saurugger, Sabine/ Radaelli, Claudio M., The Europeanization of Public Policies: Introduction, in: *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 2008, p. 214.

¹⁰² Radaelli, *Europeanisation: Solution or problem?*, p. 4.

¹⁰³ Cf. Saurugger/ Radaelli, p. 215.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Börzel, Tanja A., Risse, Thomas, *Conceptualizing the Domestic Impact of Europe*, in: Featherstone, Kevin/ Radaelli, Claudio M., (eds.): *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford, 2003, pp. 57-80.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Radaelli, Claudio M., *Whither Europeanization? Concept Stretching and Substantive Change*, *European Integration online Papers (EIoP)* Vol. 4, N° 8, 2000, p. 14.

which the Europeanisation processes cause the opposite — the national politics, policies, and polities to become less European.¹⁰⁶

It can be concluded that the processes that are ascribed to the realm of Europeanisation encompass a broad spectrum of analytical angles. They reach from investigation of the EU's impact on national policies, to the changing power relations, and therefore the EU's impact on politics, to its ideational level impact on the countries' identities. Even within these three main analytical groups the analysis of prevailing Europeanisation processes must be done while taking into account the specifics of a particular policy area and the political, economic and social context prevailing in a particular country. It is widely acknowledged that responses to Europe tend to vary greatly across countries and policy areas.¹⁰⁷

Moreover, it is worth noting that although Europeanisation processes are most actively analysed in relation to the developments taking place between the EU and its member states, the “Europeanisation logic” can also be recognised in other instances of regional integration. Thus it is argued that Europeanisation (governance perspective) should be understood as being more than, and different from, the EU-isation (integration perspective).¹⁰⁸ Especially if Europeanisation is understood in the way Radaelli proposed it, stressing the importance of “informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms”¹⁰⁹, as well as including “creative usages of Europe”¹¹⁰, the idea of Europeanisation processes encompassing a wider range of regional actors seems increasingly viable. This is particularly true in the light of overlapping memberships of the European countries in the EU and NATO, making the prime impulses for integration not easy to trace back.¹¹¹ They should therefore be analysed by taking into account the individual contextual circumstances prevailing in each case.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. *Ibid*, pp. 14-15.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Knill, Christoph/ Lehmkuhl, Dirk, *The National Impact of European Union Regulatory Policy: Three Europeanization Mechanisms*, in: *European Journal of Political Research*, 41, 2002, p. 255.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Marciacq, Florent, *The Political Geographies of Europeanisation: Mapping the Contested Conceptions of Europeanisation*, in: *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, Vol. 8, Issue 1, 2012, p. 60.

¹⁰⁹ Radaelli, *Europeanisation: Solution or problem?*, p. 3.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 4.

¹¹¹ Cf. Marciacq, p. 66.

Consequently, this research suggests that in the case of Lithuanian energy policy it is not sufficient to analyse Europeanisation processes solely between this country and the EU. As it will become clear in Chapter 2, after a closer look into the country's national identity, the US and NATO are entrenched as crucial actors in ensuring Lithuania's energy security. Therefore, beside the Lithuanian-EU interactions in the energy field, the parallel Lithuanian-NATO interactions should be approached as a part of broader Europeanisation processes. Within this approach the focus is on uploading attempts performed by Lithuania in order to influence the policy agendas of the EU and NATO. As a result of lesser influence in the international arena, analysis of uploading activities of small states represents a research gap in the academic literature and motivates finding out specific strategies that these states use in order to pursue national interests within the EU and NATO.

1.4.4. Adaptation of the Securitisation and Europeanisation Theoretical Approaches to the Current Research

As it has been presented in the analysis of the theoretical framework in this chapter, both securitisation and Europeanisation are multi-faceted theoretical approaches including several, often competing, analytical strands and focal points. It is therefore crucial to adjust the theoretical insights stemming from both in order to approach the current research problem. However, as securitisation and Europeanisation theoretical approaches stem from different research fields and have not yet been systematically combined before, key aspects allowing such a combination are discussed first before turning to their detailed adjustment.

The combination of the securitisation and Europeanisation theoretical approaches is possible through several points of conceptual overlap. First of all, both approaches are dealing with processes that are highly context dependent. The reasons why some issues are presented as existential threats, as well as the logic behind the patterns of Europeanisation processes that vary from country to country, are embedded in the prevailing worldviews of particular societies and therefore they are resistant to most generalisation attempts. As a result, differing views on security issues and differential pat-

terns of adaptation to Europe point to particular national identities that may be held accountable, at least to some extent, for the country-specific developments.

A further cross-point between the securitisation and Europeanisation theoretical approaches lies in their inseparable links to power. According to the constructivist understanding, power can be described as “production, in and through social relations, of effects that shape the capacities of actors to determine their circumstances and fate.”¹¹² In this respect, the securitisation theory recognises the consolidation of such power on the agent level¹¹³, since the agent — normally the political elite — is the one that “speaks security” and thus has the power to designate issues of exceptional urgency. An activated “security” discourse in turn allows political elites to increase their power, as entering the area of existential threats means breaking free from the usual political and institutional procedures and rules.¹¹⁴

Europeanisation, for its part, can also be understood as “a process of power generation”¹¹⁵ at both the EU and the member state level. Whereas on one hand, the EU can exert power over member states, especially in the policy areas in which positive integration prevails¹¹⁶, on the other hand, member states have the tools to constrain the EU through their uploading strategies. Moreover, presenting unpopular political reforms as EU impositions, member countries can increase their power over reform-sceptical domestic veto players at the national level.

Therefore a context dependent ability to increase power in a specific policy area being fundamental features of both securitisation and Europeanisation theoretical approaches motivate asking whether a combination of the two theories can be used to analyse the energy policy implemented by Lithuania. As it is a country with deeply entrenched suspicion towards Russia as the main energy supplier and prevalingly positive attitudes towards the EU and NATO dominate the political life, processes that can be ascribed to both securitisation and Europeanisation are intertwined in a causal way and explain, at least partially, the country’s energy sector’s reform strategy. The proposed

¹¹² Barnett, Michael/ Duvall, Raymond, Power in International Politics, in: International Organization Vol. 59 (1), 2005, p. 39.

¹¹³ Cf. Balzacq, The Three Faces of Securitization, p. 178.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Balzacq/ Léonard/ Ruzicka, p. 501.

¹¹⁵ Saurugger/ Radaelli, p. 214.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Knill/ Lehmkuhl, pp. 257-259.

combination of securitisation and Europeanisation theoretical approaches through causality is based on the following assumptions.

First, as energy policy can be ascribed to the group of strategic policies¹¹⁷ characterised by the crucial role they play in the functioning of national states, it is assumed that in such strategic policies different mechanisms than the ones observable in other policy areas are responsible for the Europeanisation processes. In the policy areas of strategic importance neither socialisation nor adaptation or political learning representing stronger or softer Europeanisation impulses coming from the EU level¹¹⁸ can be expected to induce policy change at the domestic level. In contrast, incentives to Europeanise a policy area of strategic importance can come from an individual member state's perception of its national interests in a particular policy area being assured better through international organisations rather than unilaterally.

Second, through securitisation political elites increase their ability to deal with a particular issue more effectively because of the imposed "state of urgency". Therefore, securitisation is likely to be employed in strategically important policy areas when aiming to alter the rules prevailing in such policies. As a result, securitisation emerges as a viable political instrument that elites, seeking to reform strategically important policy areas, can employ at the domestic level to legitimise unpopular political decisions, including the transfer of a certain level of sovereignty, from the national to the EU level. On the other hand, the EU can be approached as a relevant audience for securitisation when seeking to frame the discussions concerning political instruments that could be introduced to support the national reform processes.

The understanding of securitisation processes as indicated above rests on the views presented by the sociological strand of the securitisation theory. As this strand interprets securitisation as a political instrument rather than the static act of "speaking security", it also enables its understanding in terms of causality, arguing that there are processes leading to securitisation as well as processes resulting from it. On the other hand, the understanding of Europeanisation as "creative usages of Europe"¹¹⁹ allows for approaching it as more than regulations and directives downloaded from Brussels, but

¹¹⁷ Cf. Thaler, Philipp, *The European Commission and the European Council: Coordinated Agenda Setting in European Energy Policy*, in: *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 38, No. 5, 2016, p. 571.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Radaelli, *Europeanisation: Solution or problem?*, pp. 12-13.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

also as an instrument which allows for the legitimisation of unpopular or highly contested policy choices made at home¹²⁰ and as a creative instrument to increase political leverages in order to reform a highly contested policy sector.

Resulting from this argumentation, securitisation and Europeanisation emerge as societal processes bound by causal relations. Those scholars seeking to address the question of causation in theories which are constitutive in their origin, as securitisation theory is, agree on the fact that in order to reconcile the initially constitutive theory and a causal explanation, the latter has to be rethought. Due to the existing ontological tensions, causality cannot be assumed in the Humean way of regularities between observable and independent events leading to generalisable laws, but has to be compatible with the post-structuralist/constructivist setting.¹²¹ As a result, the authors pledge for conceptualising securitisation as a causal mechanism.¹²²

Causal mechanisms can be understood as “frequently occurring and easily recognisable causal patterns that are triggered under generally unknown conditions or with indeterminate consequences.”¹²³ Causal mechanisms occupy intermediate levels between causes and outcomes as they “are *triggered* by causes and [...] *link* them with outcomes in a productive relationship.”¹²⁴ As a result, causal mechanisms can be understood as mediating links between the inputs and outputs that allow opening the “black box” of the political process and identifying the forces shaping it.¹²⁵ As effects come through the mechanisms, revealing them allows one to provide the missing links for the explanation.

Applied to this research, the causal mechanism at work in the case of Lithuania’s energy policy in the EU and NATO can be called the “securitisation-induced Europeani-

¹²⁰ Cf. Kallestrup, Morten, Europeanisation As a Discourse: Domestic Policy Legitimation Through the Articulation of a “Need for Adaptation“, in: *Public Policy and Administration*, 17(2), 2002, pp. 110–124.

¹²¹ Cf. Oliveira, Gilberto Carvalho, The Causal Power of Securitisation: an Inquiry into the Explanatory Status of Securitisation Theory Illustrated by the Case of Somali Piracy, in: *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 44, part 3, 2017, p. 507.

¹²² Cf. Guzzini, Securitization As a Causal Mechanism, pp. 329–341; Robinson, Corey, Tracing and Explaining Securitization: Social Mechanisms, Process Tracing and the Securitization of Irregular Migration, in: *Security Dialogue*, 2017, Vol. 48(6), pp. 505-523.

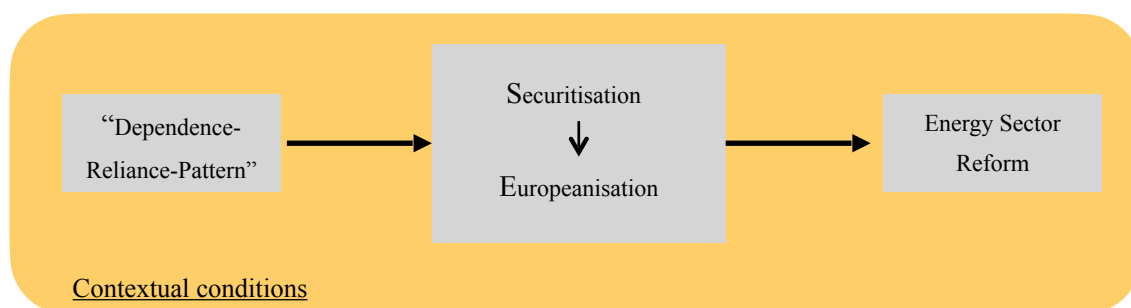
¹²³ Elster, Jon, *Explaining Social Behavior: More Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*, Revised Edition, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015, p. 26.

¹²⁴ Beach, Derek/ Pedersen, Rasmus Brun, *Process-Tracing Methods: Foundations and Guidelines*, Second Edition, University of Michigan Press, 2019, p. 30, (emphasis in original).

¹²⁵ Cf. Falletti, Tullia G./ Lynch, Julia F., Context and Causal Mechanisms in Political Analysis, *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 42 (9), 2009, p. 1146.

sation”, which works in two directions and against two main audiences: internal and external. In the case of the internal direction, the mechanism works for domestic audience and is aimed at increasing the acceptance of the top-down pressure of the EU in the securitised energy policy area. In the case of the external direction, the mechanism works towards the EU-NATO level and allows promoting the national “energy vision” among the partner countries. Both — internal and external — directions result in power generation by the securitising actor (political elite) through changing the domestic opportunity structures and gaining international support for reforming the highly contested national energy sector. The following picture illustrates the proposed causal mechanism.

Figure 3: “*Securitisation-induced Europeanisation*” Causal Mechanism



Source: Author’s own compilation

Although it is argued that mechanisms should be generalisable and thus applicable to different cases¹²⁶, at the same time the theoretical literature suggests that mechanisms are extremely context bound, and therefore to a certain extent, case-specific.¹²⁷ However, as according to this logic contextual conditions are understood as enablers, not as producers of outcomes¹²⁸, the attempts to generalise causal mechanisms within groups of the most similar cases may prove to be successful. In terms of the proposed “securitisation-induced Europeanisation” causal mechanism, the crucial contextual conditions enabling the existence of this mechanism might include the policy area in which it functions (strategic policies), and the structural qualities of countries within which it entrenches (small states).

¹²⁶ Cf. Ibid, p. 1161.

¹²⁷ Cf. Ibid, p. 1151.

¹²⁸ Cf. Beach/ Pedersen, p. 78.

In terms of the prevailing relation between securitisation and Europeanisation processes it is generally argued that securitised policy areas are normally those ones being conferred strategic importance at the national level and therefore less Europeanised. This paper challenges this assumption by arguing that the aforementioned traditionally-entrenched view is predominantly “large-state-centric”, ignoring the perspective of small states and therefore not reflecting the full picture. Bigger member states indeed tend to preserve national competences over policies of strategic importance. Being well-equipped to exert influence at the international level they successfully block attempts to increase supranational control over these policy areas. However, this does not mean that smaller and less influential member states follow the same political line and do not try to promote their national preferences regarding the supranational involvement in strategic policy areas. In order to proceed with the development of this argument, the specifics of the small state theoretical perspective are discussed below.

1.4.5. Small State Theoretical Perspective

Although the majority of states in the international arena are small according to the most commonly used definitions¹²⁹, there is only limited academic interest in the small state perspective within the discipline of International Relations (IR). The existing academic contributions to this topic vary from the analysis of limitations that small states are confronted with, to policy prescriptions that may allow for improving their performance.¹³⁰ This scholarly debate notwithstanding, systematic theoretical approach for the analysis of small states’ political performance on the world stage remains underdeveloped.

The neglect of smaller states’ perspective has a long historical tradition in international relations. Well into the twentieth century it was still common to refer to states as “powers”, their most precise manifestation being the “Concert of Europe” that con-

¹²⁹ Cf. Henrikson, Alan K., A Coming ‘Magnesian’ Age? Small States, the Global System, and the International Community, in: *Geopolitics*, Volume 6, Issue 3, 2001, p. 49.

¹³⁰ Cf. Panke, Diana, Small States in the European Union: Structural Disadvantages in EU Policy-Making and Counter-Strategies, in: *Journal of European Public Policy*, 17:6, 2010, pp. 799-817; Thorhallsson, Baldur, How Do Little Frogs Fly? Small States in the European Union, Policy Brief, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 12 / 2015, pp. 1-4.

sisted of the Great Britain, France, Prussia, Russia, and the Habsburg Empire.¹³¹ These European great powers were able to decide the fate of their smaller neighbours that were regarded as silent observers rather than active participants in the world politics. Within this historical context, power became a synonym of a state's ability to preserve their political independence and was therefore the main feature of large, resource rich, militarily superior states.

This historical context led to the entrenchment of "power" as a central concept in the classical theories of IR, especially realism. According to realists, states are rational, egoistic entities acting under the conditions of an anarchic international system, and seeking to increase their power at the expense of others.¹³² "Power" itself is understood as "the ability of states to use material resources to get others to do what they otherwise would not."¹³³ Deriving from these central premises large states and their interactions emerge as natural research objects for the realists.

Institutionalists, on the other hand, see the anarchic international system in a more complex way, claiming that states are not isolated entities but rather interdependent in multiple ways. Under these circumstances the pursuit of national interests is more effective through institutionalised cooperation with other states and conflicts too are solved not according to the realist principle of self-help, but in rule-based ways.¹³⁴ As a result, power is more diffused in institutionalised arrangements: within such arrangements a single state does not possess the resource of power over other states, but rather its actions can have repercussions on others.¹³⁵ This feature widens the concept of power by claiming that it can derive not only from military, but also economic, social, and other context dependent sources. The institutionalist approach is therefore more inclusive in considering possible power variations that may include not only large, but also small states.

¹³¹ Cf. Neumann, Iver B./ Gsthöhl, Sieglinde, Lilliputians in Gulliver's World? Small States in International Relations, Working Paper 1-2004, Centre for Small State Studies, Institute of International Affairs, University of Iceland, May 2004, p. 3.

¹³² Cf. Puglierin, Jana, Realismus als IB-Theorie, in: Woyke, Wichard/ Varwick, Johannes (eds.), Handwörterbuch Internationale Politik, 13. Auflage, Verlag Barbara Budrich, Opladen & Toronto, 2015, p. 395.

¹³³ Barnett/ Duvall, p. 40.

¹³⁴ Cf. Knelangen, Wilhelm, Institutionalismus als IB-Theorie, in: Woyke, Wichard/ Varwick, Johannes (eds.), Handwörterbuch Internationale Politik, 13. Auflage, Verlag Barbara Budrich, Opladen & Toronto, 2015, pp. 165-166.

¹³⁵ Cf. Barnett/ Duvall, pp. 51-52.

As it has already been argued before, the constructivist meta-theory rests on the main premise claiming that both our world and our knowledge are products of inter-subjective interactions.¹³⁶ Based on this premise, the constructivist claim that “[a]narchy is what states make of it”¹³⁷ was developed, leading to the assumption that the international system was a result of an inter-state agreement that could possibly resemble both anarchy and “rule without government” depending on the agreed principles of international politics.¹³⁸ Resulting from this take on the world order, shared norms and rules emerged as crucial instruments in shaping the inter-state interactions, whereas power could be understood as a product of “historically contingent and changing understandings, meanings, norms, customs, and social identities.”¹³⁹ According to constructivists, “small state” is therefore not an objective condition, but rather a part of a state’s social identity that has been shaped by complex contextual circumstances.

Although universal definition of small states on the theoretical level remains absent, several practical instances in grouping countries into large and small ones can be found. One of them is the attempt to group countries according to the principles established by the United Nations (UN). Within the UN system the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (UNSC) — the USA, United Kingdom, France, Russia and China — possess nuclear weapons and can be seen as the most powerful states at least in military terms. However, as military strength does not necessarily go hand-in-hand with economic development, this way of assigning countries as large or small does not reflect the more complex peacetime reality.

Therefore, the most widespread way to decide whether a state is large or small is to look at several material parameters, including a country’s population, size of its territory, gross domestic product (GDP), and military capacity.¹⁴⁰ However, this quantitative method has its disadvantages too, as it tends to automatically exclude quantitatively

¹³⁶ Cf. Guzzini, Stefano, *The Concept of Power: a Constructivist Analysis*, in: *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 3, 2005, p. 498.

¹³⁷ Wendt, Alexander, *Anarchy is What States Make of it: the Social Construction of Power Politics*, in: *International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (Spring, 1992), pp. 391-425.

¹³⁸ Guzzini, *The Concept of Power*, p. 503.

¹³⁹ Barnett/ Duvall, p. 56.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Crowards, Tom, *Defining the Category of "Small States"*, in: *Journal of International Development*, J. Int. Dev. 14, 2002, p. 143.

smaller states as “weak states”.¹⁴¹ At the same time it is recognised that a country’s material resources do not necessarily equal its power.¹⁴² Moreover, quantitatively small states can possess sectoral power, like in the cases of Saudi Arabia or Kuwait in terms of their influence in the oil sector, or Switzerland in the financial sector.¹⁴³

In order to avoid biased assessment of a country’s size, the newer perspectives include additional qualitative variables such as “action competence” and “vulnerability” in the analysis of a small state’s performance in the international arena.¹⁴⁴ Within this perspective, “action competence” defines a state’s internal cohesion, its ability and willingness to formulate effective domestic policies, and to seek influence on the international level. The “vulnerability” level, on the contrary, refers to potential internal and external weaknesses limiting a state’s ability to use its “action competence”.¹⁴⁵ This approach allows broader understanding about possible instances of case-specific influence that small states can exert. Such case-specific influence might prove to be of great importance in the areas of non-traditional security issues. In these areas features that matter more than traditional power resources are “economic flexibility, diplomatic competence and discursive power”¹⁴⁶.

The small states perspective within the EU and NATO, which is discussed in more detail in the subchapters 3.3. and 4.3. respectively, suggests that small states being constrained by structural conditions and having lesser leverages to pursue national interests on the basis of bilateral or predominantly intergovernmental level, prefer supranational, institutionalised political arrangements, especially in those policy areas to which they ascribe special strategic importance. Because of their existential character, policies of strategic importance are often securitised and associated with the notion of urgency and exceptional measures. However, and by contrast to the prevailing view, as instituti-

¹⁴¹ Cf. Neumann/ Gstöhl, p. 4.

¹⁴² Cf. Baldwin, David A., *Power and International Relations*, in: Carlsnaes, Walter/ Risse, Thomas/ Simmons, Beth A. (eds), *Handbook of International Relations*, Sage, 2013, p. 280.

¹⁴³ Neumann/ Gstöhl, p. 5.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Thorhallsson, Baldur, *The Size of States in the European Union: Theoretical and Conceptual Perspectives*, in: *European Integration*, Vol. 28, No. 1, 2006, p. 14.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 14.

¹⁴⁶ Thorhallsson, Baldur/ Wivel, Anders, *Small States in the European Union: What Do We Know and What Would We Like to Know?*, in: *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 19, No. 4, December 2006, p. 658.

ons are often ascribed the role of protectors within the small states strategy¹⁴⁷, the extraordinary status of strategic policies does not prevent, but, on the contrary, even motivates small states to look for international solutions for national issues in the areas of strategic policies. The aforementioned assumption is therefore tested in the case of Lithuania's (small state) energy policy (strategic policy) and later generalised in order to adapt it to the analysis of other similar cases.

1.5. Methodological Approach

Process-tracing is widely recognised as a well-suited research method for tracing causal mechanisms while “using detailed, within-case empirical analysis of how a causal mechanism operated in real world cases.”¹⁴⁸ Depending on the type of research being done, process-tracing can be used in four different variants: theory-testing, theory-building, explaining-outcome or as a theoretical-revision.¹⁴⁹ The main difference between these variants lies in their relation to theory and empirics. Whereas theory-testing, theory-building and theoretical-revision represent theory-focused research designs, the explaining-outcome variant is focused rather on the development of empirics-based, case-specific mechanistic explanations.¹⁵⁰

As the causal mechanism proposed by this research has been developed through a combination of the securitisation and Europeanisation theoretical approaches, the theory-testing variant of process-tracing is used in order to observe and evaluate its functionality. According to the methodological guidelines, the main steps of the theory-testing process-tracing involve: 1) conceptualisation of a hypothetical causal mechanism based on the already existing theoretical and empirical considerations (see Figure 3); 2) operationalisation of the proposed causal mechanism through propositions about the mechanistic evidence (see Figure 4); 3) collection and assessment of available empirical records in order to assess the functionality of the causal mechanism in practice; 4) eva-

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Bailes, Alyson J.K./ Thorhallsson, Baldur, Instrumentalizing the European Union in Small State Strategies, in: *Journal of European Integration*, 35:2, 2013, pp. 104-105.

¹⁴⁸ Beach/ Pedersen, p. 1.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 9.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 9.

luation of the level of compliance between theoretical propositions and empirical findings; 5) eventual re-definition of the theoretical propositions.¹⁵¹

The aforementioned analytical stages have to be performed taking into account the possibility of causal homogeneity on the levels of both causes and mechanisms. In terms of causes, equifinality — the possibility of the same outcome being produced by different causes in different cases — has to be considered.¹⁵² In terms of mechanisms, the possibility of the same causes being linked with the same outcomes but by different mechanisms in different contexts has to be recognised.¹⁵³ Especially the latter “shortcoming” of the mechanistic explanation refers to the importance of a detailed analysis of case-specific contextual conditions.

Contextual conditions are understood as encompassing all “relevant aspects of a setting (analytical, temporal, spatial, or institutional)”¹⁵⁴ that might impact the functioning of the causal mechanism under analysis. In the case of the proposed “securitisation-induced Europeanisation” causal mechanism, the contextual conditions encompass ideational, economic, and institutional factors at the national, EU, and NATO levels, and work as *enablers* of both the securitisation and the Europeanisation part of the proposed causal mechanism. Because of the centrality of context in the mechanistic explanation, the first part of the research is devoted to the analysis of contextual conditions that have shaped Lithuania’s energy policy in the time frame between 2004 and 2015.

Another important aspect in the mechanistic explanation is the evaluation of temporal dimension of causal mechanisms. Within this dimension mechanisms can differ in terms of both the time span that is needed for them to produce an outcome as well as the “time horizon” of an outcome.¹⁵⁵ The proposed “securitisation-induced Europeanisation” causal mechanism operating between the cause (“dependence-reliance-pattern”) and the outcome (energy sector reform) is expected to be of incremental cumulative nature, thus unfolding over multiple years within the relevant context. In order to observe the functioning of this long-term causal mechanism, the time span of the analysis stretches from 2004 when Lithuania accessed the EU and NATO, and thus the cause

¹⁵¹ Cf. *Ibid*, pp. 9-10.

¹⁵² Cf. *Ibid*, p. 6.

¹⁵³ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 6.

¹⁵⁴ Falletti/ Lynch, p. 1152.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Beach/ Pedersen, pp. 82-83.

(“dependence-reliance-pattern”) emerged, until 2015 when Lithuania’s energy sector was reformed to the extent that the most critical vulnerabilities had been removed and therefore the outcome (energy sector reform) had been reached.

The analysis based on the above mentioned specifics of the process-tracing research method consists of two main parts: 1) evaluation of the contextual conditions that prevailed between 2004 and 2015 and *enabled* the occurrence of the “securitisation-induced Europeanisation” causal mechanism; and 2) analysis of the functioning of this mechanism. Seeking to adjust the process-tracing method to ontological and epistemological premises of the securitisation theory, a “thin” constructivist variant of process-tracing¹⁵⁶ is used in this research. In this manner valid links between securitisation as a cause and Europeanisation as an effect within the selected cases are to be revealed.

The analysis of the contextual conditions starts at the national level and discusses both ideational and material factors that have shaped the scope and main directions of Lithuanian energy policy during the aforementioned time frame. The ideational level is understood as the prevailing world view of the country that made up its national identity. The material factors include the main energy indicators (the level of import dependency, prevailing energy mix, infrastructural connectedness) that dominated Lithuania’s energy sector between 2004 and 2015, the prevailing legal and institutional conditions for energy policy making, as well as changes in energy policy that occurred as a result of the political cycle (five different governments and two presidents in the time frame between 2004 and 2015). The contextual analysis proceeds at the EU and NATO levels by investigating the main developmental stages of these organisations’ energy policies, the main channels for member states’ influence on these policies, as well as chances and limitations related to small states’ uploading strategies.

The second part of the analysis dealing with the emergence and functioning of the “securitisation-induced Europeanisation” causal mechanism is conducted with the help of indicators dispersed between 2004 and 2015. These indicators stem from the national, EU, and NATO levels and represent the main high points in the field of Lithuania’s energy policy. The first cluster of indicators called “restricting circumstances” includes those events that were associated with the growing vulnerability of Lithuania’s energy sector, namely: inclusion of Gazprom into the ownership structure of the natio-

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Robinson, pp. 505-507.

nal gas company Lietuvos Dujos (2004), the Druzhba pipeline incident (2006), final closure of the INPP (2009), introduction of the Nord Stream pipeline (2011). Indicators of this cluster are expected to facilitate the “securitisation moment” of the proposed causal mechanism.

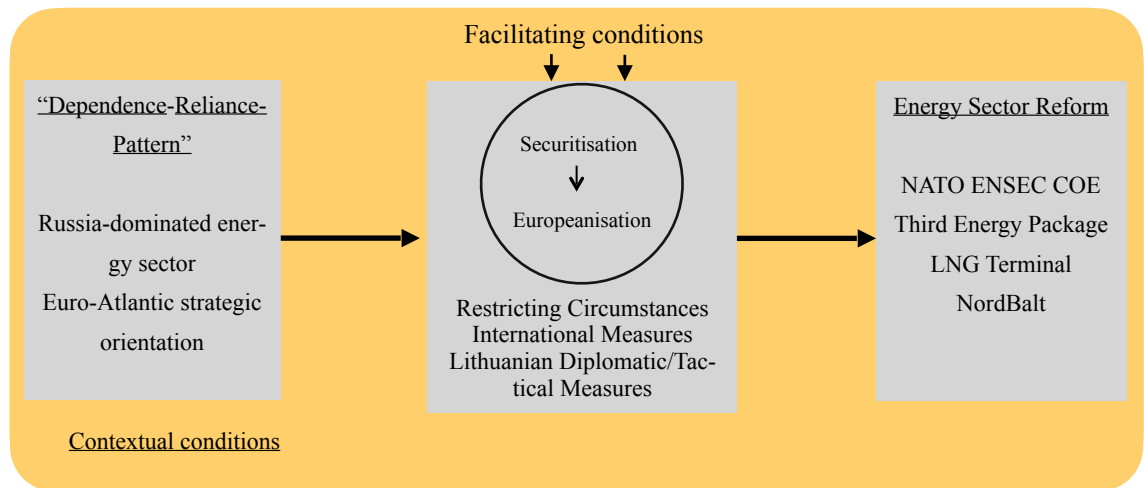
The second cluster of indicators is called “international measures” and includes the instances of energy related developments at the EU and NATO levels: Riga Summit (2006), Lisbon Treaty (2007/2009¹⁵⁷), Bucharest Summit (2008), Third Energy Package (2009), Baltic Energy Interconnection Plan (BEMIP, 2008), and NATO Strategic Concept (2010). Indicators of this cluster are expected to facilitate the “Europeanisation moment” of the proposed causal mechanism. The third cluster called “Lithuanian diplomatic/tactical measures” includes organisation of the Vilnius Energy Security Conference (2007), the plan to provide the Lithuanian Energy Security Centre with the status of NATO’s Centre of Excellence (2008-2012), Lithuanian attempts to involve the EC in negotiations with Gazprom on the implementation of the Third Energy Package (2010-2012), initiation of legal proceedings against Gazprom (2011), and Lithuanian EU presidency (2013). Finally, the fourth cluster called “facilitating conditions” includes events related with the demonstration of Russian power politics in its “near abroad” including the Ukrainian-Russian gas disputes (2006, 2009), the Russian-Georgian War (2008), the Ukrainian political crisis and the annexation of Crimea (2014), and Nord-Balt cable laying incidents (2015). Although these events were not directly connected to Lithuania’s energy policy in the purest sense, it is expected that they functioned as additional enablers of the “securitisation-induced Europeanisation” mechanism.

The outcome identified as “energy sector reform” also consists of several events (the so-called “observable manifestations”¹⁵⁸) including establishment of the NATO ENSEC COE in Lithuania (2012), implementation of the Third Energy Package (2014), acquisition and installation of the LNG terminal (2014), and the finalisation of the NordBalt and LitPolLink projects (2015). The figure below shows the operationalisation of the proposed causal mechanism with help of the previously mentioned indicators.

¹⁵⁷ The Lisbon Treaty was signed on 13.12.2007 and entered into force on 01.12.2009.

¹⁵⁸ Beach/ Pedersen, p. 254.

Figure 4: *Indicators of the „Securitisation-induced Europeanisation“ Causal Mechanism*



Source: Author’s own compilation

Triangulation of sources — expert interviews, primary (public speeches, official documents) and secondary (media reports, scientific articles) material — was used for the process tracing analysis. Nine semi-structured expert interviews have been conducted with representatives of the Lithuanian political elite and diplomatic personnel, representatives of the EC, NATO’s International Staff (IS) as well as representatives of diplomatic corps of other EU and NATO member states. The main goal of the expert interviews was to gain first-hand insights into the process as it relates to the aforementioned indicators of the analysis. As the interviewees had expert knowledge about certain events of interest for this research, interview guidelines were prepared individually for each conversation. Interviews were conducted in the Lithuanian, English, and German languages by meeting the respondents in person or reaching them through video and telephone calls. All conversations were protocolled.

It is important to stress that the professional profiles of the Lithuanian interview partners who agreed to share their experience reflected the specifics of representing a small state that had a small national bureaucracy and diplomatic corps. Therefore, within the time frame between 2004 and 2015 these representatives of the Lithuanian political and diplomatic elite had a record of continuous high-level professional occupations at the national, EU, and NATO levels. Among those interviewees who agreed to be cited publicly were Andrius Kubilius, Lithuanian Prime Minister from 2008-2012 and opposition leader from 2006-2008 who led the Special Parliamentary Group on Development of Strategic Energy Projects during his time in opposition. Since 1999 the Parliament-

rian Rasa Juknevičienė was a member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA), serving as Rapporteur of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships in 2007-2008 and as Vice-President of the Assembly in 2008 until she was appointed as the Lithuanian Minister of National Defence from 2008-2012. Linas Linkevičius was Minister of National Defence from 2000-2004, the Permanent Representative of Lithuania to NATO from 2005-2011, and Minister for Foreign Affairs from 2012-2020. Romas Švedas was the Deputy Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the EU from 2003-2007, Head of the Economic Security Department of the Lithuanian Ministry for Foreign Affairs from 2007-2009, and Energy Vice-Minister and member of the BEMIP High Level Working Group from 2009-2011. A former political advisor to the President Dalia Grybauskaitė who requested to preserve the anonymity was also interviewed.

In addition to these high-level Lithuanian interview partners, the international perspective was represented by Andris Piebalgs, the EU Commissioner for Energy from 2004-2009, as well as three other experts who requested to preserve their anonymity. These three interviewees included a representative of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Energy, a NATO official working in the Hybrid Challenges and Energy Security Section, Emerging Security Challenges Division of NATO, and a high-ranking diplomat from an EU and NATO member state who served in Lithuania from 2008-2011.

In addition to the expert interviews, an analysis of primary sources was conducted. As in the case of the expert interviews, the main goal was to gain insights into the processes related to the events ascribed to the indicators of the analysis. Various official documents regarding the national, EU, and NATO levels were analysed. Additionally, speeches and commentaries of Lithuanian, EU and NATO representatives reacting to the events that shaped Lithuania's energy policy in the time frame between 2004 and 2015 were analysed. Furthermore, secondary sources such as media reports, analyses, and relevant academic publications were analysed in order to fill the gaps in knowledge regarding the relevant events. In this respect the access to the Lexis Nexis Database provided by the Berlin State Library – Prussian Cultural Heritage¹⁵⁹ was of great relevance.

¹⁵⁹ Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, <https://staatsbibliothek-berlin.de>.

1.6. Theoretical and Empirical Relevance

This research is relevant at both theoretical and empirical levels. In terms of the theoretical relevance, it adds to the further development of the securitisation and Europeanisation theoretical approaches. Concerning the securitisation theoretical approach, this research represents an attempt to further develop its sociological view by considering securitisation as part of complex causal processes that can be employed by political actors in order to foster and justify the involvement of international partners in the area of strategic policies. In terms of the Europeanisation theoretical approach, this research targets two scientific gaps. First, it focuses on uploading activities by a member state in the area of strategic policies. Second, this research documents the role, chances, and limitations of a small member state within these Europeanisation processes. Finally, the research provides unique insights into how the securitisation and Europeanisation theoretical approaches can be combined in order to analyse the instances of Europeanisation in the policy areas that include a security aspect. Hence this research adds to the literature proposing the processual understanding of securitisation and Europeanisation practically demonstrating that neither of them are a finite phenomenon: in some particular political constellations they can enforce each other and emerge as political strategies directed towards both domestic and international audiences in order to enforce national policy reforms.

Concerning the empirical relevance of this research, it documents, reflects and summarises Lithuania's political experience during the extremely contested period of energy sector reform within the time frame between 2004 and 2015. By doing that it also evaluates Lithuania's membership experience in the EU and NATO and provides important insights into the profile of Lithuania as a member state, including its strategies of pursuing national political goals at the international level. In addition to that, the experience of the EU and NATO in assisting member states during the phases of reforming their strategic policy areas is also summarised, providing important information on tools and strategies that have been developed and put into practice.

1.7. Structure

The research starts with an investigation of Lithuania's energy policy at the national level. Chapter 2 focuses on both the ideational and material factors that characterised the development and implementation of Lithuanian energy policy in the time frame between 2004 and 2015. In terms of the ideational factors, the main goal is to highlight the underlying perceptions that have been shaping the country's relations with Russia, the EU, and NATO, and that subsequently emerged as important guidelines in the field of its energy policy. The insights stemming from the analysis of the ideational factors allow for an explanation on how securitisation of the energy supplier Russia was interrelated with Lithuania's Europeanisation strategy. Moreover, it demonstrates that in the case of Lithuania the Europeanisation processes of its energy policy are best understood as including both international partners — the EU and NATO. In terms of material factors that dominated Lithuania's energy policy field between 2004 and 2015, the factual situation that prevailed in the country's energy sector throughout the period of research, as well as existing legal and institutional conditions for energy policy making in this country are analysed. Furthermore, implications of the governmental change during the period of time under investigation on the energy field are discussed.

Having approached Lithuania's energy policy from the domestic ideational and material context, Chapters 3 and 4 switch to the energy policies of the EU and NATO respectively. The aim of these chapters is to investigate developments in the energy policy area that took place in both organisations from the inception of their energy policies until 2015 in order to identify what chances and burdens existed for Lithuania's "securitisation-induced Europeanisation" strategy to influence their development. In addition to the general insights regarding the development of respective policies of the EU and NATO, the small state perspective is included in the analysis in order to cover any possible modifications for participation in the development and implementation of these policies induced by the limitations and chances of Lithuania as a small state.

After the investigation of national and international factors that had crucial importance for the development and implementation of Lithuania's energy policy, the analysis in Chapter 5 turns to the empirical research of the country's interactions with the EU, NATO, and Russia. Twenty indicators stemming from the clusters of "restricting circumstances", "international measures", "Lithuanian diplomatic/tactical measures",

and “facilitating conditions” are analysed, allowing for the revealing of the specifics of the “securitisation-induced Europeanisation” causal mechanism for the case of Lithuania’s energy policy. The research ends with concluding remarks and recommendations for future research in analysing small states’ strategies in Europeanising strategic policies within the EU and NATO.

2. National Level Contextual Conditions for Lithuania’s Energy Policy

Although political developments in today’s world are highly intertwined, making it difficult to draw a clear line between national and international policy areas, this chapter aims at identifying national conditions that have shaped Lithuania’s energy policy in the time span between its accession to the EU and NATO in 2004 and the implementation of major strategic energy security projects in 2015. These national conditions for Lithuania’s energy policy stemmed from both ideational and material levels. On one hand, Lithuania’s energy policy has been shaped by its entrenched attitudes towards the main energy supplier Russia, and by its important international partners, the EU and NATO. On the other hand, prevailing economic, legal, and institutional conditions constituted major boundaries within which Lithuania’s political elite made political energy field decisions. Finally, the political cycle itself had an impact on changing tendencies in Lithuania’s energy policy. All of these aspects are to be discussed as the main subjects of this chapter.

2.1. National Political Identity and its Implications on Lithuania’s Energy Policy Choices

The constructivist school of international relations argues that every society functions within a certain cognitive structure, which is not given, but rather created and

re-created through social interactions of the members of the society themselves.¹⁶⁰ This cognitive structure is therefore a “living” narrative about the surrounding world that allows for explaining past and present events as well as to making political projections for the future. At the same time national identity, which can be understood as a manifestation of the prevailing national narrative, is a relational entity and is therefore constituted not only through the representation of the “self”, but also by the “other”.¹⁶¹ The “other” is conceptualised through the notion of being different: only through differentiation from those ones being distinct, the manifestation of the “self” becomes possible.¹⁶²

Extensive research dealing with Lithuania’s political identity¹⁶³ suggests that there are three main self-images prevailing and shaping its political life. The first self-image represents Lithuania as an immediate neighbour to Russia. The second one describes the country as being trapped between its loyalties to Europe/EU and the US/NATO. The third self-image represents Lithuania as a small state.¹⁶⁴ It is argued in academic literature that in the case of Lithuania these prevailing self-representations result in a coherent worldview which is driven by the logic of the “zero sum game” and is based on the idea of Lithuania being trapped between the US and Russia.¹⁶⁵ According to this understanding, the US is seen as playing the key role of a protector, whereas Russia has the role of an adversary. The EU, on the other side, is not granted such a fundamen-

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Hopf, Ted, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies*. Moscow 1955 & 1999, Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 2002, p. 1.

¹⁶¹ Cf. *Ibid*, pp. 4-5.

¹⁶² Cf. Kowert, Paul, *Toward a Constructivist Theory of Foreign Policy*, in: Kubalkova, Vedulka (ed.), *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2001, p. 282.

¹⁶³ See: Jakniūnaitė, Dovilė, *Neighbourhood Politics of Baltic States: Between the EU and Russia*, in: Berg, Eiki/ Ehin, Piret (eds.), *Identity and Foreign Policy: Baltic-Russian Relations and European Integration*, Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2009, pp. 117-132; Miniūtaitė, Gražina, „Europos normatyvinė galia“ ir Lietuvos užsienio politika/ "Normative power Europe" and Lithuania’s foreign policy (in Lithuanian only), in: *Politologija* 3 (43), 2006, pp. 3-19; Statkus, Nortautas/ Paulauskas, Kęstutis, *Lietuvos užsienio politika tarptautinių santykių teorijų ir praktikų kryžkelėje/ Lithuanian Foreign Policy on the Cross-road of Theories and Practice* (in Lithuanian only), in: *Politologija*, 2(42), 2006, pp. 12-61; Nekrašas, Evaldas, *Kritiniai pamąstymai apie Lietuvos užsienio politiką/ Critical Reflections on Lithuanian Foreign Policy* (in Lithuanian only), in: *Politologija*, 54 (2), 2009, pp. 123-142.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Jakniūnaitė, Dovilė, *Kaip kalbėsime apie 2004-2014 m. Lietuvos užsienio politiką?*, in: Jakniūnaitė, Dovilė (ed.), *Ambicingas dešimtmetis: Lietuvos užsienio politika 2004–2014/ How Are We Going to Talk About Lithuanian Foreign Policy from 2004-2014?*, in: *The Ambitious Decade: Lithuanian Foreign Policy 2004-2014* (in Lithuanian only), Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2015, p. 7.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Nekrašas, *Kritiniai pamąstymai apie Lietuvos užsienio politiką*, p. 133.

tal importance, but does play a rather instrumental role of being a source of social and economic welfare.¹⁶⁶

This embedded worldview of Lithuania ascribes particular roles to external actors — Russia, Europe/the EU, the US/NATO — and at the same time deals with important constraints for its foreign and security policy stemming from its profile as a small state. As Lithuania's energy policy that was formulated and implemented in the time frame of 2004-2015 dealt with all of these aspects, a closer investigation of Lithuania's self-images of being a neighbour to Russia, managing its loyalties to Europe/the EU and the US/NATO, and being a small state provides important guidelines for understanding its energy policy priorities and choices. Each of these three self-representations are discussed below with a particular attention being paid to their implications on Lithuania's energy policy.

2.1.1. Lithuania as an Immediate Neighbour to Russia

Being an immediate neighbour to Russia had several important implications on Lithuania's national identity. First, and most fundamentally, Russia could traditionally be understood as Lithuania's "significant other", and therefore as an antidote in relation to which Lithuania constructed its own identity. Lithuania's dissociation from Russia was based on common historical experiences that, however, resulted in completely different narratives of the historical memory of these two countries.¹⁶⁷ Russia's unwillingness to recognise the annexation and occupation of Lithuania during World War II was one of many existing collisions of the historical memory between the neighbouring countries, leading to the perception of Russia as an unfriendly, unpredictable, and threatening neighbour of Lithuania.¹⁶⁸

On the other hand, the prevailing distancing from Russia notwithstanding, Lithuania's geographic location kept Russia very near in the minds of the people. It has been therefore argued that in Lithuania Russia was predominantly perceived as a struc-

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Paulauskas, Kęstutis, *The Big, the Bad and the Beautiful: America, Russia and Europe's Mellow Power*, in: *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, No 20, 2008, p. 120.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Šešelgytė, *A Midget Warrior*, p. 38.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Miniotaitė, "Europos normatyvinė galia", p. 13.

tural factor¹⁶⁹, thus as a neighbour that could not be avoided, that was always present, and willing and able to influence political processes at the very least in the Eastern European region. This perception of the “unavoidable” Russia led to the widespread suspicion that behind any controversial decision there could be hidden adversarial Russian interests. As a result of this traditionally suspicious stance and deeply rooted securitisation¹⁷⁰, Lithuania’s political discourse on security was based on the premise of Russia being both the biggest direct and indirect threat to it.¹⁷¹

Especially since 2011 Lithuania’s stance towards Russia was defined through the security perspective. The large majority of Lithuanian security related documents identified Russia as a country actively using economic and political espionage against Lithuania and posing non-conventional threats towards it in the fields of energy¹⁷², cyber security¹⁷³, and propaganda¹⁷⁴. Following the Ukrainian crisis of 2014 and the subsequent annexation of Crimea the need to re-consider the possibility of conventional military threats posed by Russia towards Lithuania was expressed.¹⁷⁵ In relation to that and arguing that developments in Ukraine had cardinally changed the geopolitical situation in the Eastern European region, Lithuania decided to reintroduce the compulsory military service in 2015.¹⁷⁶ Following multiple examples of Lithuania’s reactionist policy

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Jakniūnaitė, Dovilė, Lietuva ir Rusija: Dešimt nestabilaus stabilumo metų, in: Jakniūnaitė, Dovilė (ed.), *Ambicingas dešimtmetis: Lietuvos užsienio politika 2004–2014/ Lithuania and Russia: Ten Years of Instable Stability*, in: *The Ambitious Decade: Lithuanian Foreign Policy from 2004-2014* (in Lithuanian only), Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2015, p. 125.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. Šešelgytė, Margarita, Security Culture of Lithuania, in: *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, Foreign Policy Research Center, Vilnius, 2010, Issue II, p. 33.

¹⁷¹ Cf. Šešelgytė, A Midget Warrior, p. 38.

¹⁷² Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Valstybės saugumo departamentas, 2012 m. veiklos ataskaita visuomenei/ State Security Department of Lithuania, Report to Society 2012 (in Lithuanian only), pp. 15-16; Lietuvos Respublikos Valstybės Saugumo Departamentas, Grėsmių Nacionaliniam Saugumui Vertinimas/ State Security Department of Lithuania, Evaluation of National Security Threats (in Lithuanian only), 2015 m., Vilnius, pp. 15-16.

¹⁷³ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Valstybės Saugumo Departamentas, Grėsmių Nacionaliniam Saugumui Vertinimas/ State Security Department of Lithuania, Evaluation of National Security Threats (in Lithuanian only), 2014 m., Vilnius, pp. 9-10.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. *Ibid*, pp. 13-15.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. Gudavičius, Stasys/ Aukštuolytė, Rima, „Žvalgyba įvardijo, kokią karinę grėsmę Lietuvai kelia Rusija“/ “Intelligence Service revealed what military threat Russia poses to Lithuania“ (in Lithuanian only), *Verslo žinios*, 29.04.2014, <https://www.vz.lt/archive/article/2014/4/29/zvalgyba-ivardijo-kokia-karine-gresme-lituvai-kelia-rusija> [Accessed: 02.02.2021].

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Gudavičius, Stasys/ Zubrutė, Liucija, „Inicijuoja šauktinių kariuomenės grąžinimą“/ “Return to Compulsory Military Service Initiated“ (in Lithuanian only), *Verslo žinios*, 24.02.2015, https://www.vz.lt/archive/article/2015/2/24/prezidente-lietuvoje-numatoma-grazinti-sauktiniu-kariuomene&template=api_article [Accessed: 02.02.2021].

towards Russia it has been argued that its political decisions were induced and motivated by Russia from the tactical up to the strategic level.¹⁷⁷

Lithuania's suspicious stance towards Russia had direct implications also on its energy policy. In the period of time between 2004 and 2015 Lithuania's energy policy became strongly focused on the security aspect, which had a broader meaning than simply "uninterrupted availability of energy sources at an affordable price"¹⁷⁸ as one of the most common definitions of energy security would propose. After Lithuania joined the Euro-Atlantic structures and thus received important security assurance from NATO in terms of conventional deterrence, the energy sector, on the other hand, gained the status as a security-gap through which Russia could possibly try to influence not only economic, but also political processes in the country.

Both internal and external factors had an influence on the shift of energy from the area of *low* to *high* politics. The internal factors, such as Russia's unannounced halt of crude oil supplies to Lithuania in 2006, combined with increasing levels of energy sources coming exclusively from it due to the ongoing decommissioning process of the INPP and the absence of any alternative supply routes to the country clearly showed that Lithuania was losing control of the processes going on in its energy sector. The external factors such as Russian-Ukrainian gas disputes of 2006 and 2009 demonstrated that Russia did not hesitate to use energy as a foreign policy tool. As a result of these developments, energy security was identified as an integral part of Lithuania's national security in the National Energy Strategy adopted in 2007.¹⁷⁹

The aforementioned national and regional energy security developments increased the perceived vulnerability in Lithuania's energy field and led to the extension of securitising moves against Russia also to the energy domain. This neighbouring country has been perceived as the main source of instability as it was strongly believed it sought to abuse its dominating position over Lithuania's energy sector not only for its own eco-

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Jakniūnaitė, Dovilė, *A Small State in the Asymmetrical Bilateral Relations*, p. 70.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. International Energy Agency, IEA, <https://www.iea.org/topics/energy-security> [Accessed: 05.01.2021].

¹⁷⁹ Nacionalinė energetikos strategija, patvirtinta Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo 2007 m. sausio 18 d. nutarimu Nr. X-1046, I. Bendrosios nuostatos/ National Energy Strategy adopted by the ruling Nr. X-1046, of 18.01.2007 by the Lithuanian Parliament, I. General Provisions (in Lithuanian only) , <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.291371> [Accessed: 02.12.2020].

nomic but also for foreign policy benefits.¹⁸⁰ Therefore, Russia's monopolist position in Lithuania's energy sector was seen as a tool to influence its political life and strategic decisions with the main goal of sustaining a certain level of control over the country and preventing it from integrating in the Western European energy structures.

The growing attention of the country's political elite towards energy as a national security issue increased the understanding of "energy security" in terms of its negative meaning, namely, by defining energy security not *for* Lithuania but rather *from* Russia. This understanding was entrenched in the National Energy Strategy 2007, which described energy security as:

"a variety of conditions assuring diversification of traditional and renewable primer energy sources, diversification and reliability of suppliers, as well as independence from the monopolist supplier, accessibility of energy on reasonable prices in an energy market based on competition."¹⁸¹

Although not mentioned directly, knowing the energy relations that prevailed between Lithuania and Russia at that time, it was clear that the unreliable "monopolist supplier", which was selling energy for unreasonable prices, was Russia. The prime aim of Lithuania's energy policy was to achieve independence from it.

Thus beside "energy security" also the concept of "energy independence" also emerged in this definition. Energy independence being an emotionally-laden concept with clear historical connotations consolidated the understanding of energy security in a negative way as security and independence *from Russia*, and later became a central leitmotif of the country's energy policy with the next national energy strategy of 2012 renamed as the "National Energy Independence Strategy"¹⁸², with the LNG tanker docked at the Baltic Sea port of Klaipėda in Lithuania in 2014 also being given the name "Independence"¹⁸³. This prevailing discursive turn in Lithuania's energy policy corre-

¹⁸⁰ Cf. 15min.lt, BNS, "V. Adamkus ragina Rusiją nesinaudoti Baltijos šalių energetine priklausomybe", 23.04.2009/ "V. Adamkus demands Russia to not exploit energy dependence of the Baltic States" (in Lithuanian only), <https://www.15min.lt/naujiena/aktualu/lietuva/v.adamkus-ragina-rusija-nesinaudoti-baltijos-saliu-energetine-priklausomybe-56-37896> [Accessed: 05.01.2021].

¹⁸¹ Nacionalinė energetikos strategija, I. Bendrosios Nuostatos, 2007.

¹⁸² Cf. Nacionalinė energetinės nepriklausomybės strategija, patvirtinta Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo 2012 m. birželio 26 d. nutarimu Nr. XI-2133/ National Energy Independence Strategy adopted by the ruling Nr. XI-2133, of 26.06.2012 by the Lithuanian Parliament (in Lithuanian only), <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.429490> [Accessed: 02.12.2020].

¹⁸³ Cf. Johnson, Keith, "Lithuania Cheers 'Independence'".

sponded well with its self-representation as a country suppressed by its unfriendly neighbour and historical adversary Russia.

Lithuania's continuing concentration on issues related to Russia had important implications on its EU and NATO policies, often marking it as a single-agenda country.¹⁸⁴ In this respect Lithuanian representatives repeatedly used the argument of "knowing Russia better" in their discussions with the EU and NATO partners and demanded a normative, value-based policy against it.¹⁸⁵ The support of the Western Allies was crucial for Lithuania: because of the prevailing asymmetrical nature of Russian-Lithuanian bilateral relations, the only possible way for Lithuania to deal with the pressures coming from this particular neighbour was through the involvement of the international partners in the Lithuanian-Russian dialogue.¹⁸⁶

2.1.2. Lithuania's Conflicting Loyalties to Europe/EU and the US/ NATO

Although perceiving its accession to both the EU and NATO as an historical achievement¹⁸⁷ and being a strongly pro-EU and pro-NATO country, Lithuania has traditionally ascribed fundamentally different roles to these organisations. The prevailing distinctions between Lithuania's relations to the US/NATO and Europe/EU stemmed from differing historical narratives underlying the Lithuanian-US and Lithuanian-European relations. Ever since regaining its independence, predominantly positive connotations dominated Lithuania's relationship to the US. It has been argued that this country was the most important external power which unconditionally supported Lithuania's aspiration for political independence and, later, for its accession to the Euro-Atlantic

¹⁸⁴ Cf. Nekrašas, *Kritiniai pamąstymai apie Lietuvos užsienio politiką*, p. 132. See also: Mälksoo, Maria, *From Existential Politics Towards Normal Politics? The Baltic States in the Enlarged Europe*, in: *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 37(3), 2006, pp. 282-286.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. Mälksoo, *From Existential Politics Towards Normal Politics?*, p. 282.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Vitkus, Gediminas, *Diplomatinė aporija: tarptautinė Lietuvos ir Rusijos santykių normalizacijos perspektyva/ Diplomatic Aporia: International Perspective of Normalization of Relations Between Lithuania and Russia (in Lithuanian only)*, Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2006.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Trainauskienė, Sigita, *Transatlantic Relations and Lithuania: Unfinished Issues of Security*, in: *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review* 11(1), 2013, p. 57.

organisational structures.¹⁸⁸ In this spirit Lithuanian-US relations have been granted the status of a “strategic partnership” by signing the Baltic Charter in 1998¹⁸⁹, and have since then been understood as an intense cooperation of two countries pursuing the same vision of the international system and sharing strategic foreign policy goals. In terms of the European partners, Lithuania cherishes strategic partnership with only two EU member countries: Poland and France.¹⁹⁰

Drawing on the perceived historical support of the US in ending the Soviet occupation as well as withstanding Russian pressures after the end of the Cold War, this partnership was perceived as vital to Lithuania’s security.¹⁹¹ There was a deeply entrenched belief dominating among Lithuanian political elite and its broader society that it would be the US, not the Western European countries, that would decisively react to a threatening security situation in Lithuania. For its part Lithuania put forth immense efforts to actively demonstrate its loyalty to its American partner. The most discussed examples thereof were Lithuania’s support for the US’s intervention in Iraq in 2003 with its simultaneous distancing from the common position of the EU on this issue.¹⁹² Moreover, Lithuania, all constraints of a small country notwithstanding, decided to take responsibility over the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in the Ghor province in Afghanistan following the US’s anti-terrorist operation in this country. As a result of its clear orientation towards the US, as illustrated by Lithuania’s practical foreign and secu-

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Jurgelevičiūtė, Diana, Lietuvos tarptautinis subjektiškumas: kokia mažoji valstybė?, in: Jakniūnaitė, Dovilė (ed.), *Ambicingas dešimtmetis: Lietuvos užsienio politika 2004–2014/ Lithuania as an International Subject: What kind of Small State?*, in: *The Ambitious Decade: Lithuanian Foreign Policy 2004-2014* (in Lithuanian only), Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2015, p. 61.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. U.S. Department of State (Archive), *A Charter of Partnership among the United States of America and the Republic of Estonia, Republic of Latvia, and Republic of Lithuania*, January 16, 1998, https://1997-2001.state.gov/www/regions/eur/ch_9801_baltic_charter.html [02.12.2020].

¹⁹⁰ Cf. Gajauskaitė, Ieva, Lietuvos Užsienio Politika: Santykiai su Strateginėmis Partnerėmis/ Lithuanian Foreign Policy: Relations with Strategic Partners (in Lithuanian only), in: Jakštaitė, Gerda/ Česnakas, Giedrius/ Karpavičiūtė, Ieva/ Gajauskaitė, Ieva/ Bardauskaitė, Danguolė/ Juozaitis, Justinas, *Lietuva globalioje erdvėje: Metinė apžvalga 2013–2014 m.*, Vytauto Didžiojo Universitetas, Versus Aureus, 2014, p. 38.

¹⁹¹ Cf. Paulauskas, Kęstutis, *The Baltics: From Nation States to Member States*, European Union Institute for Security Studies, Occasional Paper, No 62, February 2006, p. 30.

¹⁹² Cf. Mälksoo, Maria, *Europe’s New Vanguard or the Old ‘Security Modernists’ in a Fancy Dress? The Baltic States Against the Images of Eastern Europe in the EU*, in: Kasekamp, Andres (ed.), *The Estonian Foreign Policy Yearbook*, Estonian Foreign Policy Institute, 2008, p. 49.

rity policy choices, the country has been often described as an “instinctive Atlanticist”¹⁹³.

By contrast, the historical narrative that prevailed between Lithuania and its European partner countries was far more complicated. The underlying attitude in Lithuania was that of the Western betrayal of Eastern Europe during the Second World War, thus revealing the enduring uncertainty about the motives of the present political decisions, which, as it was instinctively believed, could turn out to be yet another betrayal in a modern form.¹⁹⁴ This uncertainty stemmed from the European countries’ approach towards Russia that was described in Lithuania as naive. The old EU member states’ prevailing preference to follow economic interests instead of moral arguments in dealing with Russia was thus seen as short-sighted and dangerous. Therefore it was argued that the Western European countries’ unwillingness to draw upon lessons from the past could potentially have dramatic consequences for Lithuania, thus expressing its fear of being “sold out” in the future to Russia.¹⁹⁵ One of the best illustrations for the clash between Lithuania and the Western European countries’ attitudes towards Russia was the dispute over the Nord Stream pipeline.¹⁹⁶ In this context it has been claimed that Lithuania constructed its national identity not only through distancing itself from Russia, but also from those EU member states pursuing pragmatic foreign policy towards Russia. In doing so Lithuania positioned itself as the true defender of the European idea of solidarity and democracy.¹⁹⁷

These prevailing historical narratives between Lithuania and the US as well as between Lithuania and the Western European countries also extended to Lithuania’s perception of NATO and the EU. Lithuania’s embedded approach to the US as the main protector and to Western Europe as prevailingly inconsistent in its relations towards Russia led to a clear prioritisation of NATO among the international organisations that Lithuania belonged to. In addition to the EU’s inability to formulate a united stance

¹⁹³ Vilpišauskas, *The Dilemmas of Transatlantic Relations after EU Enlargement and the Implications for Lithuania*, p. 94.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. Mälksoo, Maria, *The Memory Politics of Becoming European: The East European Subalterns and the Collective Memory of Europe*, in: *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 15(4), 2009, p. 656.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. Mälksoo, *From Existential Politics Towards Normal Politics?*, p. 281.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. Reuters, „Lithuania leader worried by Baltic Sea gas pipe“, 05.11.2007, <https://www.reuters.com/article/nordstream-lithuania-idUKL0568747520071105> [Accessed: 03.12.2020].

¹⁹⁷ Cf. Miniotaitė, „Europos normatyvine galia“, p. 13.

towards Russia, its general profile of being a soft rather than a hard power resulted in Lithuanian scepticism towards it.¹⁹⁸ As a result, gradual development of the EU's competences in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) were only greeted by Lithuania under the condition that it would not duplicate NATO. This condition is anchored in the so-called "non-duplication" clause stating that development of the EU's role in the security and military field should not intervene in the functional area of NATO, and thus should not duplicate its capabilities.¹⁹⁹ Lithuania's principal foreign policy goal is therefore to prevent the retreat of NATO from the European, and thus Lithuanian, security architecture.

According to Lithuania's position, the retreat could be prevented by granting a broader functionality to the Alliance. Therefore from the very beginning of Lithuania's membership in NATO, its special role for Lithuania's foreign and security policy was extended beyond the mere military area. New provisions that have been included to Lithuania's National Security Strategy (2002) in 2005 following its accession to the EU and NATO stated that "Lithuania's membership in NATO guarantees its military, political and economic security".²⁰⁰ Later it was emphasised that NATO was not a purely military, but also a political organisation, and therefore a place where all security concerns of the member states could be discussed.²⁰¹

Although in the area of foreign and security policy Lithuania's Atlanticist security orientation led to the perception of Europe as merely a pillar of NATO²⁰² and thus

¹⁹⁸ Cf. Jonavičius, Laurynas, Lithuania: Searching for security, in: Janning, Josef (ed.), *Keeping Europeans Together: Assessing the State of EU Cohesion*, European Council on Foreign Relations, 2016, p. 88.

¹⁹⁹ Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo rezoliucija "Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio politikos kryptių Lietuvai tapus visateise NATO nare ir Europos Sąjungos nare", 2004 m. gegužės 1 d. Vilnius/ Resolution of Seimas "Concerning Lithuania's Foreign Policy Directions After the EU and NATO Accession (in Lithuanian only)", <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.232592?jfwid=-kyrux8441> [Accessed: 03.12.2020].

²⁰⁰ Lietuvos Nacionalinio saugumo strategija patvirtinta Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo 2002 m. gegužės 28 d. nutarimu Nr. IX-907, 2005 m. sausio 20 d. nutarimo redakcija, 7. Baigiamosios nuostatos/ National Security Strategy of Lithuania, adopted by the ruling No IX-907 of the Lithuanian Parliament on 28.05.2002, 7. Final provisions (in Lithuanian only), <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.249438> [Accessed: 03.12.2020].

²⁰¹ Cf. Bajarūnaitė, Alvyda/ Liauksminas, Saulius, „L. Linkevičius: kėsintis į NATO teritoriją nėra nei karinių, nei finansinių galimybių“/ "L. Linkevičius: there are neither military nor financial opportunities to threaten NATO territory" (in Lithuanian only), lrt.lt, 28.03.2014, <https://www.lrt.lt/naujienos/lietuvoje/2/39714/l-linkevicius-kesintis-i-nato-teritorija-nera-nei-kariniu-nei-finansiniu-galimybiu> [Accessed: 04.12.2020].

²⁰² Cf. Paulauskas, *The Baltics: From Nation States to Member States*, p. 6.

reduced its EU-policy in this area to sustaining the trans-Atlantic partnership²⁰³, while at the same time the EU was seen as the crucial partner in the areas of economic and social policy. Lithuania's approach towards the EU was driven by pragmatic incentives such as the much needed financial support that it received from Brussels as well as by the willingness to consolidate its membership in this organisation. Resulting from these perceptions, Lithuanian membership in the EU and NATO can be summarised as a permanent management of two loyalties: trying to maintain the balance between its close alignment with the US, and fulfilling its role as a "good European" in the eyes of Brussels.²⁰⁴

Lithuania's prevailing security orientation towards the US/NATO also extends to the energy security field. Although over the years the EU offered new instruments for reducing energy vulnerabilities in the member states, Lithuania was still putting much of its political and diplomatic efforts towards attempting to involve NATO in the discussion on energy security. In this respect, the notion of ongoing assertive actions of Russia against Lithuania's energy sector gradually intensified and resulted in increased securitisation of energy. Russia was identified as a country trying to intervene in Lithuania's energy policy and thus attempting to block the implementation of structural reforms in its energy sector²⁰⁵, attempting to discredit Lithuania's goal of implementing the provisions of the EU's Third Energy Package²⁰⁶ and aiming to hinder the development of alternative natural gas supply routes such as installation of an LNG terminal at the seaport of Klaipeda.²⁰⁷ The ongoing political discussion about Russia's coercive measures against the Lithuanian energy sector allowed raising the profile of energy from simply an economic to a national security issue and therefore justified the involvement of NATO in the management of the situation.

²⁰³ Cf. Statkus, Nortautas/ Paulauskas, Kestutis, Tarp Geopolitikos ir Postmoderno: kur link sukti Lietuvos užsienio politikai?/ Between Geopolitics and Postmodern: what direction should Lithuanian foreign policy take? (in Lithuanian only), Generolo Jono Žemaičio Lietuvos Karo Akademija, 2008, p. 47.

²⁰⁴ Cf. Paulauskas, *The Baltics: From Nation States to Member States*, p. 6.

²⁰⁵ Lietuvos Respublikos Valstybės saugumo departamento veiklos apžvalga/ State Security Department of Lithuania, Activities' Review (in Lithuanian only), Vilnius, 2012, pp. 20-21. <https://www.vsd.lt/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Veiklos-ataskaita-2011.pdf> [Accessed: 05.12.2020].

²⁰⁶ Cf. *Ibid*, pp. 15-16.

²⁰⁷ Lietuvos Respublikos Valstybės Saugumo Departamentas, Grėsmių Nacionaliniam Saugumui Vertinimas/ State Security Department of Lithuania, Evaluation of Threats to National Security (in Lithuanian only), Vilnius, 2015 m., pp.15-16.

2.1.3. Lithuania's Small State Identity

Lithuania's historical experience of being rather an object than a subject of international relations combined with its comparatively small size and limited material resources resulted in the consolidation of a "small state mentality" as an important part of its national identity. Typical for small states in general, this mentality manifested itself as an embedded understanding of being unable to impact broader international processes directly and on its own.²⁰⁸ As a result, in most cases the prevailing material factors combined with Lithuania's perceived smallness led to the formulation and implementation of a reactive foreign policy, which was constrained in terms of both its geographic and thematic scope.²⁰⁹ However, despite these geographic and thematic boundaries Lithuania proved itself to be a small, yet active state.

In terms of geography, Eastern Europe naturally emerged as the most important region on which Lithuania's foreign policy was focused. As this region also belonged to Russia's sphere of particular foreign policy interest, Lithuania was constantly involved in political developments that included the "Russian factor". In this respect Lithuania participated in management of multiple political crises following the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004, the Russian-Georgian war in 2008, the gas disputes between Ukraine and Russia in 2006 and 2009, as well as the Ukrainian crisis of 2014 and the subsequent annexation of Crimea. Lithuania's involvement in these political developments reflected the prevailing thematic focus of its foreign policy aimed at countering Russia's aggressive influence in the region through strengthening democratic processes in the EU's Eastern neighbourhood²¹⁰ and addressing energy security issues²¹¹.

Lithuania's main approach in dealing with these regional issues was prevalingly value-based. In this respect Lithuania, drawing on its own historical experience, insisted on the need to actively support its Eastern neighbours' democratic aspirations and to clearly condemn Russian efforts to prevent their drift towards the EU through political and military leverages. In doing so Lithuania developed its role as a moral advocate wi-

²⁰⁸ Cf. Koehane, Robert O., "Lilliputians' Dilemma: Small States in International Politics", *International Organization* 23(2), 1969, p. 296.

²⁰⁹ Cf. Statkus/ Paulauskas, *Tarp Geopolitikos ir Postmoderno*, p. 38.

²¹⁰ Cf. Nekrašas, Evaldas, *Lithuanian Foreign Policy: Concepts, Achievements and Predicaments*, in: *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, 13-14, 2004, p. 33.

²¹¹ Cf. Jakniūnaitė, *Lietuva ir Rusija: Dešimt nestabilaus stabilumo metų*, p. 108.

thin the EU by arguing that it knew Russia and its hidden interests better than the Western European countries. This political positioning often resulted in Lithuania's foreign policy being more in line with the American rather than the Western European view.

Feeling reliant on US support to aid further developments in Eastern Europe, Lithuania put much of its effort towards developing the image of a trustworthy ally and as a country that could be useful for the US. Therefore Lithuania decided to join the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in remote Afghanistan in 2005.²¹² Lithuania's determination to take over the leadership of one of the PRTs established in Afghanistan exceeded any expectations that the international community had for such a small country and they were treated as an example to aspire to for the bigger, albeit less active NATO member countries. In relation to Lithuania's active involvement in the activities of the ISAF, the then NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer stated that: "[i]f Lithuania can do it, others can do it too."²¹³ Despite Lithuania's participation in multiple international military and civil missions since the regain of its independence²¹⁴, the ISAF was the first mission with Lithuania holding responsibility as a lead nation. This move clearly demonstrated Lithuania's commitment to be "security providers, not only consumers"²¹⁵.

It is because of these efforts that Lithuania has been identified as an ambitious²¹⁶ and active²¹⁷ small state. Having no national leverages to influence its relations with Russia²¹⁸, Lithuania's main aim was to play an active role in the international formats that had the support of its Western partners. Being a "security provider" outside its own

²¹² Cf. Socor, Vladimir, „Lithuania to Lead NATO Unit in Afghanistan“, The Jamestown Foundation, 16.04.2005, <https://jamestown.org/program/lithuania-to-lead-nato-unit-in-afghanistan/> [Accessed: 06.12.2020].

²¹³ ELTA, January 24, February 12, cited from: Socor, Vladimir, „Lithuania to Lead NATO Unit in Afghanistan“.

²¹⁴ lrt.lt, „Sukanka 20 metų, kai Lietuva dalyvauja tarptautinėse operacijose“/ „20 years of Lithuanian participation in international operations“ (in Lithuanian only), 22.08.2014, <https://www.lrt.lt/naujienos/lietuvoje/2/59087/sukanka-20-metu-kai-lietuva-dalyvauja-tarptautinese-operacijose> [Accessed: 06.12.2020].

²¹⁵ Maskaliūnaitė, Asta, Sharing the Burden? Assessing the Lithuanian Decision to Establish a Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan, in: Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review 2013-2014, Volume 12, 2014, p. 235.

²¹⁶ Cf. Lopata, Raimundas, Debatai dėl Lietuvos užsienio politikos/ Debates on Lithuanian Foreign Policy (in Lithuanian only), in: Politologija, 1(57), 2010, p. 135.

²¹⁷ Cf. Jurgelevičiūtė, p. 73.

²¹⁸ Cf. Jakniūnaitė, A Small State in the Asymmetrical Bilateral Relations, p. 80.

boundaries, Lithuania felt justified to ask for assistance in regards to its own national issues. As a result, Lithuania's foreign policy strategy of „engaging the ‘West’ to negotiate with the ‘East’“²¹⁹ has become entrenched in its political practice and was widely recognised as the best way to overcome its structural deficiencies.

2.2. Factual Situation of Lithuania’s Energy Sector from 2004-2015

Lithuania’s energy system developed from the 1960s through the 1980s when the country still belonged to the Soviet Union. As a result, Lithuania’s energy sector was designed to integrate with the Soviet energy system and thus contribute to covering the energy needs not only of Lithuania itself, but also of other neighbouring Soviet Bloc countries.²²⁰ The biggest energy infrastructure units of regional importance built on the Lithuanian territory were the Mažeikiai Crude Oil Refinery which was commissioned in 1980, and the INPP comprising of two units which were put online in 1983 and 1987 respectively.²²¹ Having this infrastructure on its territory, Lithuania became an important energy hub specialising in the crude oil refining and electricity generation. In the natural gas sector, on the contrary, Lithuania was fully dependent on supplies from Russia through its natural gas transportation system.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Lithuanian state “inherited” both the existing energy infrastructure and the historically determined energy ties with the neighbouring countries. As a result, thanks to the INPP Lithuania was able to cover its own electricity needs and even export electric energy.²²² In the oil sector, the Mažeikiai Crude Oil Refinery kept operating, although not without disruptions. Reacting to the energy blockade that Russia imposed on Lithuania after it declared political independence in 1990, thus halting crude oil supplies to the country, the Būtingė Oil Terminal

²¹⁹ Lamoreaux, Jeremy W./ Galbreath, David J., The Baltic States as ‘Small States’: Negotiating the ‘East’ by Engaging the ‘West’, in: *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 39(1), 2008, p. 1.

²²⁰ Cf. Vitkus, *Russian Pipeline Diplomacy*, pp. 26-33.

²²¹ Cf. *Ibid*, pp. 26-33.

²²² Cf. U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), „Lithuania“, <https://www.eia.gov/international/overview/country/LTU> [Accessed: 06.12.2020].

was built to supplement Lithuania's oil complex in diversifying oil import routes and allowing Lithuania to be supplied by sea in the form of oil tankers.²²³

In terms of natural gas Lithuania remained fully dependent on supplies from the Soviet-era Minsk-Vilnius pipeline starting in Russia, passing through Lithuanian territory, and continuing further onwards to the Russian territory of Kaliningrad.²²⁴ Due to the complexity of the existing natural gas supply and transmission network as well as the prevailing underdevelopment of the liquefied natural gas (LNG) technology at that time, Lithuania was not able to diversify its natural gas supply routes as it did in the case of oil. On the other hand, after its independence Lithuania gained a new function as a transit country for natural gas to the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad, and in the process acquired a small amount of leverage against its monopolist natural gas supplier.

Unable to comprehensively reform its energy sector immediately after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Lithuania stood on the brink of a radical transformation of its energy field in 2004 after joining the EU. The main trigger for the upcoming changes was Lithuania's legal obligation to close the INPP due to safety reasons as one of the major pre-conditions for its EU accession. Nuclear energy made up 36% of Lithuania's energy mix²²⁵ and accounted for approximately 77% of generated end-use electricity prior 2009²²⁶, and was the backbone of the entire Lithuanian energy sector. Thus the requirement to close the INPP meant an upcoming transformation not only for the country's electricity sector in terms of the need to find alternative electric energy sources, but for the whole energy system. The loss of electricity produced by the INPP automatically meant the need to increase the import of not only electric energy, but also of natural gas, which was needed as a fuel for the remaining electricity generating power plants in the country.

Lithuania had no exploitable domestic energy resources and covered only 8.2% of its energy needs by renewable energy back in 2004.²²⁷ Thus apart from the impending need to import electricity, the country was already importing a substantial share of energy products at that time, namely 99.8% of natural gas, 98.5% of crude oil, and 100.7%

²²³ Cf. Janeliūnas/ Molis, pp. 205-208.

²²⁴ Cf. Grigas, *The Politics of Energy and Memory between the Baltic States and Russia*, p. 80.

²²⁵ Cf. Janeliūnas/ Molis, p. 205.

²²⁶ Cf. U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), „Lithuania“.

²²⁷ Cf. Janeliūnas/ Molis, p. 205.

of coal.²²⁸ The overall import dependency rate of Lithuania constituted 46.6% in 2004.²²⁹ After the second unit of the INPP was closed in 2009 Lithuania turned into a net importer of electricity. Around 60% of this energy source came from Russia, and the rest from Estonia, Latvia, and Belarus.²³⁰ Resulting from the closure of the INPP, Lithuania's import dependency rate increased continuously throughout the following years until 2015, reaching its peak of 81.9% in 2010²³¹ and later decreasing minimally until it reached 78.4% in 2015²³². All in all, during the entire "post-INPP" period from 2010 until 2015, Lithuania's import dependency ratio was well above the EU's dependency average that constituted approximately 55%.²³³

The growing import dependency, entrenched monopolist energy supply structure, and lacking alternative energy supply routes resulted in the growing vulnerability of Lithuania's energy sector. In this respect it has been argued that the main possible threats for Lithuania's energy security were short-term supply disruptions and manipulation of energy prices.²³⁴ The ongoing developments in Lithuania's energy sector encouraged evaluating its energy security level. It has been calculated that this level fluctuated between 52.8% and 51.2% between 2007 and 2011, with 100% representing the level of an absolute energy security.²³⁵ The analysts offering this method of energy security evaluation drew two important conclusions. The first suggested that the closure of the INPP decreased Lithuania's energy security by only approximately 3%, because it not only had negative effects such as growing energy imports, but also some positive ones. In this respect, closure of the INPP encouraged strengthening other parameters of energy

²²⁸ Cf. Ibid, p. 205.

²²⁹ Cf. Ibid, p. 205.

²³⁰ Cf. U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), „Lithuania“.

²³¹ Cf. statista.com, "Dependency rate on energy imports in Lithuania from 2008 to 2017, "<https://www.statista.com/statistics/691165/dependency-on-energy-imports-in-lithuania/> [Accessed: 19.02.2021].

²³² Cf. Ibid.

²³³ Cf. Eurostat, "Energy production and imports“, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Energy_production_and_imports#More_than_half_of_EU_energy_needs_are_covered_by_imports [Accessed: 19.02.2021].

²³⁴ Cf. Augutis, Juozas/ Krikštolaitis, Ričardas/ Genys, Dainius/ Česnaikas, Giedrius, Lietuvos Energetinis Saugumas: Metinė Apžvalga 2011–2012/ Energy Security of Lithuanian: Annual Review 2011-2012 (in Lithuanian only), Vytauto Didžiojo Universitetas, Lietuvos Energetikos Institutas, Kaunas, 2013, pp. 12-14.

²³⁵ Cf. Ibid, p. 17.

security such as the formation of an electricity market and a more active use of renewables in electricity generation.²³⁶ Indeed, the share of gross consumption of electricity generated from renewable energy sources grew steadily from 3.8% in 2005 to 15.6% in 2015.²³⁷

The second conclusion indicated that Lithuania's natural gas sector was the most vulnerable part of its energy domain because of its sensitivity to possible geopolitical and economic pressures.²³⁸ Natural gas covering a quarter of Lithuania's energy demands in 2004²³⁹ was an important energy source widely used in the country's heating and business sectors. As in the early 2000s no global natural gas market existed and this energy source was prevalingly transported via pipelines, and natural gas importing countries were tightly bound to their suppliers through longterm supply contracts. The first such supply contract between Lithuania and Russia was signed in 1999 and later extended until 2015.²⁴⁰ The contract with Gazprom was based on the agreement to supply natural gas to Lithuania according to a special country-specific price formula, which, however, has been modified by Gazprom several times throughout the years in order to adapt the price paid by Lithuania to compete with the gas prices paid by the Western European countries. As a result of these modifications gas prices for Lithuania increased more than twice in 2007 as compared with 2005.²⁴¹

Being dependent on one natural gas supplier and a sole supply route, Lithuania had no viable political leverages to negotiate better prices for the imported gas. Moreover, since 2004 Lithuania's natural gas sector was completely dominated by Russia's Gazprom. This company was not only the sole natural gas supplier to the country but

²³⁶ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²³⁷ Cf. Official Statistics Portal, The Share of Energy from Renewable Sources, <https://osp.stat.gov.lt/statistiniu-rodikliu-analize?indicator=S1R127?hash=7811fded-51bd-405c-9cac-4bdc636ddbdb#/> [Accessed: 20.02.2021].

²³⁸ Cf. Augutis/ Krikštolaitis/ Genys/ Česnakas, p. 17.

²³⁹ Cf. Janeliūnas, Molis, p. 205.

²⁴⁰ Cf. Valstybinė kainų ir energetikos kontrolės komisija, Lietuvos elektros energijos ir gamtinių dujų rinkų metinė ataskaita Europos Komisijai/ National Commission for Energy Control and Prices, Annual Report to the European Commission Concerning Lithuania's Electricity and Natural Gas Markets (in Lithuanian only), Vilnius, 2006, p. 71, <https://www.regula.lt/dujos/SiteAssets/rinkos-stebesenos-ataskaitos/ek-2005.pdf> [Accessed: 23.02.2021].

²⁴¹ Cf. Valstybinė kainų ir energetikos kontrolės komisija, Lietuvos Respublikos elektros energijos ir gamtinių dujų rinkų metinė ataskaita Europos Komisijai/ National Commission for Energy Control and Prices, Annual Report to the European Commission Concerning Lithuania's Electricity and Natural Gas Markets (in Lithuanian only), Vilnius, 2007, p. 16, <https://www.regula.lt/dujos/SiteAssets/rinkos-stebesenos-ataskaitos/ek-2006.pdf> [Accessed: 23.02.2021].

also one of the biggest shareholders of the national gas company Lietuvos Dujos. As a result, Gazprom was enjoying a complete “vertical monopoly”²⁴² in Lithuania’s gas sector through its involvement in all levels of the natural gas business from supplying to distributing and delivering gas to households and businesses.²⁴³ Gazprom’s involvement stretching over various activities in the gas sector meant that the Lithuanian government had very limited chances to implement policies contradicting the interests of this company and thus Russia.²⁴⁴

These restrictive circumstances notwithstanding, far-reaching energy security projects have been developed and implemented in Lithuania’s electricity and natural gas sectors. To the realised projects at the end of 2015 count: 1) implementation of the EU’s Third Energy Package; 2) construction of the floating LNG terminal; and 3) construction of the “electricity bridges” NordBalt to Sweden and LitPol Link to Poland. In addition to these, the Gas Interconnection Poland–Lithuania (GIPL) and synchronisation of Lithuania’s electricity grid with the Continental European Network (CEN) were both energy security projects of strategic importance still under implementation at the end of 2015. By contrast, construction of a new nuclear power plant in Visaginas (VNPP) was actively debated since the closure of the first block of the INPP but left unrealised.

Whereas the implementation process of the requirements of the EU’s Third Energy Package in Lithuania’s electricity sector has been rather unproblematic and was completed in September 2012²⁴⁵, the same process in the country’s natural gas sector proved to be far more complicated. Lithuania’s decision to choose the strict ownership unbundling model for separation of the natural gas supply and transmission activities according to the requirements of the Third Energy Package provoked a conflict with Gazprom, which at that time was both Lithuania’s main natural gas supplier and a co-owner of its gas transmission network. The conflict reached the political level with the at that time Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin calling the ongoing process a “robbery”²⁴⁶. The enormous political pressure from the Russian side notwithstanding, Li-

²⁴² Molis, p. 8.

²⁴³ Cf. Grigas, *The Politics of Energy and Memory*, p. 93.

²⁴⁴ Cf. Janeliūnas/ Molis, p. 209.

²⁴⁵ Cf. Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania, „Electricity sector“, <https://enmin.lrv.lt/en/sectoral-policy/electricity-sector-1> [Accessed: 24.02.2021].

²⁴⁶ Cited from: Tracevskis, Rokas M., „Lithuanian energy issues provoke cries from Putin“, *The Baltic Times*, 02.12.2010, <https://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/27441/> [24.02.2021].

Lithuania finished the implementation of the Third Energy Package in its natural gas sector in November 2014²⁴⁷, thus forcing Gazprom and its counterpart E.ON Ruhrgas to sell their assets of Lietuvos Dujos, dismantling the company and creating two new entities instead: the natural gas supply operator Lietuvos Dujų Tiekimas and the transmission system operator Amber Grid.²⁴⁸

Beside the implementation of the Third Energy Package representing the energy sector's legal reorganisation and energy market liberalisation, Lithuania also implemented infrastructural projects aimed at diversification of its energy supply routes. The construction of the LNG terminal was the most important strategic infrastructure project in the natural gas sector. After years of unsuccessful negotiations with neighbouring Latvia and Estonia on a regional LNG terminal, Lithuania made a unilateral move, stepped out of the negotiations, and opted for a national terminal located in the Lithuanian port of Klaipėda.²⁴⁹ Due to financial reasons, Lithuania chose the option of leasing a Floating Storage and Re-gasification Unit (FSRU) from the Norwegian company Høegh LNG.²⁵⁰ The FSRU, which was given the symbolic name Independence, was officially installed at the Klaipėda seaport in October 2014.²⁵¹ Through the installation of the FSRU Lithuania successfully accomplished the requirement of the EU to develop an alternative natural gas supply route by December 2014 as envisaged in the Security of Supply Regulation of 2010.²⁵²

²⁴⁷ Cf. Lithuanian Tribune, BNS, „Lithuania successfully coped with EU's third energy package, experts say“, 31.10.2014, <https://lithuaniatribune.com/lithuania-successfully-coped-with-eus-third-energy-package-experts-say/> [Accessed: 24.02.2021].

²⁴⁸ Cf. Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania, „Gamtinių dujų perdavimo sistemos nuosavybės atskyrimas“/ „Ownership unbundling of the natural gas transmission system“ (in Lithuanian only), <https://enmin.lrv.lt/lt/veiklos-sritys-3/gamtines-dujos/gamtiniu-duju-perdavimo-sistemas-nuosavybes-atskyrimas> [Accessed: 24.02.2021].

²⁴⁹ Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW), „Lithuania is planning to build its own LNG terminal“, 04.08.2010, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analyses/2010-08-04/lithuania-planning-to-build-its-own-lng-terminal> [Accessed: 24.02.2021].

²⁵⁰ Cf. Høegh LNG, „Høegh LNG Signs FSRU Agreement with Klaipėdos Nafta in Lithuania“, 02.03.2012, Press Release, <https://www.hoeghlng.com/investors/news/press-release-details/2012/Hegh-LNG-signs-FSRU-agreement-with-Klaipėdos-Nafta-in-Lithuania/default.aspx> [Accessed: 26.02.2021].

²⁵¹ Cf. Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania, „FSRU “Independence” has arrived!“, <https://enmin.lrv.lt/en/sectoral-policy/natural-gas-sector/fsru-independence-has-arrived> [Accessed: 26.02.2021].

²⁵² REGULATION (EU) No 994/2010 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 20 October 2010 concerning measures to safeguard security of gas supply and repealing Council Directive 2004/67/EC, Article 6 „Infrastructure standard“, Official Journal of the European Union, L295/1, 12.11.2010, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32010R0994&from=EN> [Accessed: 26.02.2021].

There have been immediate economic and security benefits related to the installation of the FSRU. Reacting to the emerging competition in the Lithuanian natural gas market that has been enabled by Lithuania's acquired ability to import LNG, Gazprom offered a 20% discount for its gas.²⁵³ In 2015 Lithuania imported 16.5% of LNG from the Norwegian supplier Statoil and covered the rest of its natural gas demand by the Gazprom pipeline gas.²⁵⁴ Therefore, thanks to the FSRU, Lithuania went from once being a country overpaying for imported natural gas into the country paying one of the lowest prices for gas in Europe.²⁵⁵ In addition to these economic benefits, the ability to import LNG and thus to participate in the global gas market and choose its suppliers freely provided Lithuania with an important security of supply guarantee. In order to achieve full integration of Lithuania and the other two Baltic States' energy systems into the internal EU gas market, construction of an interconnection between Lithuania and Poland was needed. Therefore the GIPL project was initiated in 2011, but was still under implementation at the end of 2015.

Concerning diversification projects in Lithuania's electricity sector, construction of the NordBalt and LitPol Link interconnections were two crucial projects. The NordBalt subsea electricity link between Lithuania and Sweden and the LitPol Link electricity link between Lithuania and Poland were completed in December 2015, connecting the energy markets of the Baltic States with the Western and Northern European ones. Having achieved interconnection with the Western and Northern Europe at the energy market level and thus being able to enjoy the immediate positive effects on electricity prices²⁵⁶, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia were however still not connected to the European electricity grid at the actual system level. By the end of 2015 the electricity grids

²⁵³ Cf. Kauno diena, BNS, „R. Masiulis: „Gazprom“ nuolaida mažina SGD terminalo kainą vartotojams“/ „R. Masiulis: “Gazprom“ discount lowers the price of the LNG terminal for consumers“ (in Lithuanian only), 27.10.2014, <https://kauno.diena.lt/naujienos/verslas/ekonomika/r-masiulis-gazprom-nuolaida-mazina-sgd-terminalo-kaina-vartotojams-656527> [Accessed: 26.02.2021].

²⁵⁴ Cf. Valstybinė kainų ir energetikos kontrolės komisija, 2015 metų energetikos sektoriaus plėtros apžvalga/ National Commission for Energy Control and Prices, The Review of the Development of the Energy Sector in 2015 (in Lithuanian only), p. 29, https://www.vert.lt/SiteAssets/veikla/PRIEDAS_pletros_apzvalga_.pdf [Accessed: 26.02.2021].

²⁵⁵ Cf. 15min.lt, “4 metai su SGD terminalu: dėl atpigusių dujų sutaupyta 103 mln. eurų“/ “4 years with the LNG terminal: cheaper gas allowed sparing 103 mln euros“ (in Lithuanian only), 17.10.2018, <https://www.15min.lt/verslas/naujiena/energetika/4-metai-su-sgd-terminalu-del-atpigusiu-duju-sutaupyta-103-mln-euru-664-1046082?copied> [Accessed: 26.02.2021].

²⁵⁶ Cf. The Lithuania Tribune, „Electricity price drops by 13% due to NordBalt and LitPol Link“, 04.01.2017, <https://lithuaniatribune.com/electricity-price-drops-by-13-due-to-nordbalt-and-litpol-link/> [Accessed: 24.02.2021].

of the Baltic States together with Belarus and Russia still belonged to the so-called BRELL (Belarus, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) energy ring, thus operating in a synchronous mode with the IPS/UPS²⁵⁷ electricity grid administered by Moscow.²⁵⁸ Hence the construction of the LitPol Link was the first crucial step needed in order to change the synchronisation area from the IPS/UPS to the synchronous grid of Continental Europe. This strategic energy security project is due to be implemented by 2025.²⁵⁹

Experts have evaluated the effects of the installation of the FSRU and completion of the NordBalt and LitPol Link electricity lines on Lithuania's energy security situation. 2015 represented the first year of the FSRU operation, and the energy security level of Lithuania reached 66.3% which represented the highest level since the beginning of the estimation. In 2016 with both the NordBalt and LitPol Link "electricity bridges" fully operational, the energy security level rose further up to 67.8%.²⁶⁰ The increase in the energy security level emerged because of elimination of the main deficiencies that had been traditionally characteristic for Lithuania's energy sector: namely, absence of market-based leverages to influence natural gas price, reliance on a monopolist natural gas supplier, and over-reliance on natural gas in electricity production.²⁶¹

All in all, the new energy infrastructure alongside the legal and market level re-organisation of Lithuania's energy sector allowed for eliminating the constraints that had been dominating its energy field since the Soviet era. In this manner, Lithuania's vulnerability in the energy field and thus also its exposure to pressures stemming from the over-dependence on a single energy supplier, single natural gas transport route and one-way energy infrastructure lessened considerably as compared to the pre-reform level.

²⁵⁷ "IPS" stands for Integrated Power System and encompasses former Soviet states in Central Asia, Caucasus and Eastern Europe; "UPS" stands for Unified Power System of Russia and covers multiple regions of the Russian Federation: Cf. Elering AS, "Synchronisation with continental Europe", <https://elering.ee/en/synchronization-continental-europe> [Accessed: 30.12.2021].

²⁵⁸ Cf. Budginaite-Froehly, Justina, „Liberalisierung, Diversifizierung, Resilienz: der Umbau des litauischen Energiesektors“, in: Osteuropa, 67, Jg., 9-10, 2017, pp. 84-85.

²⁵⁹ Cf. European Commission, „Energy security: The synchronisation of the Baltic States' electricity networks - European solidarity in action“, 20.06.2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_3337 [Accessed: 24.02.2021].

²⁶⁰ Cf. Augutis, Juozas/ Krikštolaitis, Ričardas/ Leonavičius, Vylius/ Pečiulytė, Sigita/ Genys, Dainius/ Martišauskas, Linas/ Juozaitis, Justinas, Lietuvos Energetinis Saugumas: Metinė Apžvalga 2016–2017/ Energy Security of Lithuania: Annual Review 2016-2017 (in Lithuanian only), Vytauto Didžiojo Universitetas/Lietuvos Energetikos Institutas/ Energetinio Saugumo Tyrimų Centras, Kaunas, 2018, p. 24.

²⁶¹ Cf. Ibid, p. 25.

2.3. Legal and Institutional Conditions for Energy Policy Making in Lithuania

The legal basis for the Lithuanian energy policy consists of two groups of legislation. The first group regulates sectoral activities and consists of the Natural Gas Law²⁶², Law on Electricity²⁶³, Law on Oil Products and State Oil Stock²⁶⁴, Law on Renewable Energy Sources²⁶⁵, Law on the Heating Sector²⁶⁶, Law on the LNG Terminal²⁶⁷, and Law on the Energy Resources Market²⁶⁸. In addition to these laws, the Energy Law provides horizontal regulation encompassing all sectors and determining general legal grounds and inter-institutional relations within the process of energy policy formation and implementation.²⁶⁹ This law foresees that the main actors involved in the energy policy formation and implementation process are the Lithuanian Parliament (Seimas), the Government, and the Energy Ministry. According to this law, Seimas adopts the National Energy Strategy and thus determines the main political directions in the energy field. The Government oversees the implementation of the country's energy policy with the Energy Ministry being its prime coordinator.

Although the base scheme for national energy policy formulation and coordination as indicated above seems rather simple, the cross-sectoral nature of this policy ma-

²⁶² Lietuvos Respublikos Gamtinių Dujų Įstatymas 2000 m. spalio 10 d. Nr. VIII-1973, Vilnius, Valstybės žinios, 2000-10-25, Nr. 89-2743/ Law on Natural Gas, originally issued in 2000 with later amendments.

²⁶³ Lietuvos Respublikos Elektros Energetikos Įstatymas, 2000 m. liepos 20 d. Nr. VIII-188, Vilnius, Valstybės žinios, 2000-08-04, Nr. 66-1984/ Law on Electricity, originally issued in 2000 with later amendments.

²⁶⁴ Lietuvos Respublikos Naftos Produktų ir Naftos Valstybės Atsargų Įstatymas, 2002 m. birželio 25 d. Nr. IX-986, Vilnius, Valstybės žinios, 2002-07-17, Nr. 72-3008/ Law on Oil Products and State Oil Stock, originally issued in 2002 with later amendments.

²⁶⁵ Lietuvos Respublikos Atsinaujinančių Išteklių Energetikos Įstatymas, 2011 m. gegužės 12 d. Nr. XI-1375, Vilnius, Valstybės žinios, 2011-05-24, Nr. 62-2936/ Law on Renewable Energy Sources, originally issued in 2011 with later amendments.

²⁶⁶ Lietuvos Respublikos Šilumos Ūkio Įstatymas, 2003 m. gegužės 20 d. Nr. IX-1565, Vilnius, Valstybės žinios, 2003-05-28, Nr. 51-2254/ Law on Heating Sector, originally issued in 2003 with later amendments.

²⁶⁷ Lietuvos Respublikos Suskystintų Gamtinių Dujų Terminalo Įstatymas, 2012 m. birželio 12 d. Nr. XI-2053, Vilnius, Valstybės žinios, 2012-06-19, Nr. 68-3466/ Law on the LNG Terminal, originally issued in 2012 with later amendments.

²⁶⁸ Lietuvos Respublikos Energijos Išteklių Rinkos Įstatymas, 2012 m. gegužės 22 d. Nr. XI-2023, Vilnius, Valstybės žinios, 2012-06-05, Nr. 63-3164/ Law on Energy Resources Market, originally issued in 2012 with later amendments.

²⁶⁹ Lietuvos Respublikos Energetikos Įstatymas.

kes the practical energy policy making process far more complex. Resulting from the focus of this research on Lithuania's energy policy in relation to the external actors the EU, NATO, and Russia, only the overlap between the energy, foreign, and security policies is considered, therefore ignoring multiple interrelations between energy and environment, as well as energy and transport. In this respect it is important to stress that the existing overlap between the energy, foreign, and security policies had important implications on the institutional involvement in the policy formation process, first and foremost resulting in an undefined and thus freely interpretable role of the president of the country.

Formally neither the Energy Law nor other legal acts dealing directly with the energy sector define a role for the President of the Republic of Lithuania in the energy field. In practice the President's role in this policy area arises from the President's constitutional responsibility in "decide[ing] the basic issues of foreign policy"²⁷⁰. Close intertwinement of the country's energy and foreign and security policies as discussed above presuppose the President's active involvement in this policy area. As it is shown in the following chapters both Valdas Adamkus and Dalia Grybauskaitė were actively involved in the domestic energy policy making and international energy diplomacy. This tendency has been particularly visible during the two presidential terms of Grybauskaitė (2009-2014 and 2014-2019), who treated energy security as one of her top presidency priorities.²⁷¹

The European dimension of Lithuania's energy policy has been affected by the actual distribution of powers at the national level. Resulting from the Constitutional Court's decision of 10. January 1998, Lithuania was a parliamentary republic having some qualities of a semi-presidential political system.²⁷² Although, according to the

²⁷⁰ Lietuvos Respublikos Konstitucija, VI SKIRSNIS/ Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, paragraph 4, <https://www.lrs.lt/home/Konstitucija/Konstitucija.htm> [Accessed: 25.01.2021].

²⁷¹ Cf. Janeliūnas, Tomas, Prezidento įtaka Lietuvos užsienio politikos formavimui: galios centro pokytis D. Grybauskaitės prezidentavimo laikotarpiu/ The President's Influence on the Formation of Lithuanian Foreign Policy: A Shift of the Power Center During Grybauskaitė's Term (in Lithuanian only), in: *Politologija*, Vol. 94 (2), 2019, pp. 46-47.

²⁷² Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Konstitucinis Teismas, Nutarimas „Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo 1996 m. gruodžio 10 d. nutarimo „Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės programos“ atitikimo Lietuvos Respublikos Konstitucijai“, Vilnius, 1998 m. sausio 10 d., Byla Nr. 19/97/ The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Lithuania, Ruling on Constitutionality of the Ruling of the Lithuanian Parliament of 10.12.1996 on the Governmental Programm of the Republic of Lithuania, <https://www.lrkt.lt/lt/teismo-aktai/paieska/135/ta370/content> [Accessed: 25.01.2021].

country's Constitution, the Government was accountable to the Parliament²⁷³ (parliamentary quality), at the same time the President was identified as the "head of the state", who decided the main foreign policy issues and, together with the Government, implemented Lithuania's foreign policy²⁷⁴ (semi-presidential quality). Resulting from this formulation a clash between the roles of the President and the Prime Minister arose, especially concerning the question of who should represent Lithuania in meetings of the European Council representing a gathering at the level of the heads of state or governments of the EU member states.

The question on who — the Lithuanian President or the Prime Minister — should represent the country in this body was a matter of interpretation of whether the EU policy was part of the foreign policy of Lithuania or rather an extension of its domestic policies. As the European Council was the body deciding on strategic political directions of the EU and thus extremely important in the case of energy as an emerging common European policy, the question of Lithuania's representation in it was accompanied by tense political debates that resulted in differences between the representational preferences during the presidential terms of Adamkus and Grybauskaitė. During the term of Adamkus, the decision on who was going to represent Lithuania in Brussels depended on the agenda of a particular meeting. This approach culminated in a confusing representational tradition which resulted in sometimes the President, sometimes the Prime Minister, and sometimes even both travelling to the European Council meetings.²⁷⁵

Following the Treaty of Lisbon coming into force in 2009, the rules on national representation in the European Council have been changed to allow only one representative per member country. This change at the EU level coincided with the start of Grybauskaitė's presidential term, during which a clear shift of power centred towards the presidential institution could be observed. Grybauskaitė, a former EU Commissioner, was showing strong willingness to take over the leadership in European affairs. As a result, she managed to take over the duty of representing the country in the European Council and was the national leader most actively involved in a vast majority of EU-le-

²⁷³ Lietuvos Respublikos Konstitucija, VII SKIRSNIS.

²⁷⁴ Ibid, VI SKIRSNIS.

²⁷⁵ Cf. Janeliūnas, Prezidento įtaka Lietuvos užsienio politikos formavimui, p. 33.

vel negotiations including energy issues.²⁷⁶ Resulting from this constellation of power between the President and the Prime Minister, strategic level representation of Lithuania's positions on energy moved into the area of responsibilities of the President.

Concerning representation of Lithuanian interests in the meetings of the Council of the EU (in the case of energy — in the Council configuration of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy (TTE) Council), the responsibilities were shared between the Government, the Energy Ministry, and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. For formulation of Lithuania's national position on topics related to energy, representatives of these three institutions cooperated within the national Governmental EU Commission (GEUC).²⁷⁷ Created to coordinate Lithuanian national positions on all topics included in the EU agenda, the GEUC was composed of respective vice ministers responsible for the EU issues within a particular policy area, Vice Chancellor of the Government, and the Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the EU.²⁷⁸

On this point it is important to stress that an independent Energy Ministry did not exist between 1997 and 2009 in Lithuania. During this period of time energy issues were the responsibility of the Ministry of Economy.²⁷⁹ In 2009 the Government led by the conservative Homeland Union — Lithuanian Christian Democrats (HU-LChD) party proposed re-establishing the Energy Ministry in order to be able to deal better with pressing energy security issues and to promote the energy sector reform.²⁸⁰ After much deliberation about the necessity to create a new ministry in the middle of the financial crisis, President Adamkus approved this project and signed the corresponding law in

²⁷⁶ Cf. *Ibid*, pp. 33-35.

²⁷⁷ Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, Nutarimas „Dėl Europos Sąjungos reikalų koordinavimo“, patvirtinta Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2004 m. sausio 9 d. nutarimu Nr. 21/ Government of the Republic of Lithuania, Ruling on the Coordination of the European Union Policy, <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legislAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.224896/WUTNwXljTz> [Accessed: 24.01.2021].

²⁷⁸ Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, “ES reikalų koordinavimas Lietuvoje“/ “Coordination of EU Affairs in Lithuania“ (in Lithuanian only), <http://urm.lt/default/lt/uzsienio-politika/uzsienio-politikos-prioritetai/lietuva-europos-sajungoje/11878/es-reikalu-koordinavimas-lietuvoje> [Accessed: 24.01.2021].

²⁷⁹ Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania, <https://enmin.lrv.lt/en/about-the-ministry/history> [Accessed: 09.01.2021].

²⁸⁰ Cf. Alfa.lt, „Kubilius: Energetikos ministerijos steigimas papildomai nekainuos“/ “Kubilius: Establishment of the Energy Ministry will not cost additionally“ (in Lithuanian only), 09.01.2009, <https://www.alfa.lt/straipsnis/10244346/kubilius-energetikos-ministerijos-steigimas-papildomai-nekainuos> [Accessed: 10.01.2021].

January 2009.²⁸¹ The re-establishment of an independent Energy Ministry proved to be a crucial institutional change that signalled both strengthening focus on energy as an issue of national priority and a shift in understanding energy as not purely economic but rather complex issue including foreign and security policy aspects.

As a result, concerning the time frame of the present research, this institutional condition resulted in energy policy being coordinated by the Ministry of Economy between 2004 and 2009, and by the new Energy Ministry between 2009 and 2015. After the Energy Ministry had been established, the Innovation and International Cooperation Group within the Ministry was created and tasked with the coordination of EU affairs. The tasks for this Group included “preparation, inter-institutional coordination and approval of Lithuanian positions regarding energy related affairs discussed within the EU as well as coordination of transposition of the EU law.”²⁸²

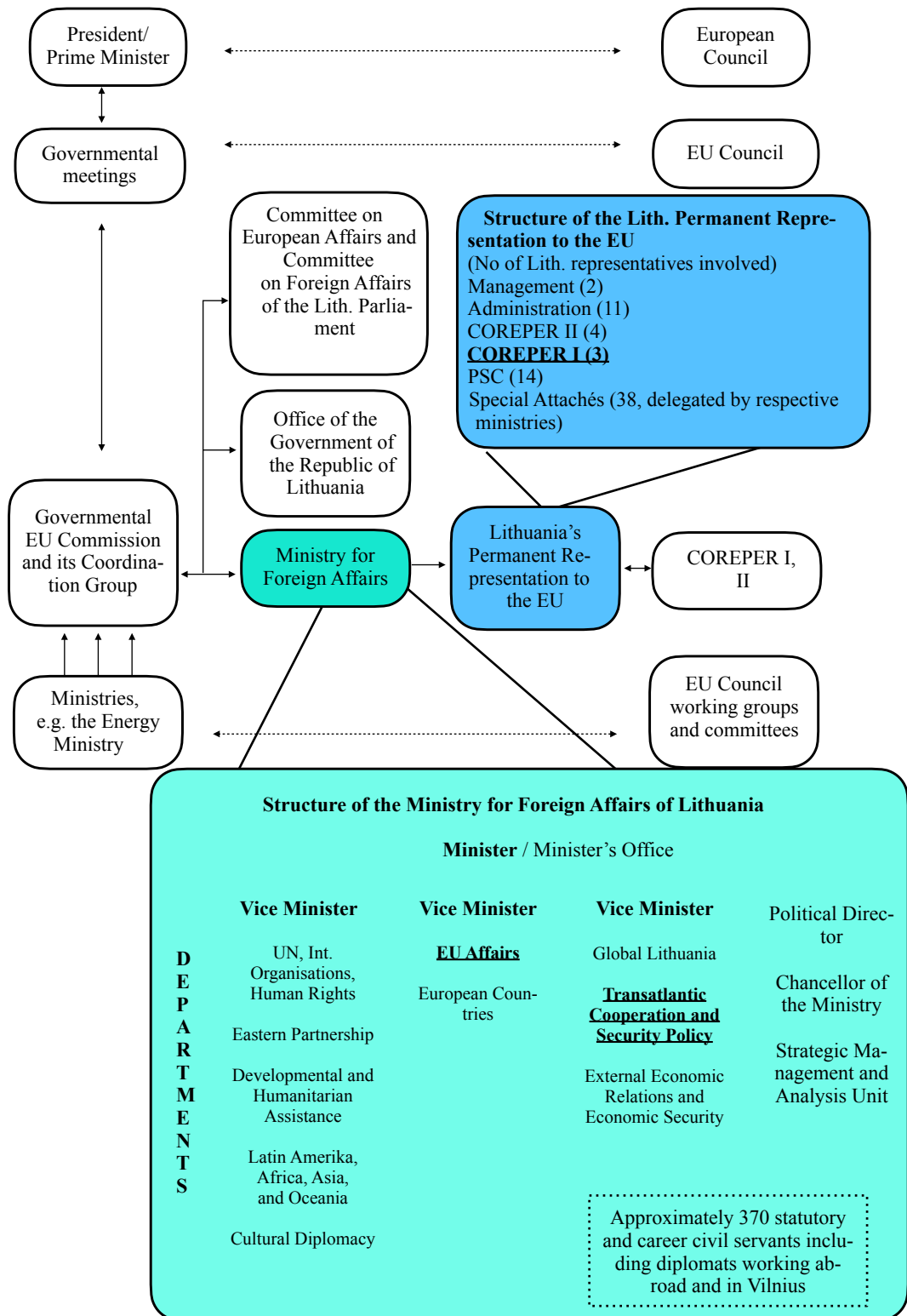
All in all, from the distribution of responsibilities as outlined above it can be concluded that the operational and tactical level coordination of Lithuania’s energy policy within the EU were in the hands of the Government, with the Energy Ministry (since 2009) acting as the main provider of thematic input. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs remained the main overseer of this inputs’ compatibility with Lithuania’s overall EU-policy. The president of the country acted on the strategic level and in most cases represented Lithuania’s positions on energy during the European Council meetings. Figure 5 below shows the organisational structure of Lithuanian EU-policy’s coordination including also the energy portfolio.²⁸³

²⁸¹ Cf. TV3.lt, Balsas.lt, „V. Adamkus pasirašė įstatymą dėl Energetikos ministerijos steigimo“/ “V. Adamkus signed the law on establishment of the Energy Ministry“ (in Lithuanian only), 23.01.2009, <https://www.tv3.lt/naujiena/lietuva/234391/v-adamkus-pasirase-istatyma-del-energetikos-ministerijos-steigimo-papildyta> [Accessed: 10.01.2021].

²⁸² Cf. Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania, EU affairs at the Ministry of Energy, <https://en-min.lrv.lt/en/sectoral-policy/international-cooperation-and-european-union-affairs/coordination-of-european-union-affairs/eu-affairs-at-the-ministry-of-energy> [10.01.2021].

²⁸³ NB: the chart provides orientational information only, the exact organisational structure of the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the structural division of the Permanent Representation and the number of personnel were a matter of change during the timeframe from 2004-2015.

Figure 5: Organisational Chart of Lithuanian EU-Policy Coordination



Sources: Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs: <https://www.urm.lt/default/lt/uzsienio-politika/uzsienio-politikos-prioritetai/lietuva-europos-sajungoje/11878/es-reikalu-koordinavimas-lietuvoje>; <https://www.urm.lt/default/lt/ministerija/veikla/darbo-uzmokestis/2020-metu-iv-ketvirtis>; https://urm.lt/uploads/tr/documents/Struktūra%20po%20Kolegijos%2003_29%20final.pdf [Accessed: 10.12.2021]; Lithuanian Permanent Representation to the EU: <https://eu.mfa.lt/eurep/en/about-us/permanent-representation/embassy-staff-> [Accessed: 10.12.2021].

At the NATO level the Commission for Coordination of Lithuania's Euro-Atlantic Security Policy (CCLEAS) was the main intra-governmental body tasked with deciding strategic questions for Lithuania's participation in NATO policies, initiatives, and structures. This body was composed of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Defence Minister, the Foreign Policy Advisor of the President, all vice ministers, Lithuania's Permanent Representative in the North Atlantic Council, and others.²⁸⁴ However, NATO policy, being a crucial area of the country's foreign and security policies, was under direct influence of the president. Therefore although the president was not directly involved in the work of the CCLEAS, rather represented through the foreign policy advisor, it can be assumed that the president — especially Grybauskaitė — played a leading role in formulating Lithuania's policy in NATO at the strategic level.

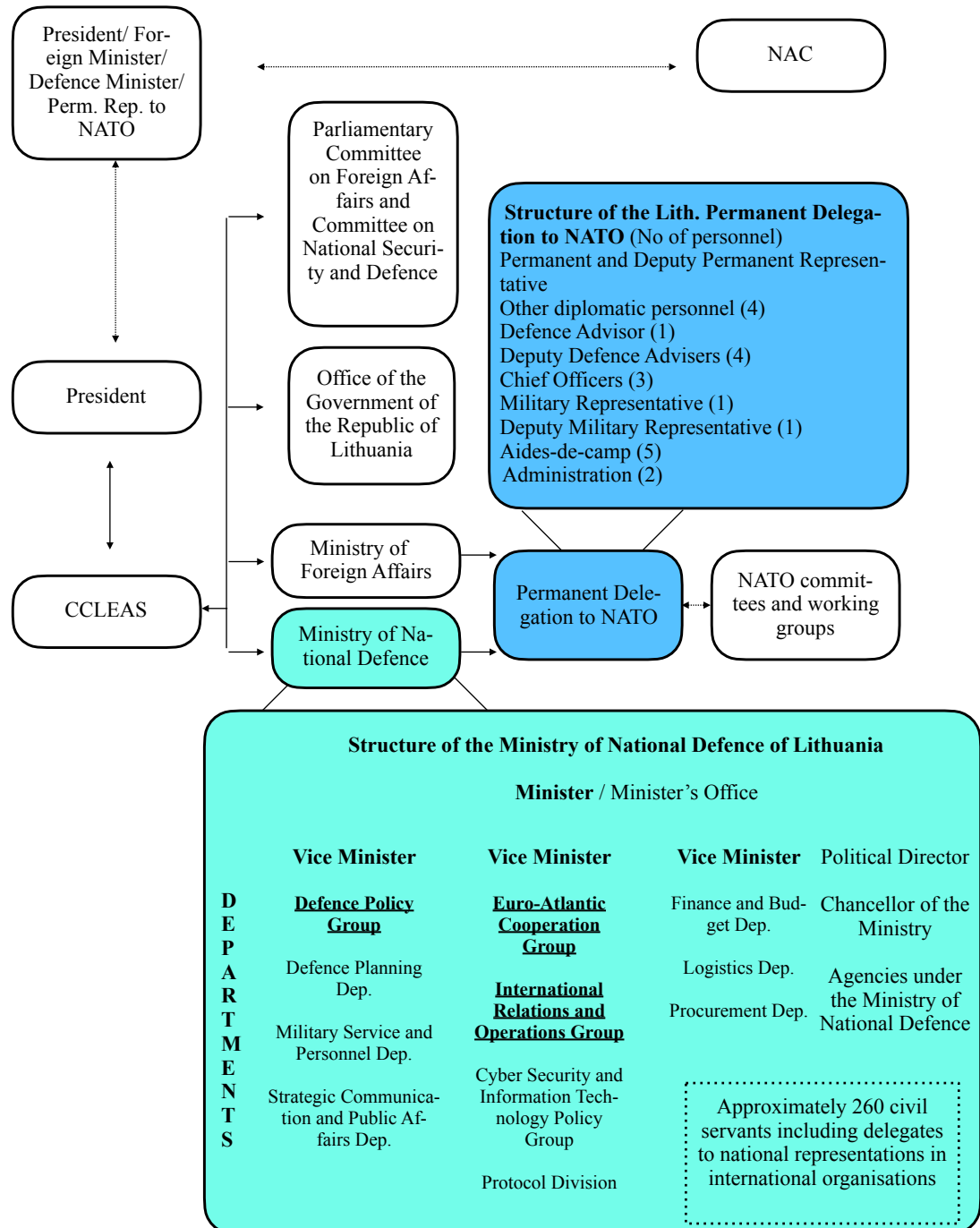
In general, political observers argued that the trend of diminishing institutionalisation of the foreign policy process was characteristic for the presidential terms of Grybauskaitė. According to this trend, the institutionalised practices — including the aforementioned GEUC, CCLEAS, and the State Defence Council — that have been used for the preparation of the president's participation in the EU and NATO meetings during the presidency of Adamkus, lost their centrality in the process of policy formation during the Grybauskaitė term.²⁸⁵ In this respect it has been argued that Grybauskaitė was often personally involved in the micro-management of the preparation of the country's positions for discussions at the EU level, and requested the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to barely provide information, but not to discuss its contents. Resulting from these trends, it can be concluded that although the Government with the Ministry for Economy and later the Energy Ministry remained responsible for implementation of Lithuania's energy policy, the process of its strategic formation differed strongly in the time frame between 2004-2009 and 2009-2015, with the first period of time being rather collegial, and the second one concentrated in the hands of the president.

²⁸⁴ Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, Nutarimas „Dėl Lietuvos Euroatlantinės saugumo politikos koordinavimo komisijos sudarymo ir jos nuostatų patvirtinimo“, patvirtinta Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2005 m. gegužės 9 d. nutarimu Nr. 521/ Government of the Republic of Lithuania, Ruling on the Establishment of the Commission for Coordination of Lithuania's Euroatlantic Security Policy and on Approval of its Statute, <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.255472?jfwid=bj9qo3xs7> [Accessed: 24.01.2021].

²⁸⁵ Cf. Janeliūnas, Prezidento įtaka Lietuvos užsienio politikos formavimui, pp. 36-37.

Figure 6 below shows the organisational structure of Lithuania's security policy coordination.²⁸⁶

Figure 6: *Organisational Chart of Lithuanian Security Policy Coordination*



Sources: Lithuanian Permanent Delegation to NATO: <https://nato.mfa.lt/nato/en/embassycontacts> [Accessed: 10.12.2021]; Ministry of National Defence: https://kam.lt/lt/administracine_informacija/informacija_apie_darbo_uzmokesti.html; https://kam.lt/lt/struktura_ir_kontaktai_563/ks.html [Accessed:

²⁸⁶ NB: the chart provides orientational information only, the exact organisational structure of the Lithuanian Ministry of National Defence, the structural division of the Permanent Representation and the number of personnel were a matter of change during the timeframe from 2004-2015.

10.12.2021]; Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė: Nutarimas „Dėl Lietuvos Euroatlantinės saugumo politikos koordinavimo komisijos sudarymo ir jos nuostatų patvirtinimo“.

2.4. Implications of the Political Cycle on Lithuania’s Energy Policy

The legal and institutional conditions as outlined above can be understood as a general framework for the making of Lithuania’s energy policy. This framework was filled with thematic substance by the political elite governing and representing the country. Between 2004 and 2015 Lithuania has been governed by five governments and two presidents (see Table 1 below). Each of them had a distinct vision of energy policy and its main priorities. This subchapter analyses the governmental programmes and reports on their implementation as well as official speeches and comments on energy issues by the President, the Prime Minister, the Energy Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Defence Minister of Lithuania in order to reveal the implications of the political cycle on the country’s energy policy.

Table 1: *Governments and Presidents in Lithuania, 2004-2015* (continued on the next page)

Time frame	Government	President	Time frame
Until December 2004	Coalition of the New Union/ Social Liberals and Lithuanian Social-Democratic Party <u>Prime Minister: Algirdas Brazauskas</u>	Valdas Adamkus	July 2004 — July 2009
December 2004 — June 2006	Coalition of the Labour Party, Lithuanian Social-Democratic Party, New Union (Social Liberals), and Union of Peasants and New Democracy Parties <u>Prime Minister: Algirdas Brazauskas</u>		
July 2006 — November 2008	Coalition of the Lithuanian Social-Democratic Party, Peasants People Union, Civic Democracy Party, Liberal and Centre Union <u>Prime Minister: Gediminas Kirkilas</u>		
December 2008 — December 2012	Coalition of the Homeland Union-Lithuanian Christian Democrats, Liberal Movement of the Republic of Lithuania and Liberal and Centre Union	Dalia Grybauskaitė	July 2009 — July 2019

Time frame	Government	President	Time frame
	<u>Prime Minister: Andrius Kubilius</u>		
December 2012 — December 2016	Coalition of the Labour Party, Lithuanian Social-Democratic Party, Party Order and Justice and Lithuanian Poles' Electoral Action <u>Prime Minister: Algirdas Butkevičius</u>		

Source: Author's own compilation

2.4.1. Algirdas Brazauskas-led Governments 2001-2004 and 2004-2006

At the time of Lithuania's accession to the EU and NATO the country was governed by a coalition government led by the LSDP. At that time the Prime Minister was the leader of the LSDP and former President of Lithuania Algirdas Brazauskas. In the Brazauskas' Cabinet of Ministers the Minister of Foreign Affairs was Antanas Valionis (New Union), Minister of Defence was Linas Linkevičius (LSDP), and Minister of Economy was Petras Čėsna (Independent). Since an independent Energy Ministry did not yet exist, Čėsna was also responsible for the energy portfolio.²⁸⁷

The LSDP continued to lead the government after parliamentary elections in 2004, however in a broader coalition which included the Labour Party, the New Union, the Union of Peasants, and the New Democracy Party. Throughout this period of time and until June 2006 Algirdas Brazauskas kept his position as the Prime Minister. During the second Brazauskas' government Antanas Valionis remained the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Gediminas Kirkilas (LSDP) started his new position as the Minister of Defence, whereas the leader of the Labour Party, Viktor Uspaskich, was chosen as the Minister of Economy, which was also responsible for energy.²⁸⁸ As the first Brazauskas' government was replaced by the second Brazauskas' government in 2004 with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs keeping their positions, developments in the energy field under these governments are analysed as a continuous process.

²⁸⁷ Cf. Krupavičius, Algis, Lithuania, in: European Journal of Political Research, Vol. 41, Issue 7/8, European Consortium for Political Research, 2002, p. 1019.

²⁸⁸ Cf. Krupavičius, Algis, Lithuania, in: European Journal of Political Research, Vol. 44, Issue 7/8, European Consortium for Political Research, 2005, p. 1091.

Until 2006 the key developments for the energy sector were related with (1) privatisation of the national gas company Lietuvos Dujos and (2) management of the shareholder structure of the national oil refinery company Mažeikių Nafta in order to solve crude oil supply problems. In this respect, the governmental programme of 2001-2004 presenting the main planned tasks of the government until the end of the legislative period in 2004 indicated that energy sector had to be restructured and reorganised, including privatising some of its objects. It has been argued that the government assured the process of privatisation was to be implemented without harming the state's national interests, therefore keeping control of the national strategic economic objects under the control of the state.²⁸⁹

However, by 2004 the state control over Lietuvos Dujos was lost. The privatisation process of the company already started back in 2000 with the previous government consisting of the conservative HU-LChD having prepared the guidelines for selling a third of the company's shares to the so-called "strategic investor" that was aimed at fulfilling the criteria of European and Trans-Atlantic integration.²⁹⁰ The company E.ON Ruhrgas met this governmental requirement and acquired 34% of Lietuvos Dujos shares back in 2002.²⁹¹ The second phase of the privatisation process took place in 2004 under the first Brazauskas' government with the decision to sell yet another 34% of the company's shares, this time to Lithuania's sole natural gas supplier, Russia's Gazprom.²⁹²

The distribution of shares of Lietuvos Dujos between a Western company and a Russian natural gas company represented a clash between the strategic vision of Li-

²⁸⁹ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2001 – 2004 metų programa/ The Governmental Programme 2001 - 2004, Vilnius, 2001, p. 15, https://lr.lt/uploads/main/documents/files/Apie_vyriausybe/Ankstesnes_vyriausybes/Po_1990_metu/12_programa.pdf [Accessed: 25.01.2021].

²⁹⁰ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, Nutarimas „Dėl Akcinės Bendrovės „Lietuvos Dujos“ Pagrindinių Privatizavimo Bei Pertvarkymo Nuostatų Patvirtinimo“, 2000 m. kovo 2 d. Nr. 246 Vilnius/ Government of the Republic of Lithuania, On the Approval of the Main Privatisation and Reorganisation Rules of "Lietuvos Dujos", <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.96482/TnJgeEdss> [Accessed: 28.01.2021].

²⁹¹ Cf. Delfi.lt, Elta, "Baiminamasi, kad privatizuotos "Lietuvos dujos" gali didinti kainas"/ "It is feared that "Lietuvos Dujos" would increase prices after privatisation" (in Lithuanian only), 18.04.2003, <https://www.delfi.lt/verslas/verslas/baiminamasi-kad-privatizuotos-lietuvos-dujos-gali-didinti-kainas.d?id=2215436> [Accessed: 28.01.2021].

²⁹² Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, Nutarimas „Dėl Pritarimo Akcinės Bendrovės „Lietuvos Dujos“ Valstybei Nuosavybės Teise Priklausančių 34 Procentų Akcijų Pirkimo-Pardavimo Sutarties, Šios Sutarties Priedų, Taip Pat Akcininkų Sutarties Projektams“, 2004 m. sausio 9 d. Nr. 22, Vilnius/ Government of the Republic of Lithuania, Ruling on the Agreement for the Sale of 34% of the "Lietuvos Dujos" Shares Belonging to the State, on Annexes of this Agreement, as well as on the Projects of the Shareholders Agreement , <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.224897?jfwid=-1c2dte9yvg> [Accessed: 28.01.2021].

thuania's energy sector as formulated by the HU-LChD on one side, and the LSDP on the other side. The strategic aim of the HU-LChD was to initiate the integration process of the Lithuanian natural gas system to the Western energy market, whereas the Brazauskas government concentrated on the management of pressures coming from the ongoing energy dependence on Russia. The decision to allow Gazprom, a company with unlimited access to the vast Russian natural gas reserve, to acquire a substantial part of the company's shares was motivated by the pressing need of the Brazauskas government to assure uninterrupted natural gas supply in the short and medium terms.

Immense difficulties in supplying the country with crude oil as a result of the shareholder structure of yet another major energy company Mažeikių Nafta was the precedent for privatisation of Lietuvos Dujos. Due to financial reasons the then ruling HU-LChD had already sold Mažeikių Nafta to the US company Williams International back in 1999. Choosing an American shareholder as a "strategic investor"²⁹³ with the aim of solving the company's financial problems and assuring energy supply represented an early example of Lithuania's willingness to involve the US in the process of reforming its energy sector. However, it soon became clear that Williams International was unable to assure supply to Lithuania, given the fact that the company neither had its own oil resources nor exclusive suppliers.²⁹⁴ Russian crude oil exporters Lukoil and Yukos, having the best access to Lithuania's energy market, were unwilling to cooperate with Williams International and demanded shares in the Lithuanian company in exchange for continued oil supplies.²⁹⁵ Following an ongoing supply dispute, the Russian company Yukos managed to eliminate Williams International as a shareholder of Mažeikių Nafta and gained a controlling role of the company by acquiring over 50% of its shares in 2002. As a result of this deal, the Lithuanian state retained just under 41% of the company's shares. Following this takeover, Yukos increased the oil supplies to Lithuania

²⁹³ Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, Nutarimas „Dėl Akcinės Bendrovės „Mažeikių Nafta“ Akcijų Pardavimo Tvarkos Patvirtinimo“, 1999 m. spalio 27 d. Nr. 1192, Vilnius/ Government of the Republic of Lithuania, Ruling on the Approval of the Change of Order of the Sale of "Mažeikių Nafta" Shares, https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/rs/legalact/TAD/TAIS.88958/format/ISO_PDF/ [Accessed: 29.01.2021].

²⁹⁴ Cf. Tvaronavičienė, Manuela/ Kalašinskaitė, Kristina/ Peleckis, Kęstutis, Lietuvos Ūkio Strateginės Įmonės „Mažeikių Nafta“ Privatizavimo Atvejis/ Case Study of Lithuanian Strategic Company's "Mažeikių Nafta" Privatization (in Lithuanian only), in: Business: Theory and Practice, 9(2), Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, 2008, p. 100.

²⁹⁵ Cf. Oil & Gas Journal, "Williams and Yukos planning deal with Lithuanian oil company", 15.06.2001, <https://www.ogj.com/refining-processing/refining/article/17261902/williams-and-yukos-planning-deal-with-lithuanian-oil-company> [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

considerably.²⁹⁶ However, difficulties with Mažeikių Nafta did not come to an end with this acquisition, as by 2006 the company had to be re-sold as a result of ongoing legal proceedings against Yukos in Russia.

As developments in the natural gas and oil sectors were keeping the Lithuanian government busy, it failed to pay attention to the country's electricity sector. Although the two Brazauskas-led governments were in power during the impending closure of the INPP's first bloc at the end of 2004, this issue received surprisingly little attention. The governmental programme of 2001-2004 mentioned it only briefly, stating that the timing and instruments for the decommissioning of the first bloc had to correspond the EU's financial support for the closure.²⁹⁷ As a result, the strategy of the government can be described as an attempt to ensure the EU's financing of the closure while at the same time trying to postpone it. Arguing that shutting down the first bloc in the winter of 2004 would endanger not only Lithuania, but the whole region as well, Prime Minister Brazauskas contacted the EC asking for a delay of the closure until the summer of 2005.²⁹⁸ However, asking to delay the closure until two months before the initial deadline left not only the EC, but also the Lithuanian Ministry for Foreign Affairs as well as President Adamkus sceptical.²⁹⁹ As a result, Brazauskas was later strongly criticised for not assuring alternative electricity supply sources before the shutdown.³⁰⁰

Concerning the international level of the debate on energy, the Brazauskas government identified Lithuania's interest in joining these discussions in the EU. Shortly after Lithuania became a member of the EU, the Prime Minister noted that the new member states, including Lithuania, that had direct interests in the EU-Russia dialogue

²⁹⁶ Cf. Euractiv, „Lithuanian Government Questioned on Privatization Deal“, 10.09.2002, updated: 29.01.2010, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/enlargement/opinion/lithuanian-government-questioned-on-privatization-deal/838386/> [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

²⁹⁷ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2001 – 2004 metų programa, p. 17.

²⁹⁸ Cf. Gabartas, Renaldas, „Pakasybos atidedamos?“/ “The Funeral will be postponed?“ (in Lithuanian only), Kauno diena, 22.10.2004, <https://kauno.diena.lt/dienrastis/kita/pakasybos-atidedamos-22978> [Accessed: 31.02.2021].

²⁹⁹ Cf. Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Cf. Veidas.lt, „Lietuvos energetiką žlugdo trypciojimas vietoje. Kas jį lemia?“/ “Lithuanian energy sector is being destroyed by lacking activism. What is the reason thereof?“ (in Lithuanian only), 07.11.2011, <http://www.veidas.lt/lietuvos-energetika-zlugdo-trypciojimas-vietoje-kas-ji-lemia> [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

on energy had to be included in it.³⁰¹ Similarly, in the governmental programme of 2004-2008 it was stated that Lithuania should seek to become an integral part of the EU's energy market by connecting Lithuanian and Polish electricity networks as well as Lithuanian and Latvian gas systems.³⁰² In 2006 Lithuania's status as an energy island of the EU had already been established, with Prime Minister Brazauskas using the meetings of the Baltic-Nordic countries in order to stress the importance of solidarity at the EU level for solving Lithuania's energy security issues.³⁰³

All in all, the timeframe from joining the EU in 2004 until 2006 was characterised by the Lithuanian government's concerns over security of supply in its traditional economic sense. As a result, the government's main concern was to assure the continuous flow of natural gas, crude oil, and electricity to the country's energy system. The "lessons learned" from the case of privatising Mažeikių Nafta suggested that in order to achieve this goal in the short and medium term, Lithuania had to take into account the interests of its main supplier Russia. This pragmatic view resulted in a major increase of Russian energy companies' influence over Lithuania's energy sector. However, shortly before the collapse of the second Brazauskas government, the Minister for Foreign Affairs A. Valionis argued on behalf of the need for stronger coordination between Lithuania's energy and foreign policies. According to Valionis, fusion of these policies would contribute to both energy and national security.³⁰⁴ This position of the Foreign Minister marked the upcoming strategic turn of Lithuania's energy policy towards a more securitised approach.

³⁰¹ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, „Ministras Pirmininkas Estijoje akcentavo energetinio dialogo su Rusija ir aplinkosaugos klausimų svarbą“, 22.06.2004/ Government of the Republic of Lithuania, During his visit in Estonia Prime Minister accentuated the importance of energy dialogue with Russia and environmental issues, <https://lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/ministras-pirmininkas-estijoje-akcentavo-energetinio-dialogo-su-rusija-ir-aplinkosaugos-klausimu-svarba>, [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

³⁰² Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, Nutarimas „Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės Programos“, 2004 m. gruodžio 14 d., Nr. X-43 Vilnius, p. 4/ Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, Ruling on the Governmental Programm, https://lrv.lt/uploads/main/documents/files/Apie_vyriausybe/Ankstesnes_vyriausybes/Po_1990_metu/po_1990_13_programa.pdf [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

³⁰³ Cf. Delfi.lt, „Šiaurės ir Baltijos valstybių premjerai laikosi vieningos pozicijos dėl Europos energetikos politikos“/ “Prime Ministers of Nordic and Baltic countries are united over the European energy policy“ (in Lithuanian only), 23.03.2006, <https://www.delfi.lt/spausdinti/?id=9113912> [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

³⁰⁴ Cf. Delfi.lt, BNS, „A.Valionis: reikia artinti energetiką su užsienio politika“/ “A. Valionis: energy and foreign policies should be brought closer to each other“ (in Lithuanian only), 16.05.2006, <https://www.delfi.lt/spausdinti/?id=9544884> [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

2.4.2. Gediminas Kirkilas-led Government 2006-2008

After the governmental crisis in 2006, a new government without representatives from the Labour Party was formed. The representative of the LSDP, Gediminas Kirkilas became the new Prime Minister. Petras Vaitiekūnas (independent, delegated by the Lithuanian Peasants People Union (LPPU)) was appointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Juozas Olekas (LSDP) became the Minister of Defence. Vytas Navickas (LPPU) held the position of the Minister of Economy, and therefore was also responsible for the energy portfolio.³⁰⁵

During the time of the Kirkilas-led government several important developments in Lithuania's energy policy could be observed. First of all, this period of time can be seen as transformative for Lithuania's energy policy because of its shift from the realm of *low* to *high* politics. The beginning of the term of the new government was still marked by the continuous neglect of Lithuania's energy security situation. As a result, the governmental programme of 2006 paid almost as little attention to energy issues as the programmes of the previous governments, barely stating that Lithuania would seek to become an integral part of the EU's energy market through the planned connections of Lithuanian-Polish electricity networks, Lithuanian-Latvian gas systems as well as through the planned LNG terminal; and that Lithuania would seek to remain a country producing nuclear power.³⁰⁶

However, developments in the country's oil sector shortly after the formation of the new government brought energy issues to the political agenda more often than it had been initially planned. Following the Yukos bankruptcy, the Lithuanian government decided to sell Mažeikių Nafta to the Polish energy company PKN Orlen in May 2006.³⁰⁷ Shortly after that crude oil supplies from Russia to the Lithuanian crude oil refinery had been halted, as argued by the Russian side, because of a technical damage in the Druzh-

³⁰⁵ Cf. Krupavičius, Algis, Lithuania, in: European Journal of Political Research, Vol. 46, Issue 7-8, European Consortium for Political Research, 2007, p. 1020.

³⁰⁶ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, Nutarimas „Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės Programos“, 2006 m. liepos 18 d. Nr. X-767, Vilnius, pp. 23-24/ Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, Ruling on the Governmental Programm, https://lr.lt/uploads/main/documents/files/Apie_vyriausybe/Ankstesnes_vyriausybes/Po_1990_metu/14_programa.pdf [Accessed: 31.02.2021].

³⁰⁷ Cf. Handelsblatt, „Ölkonzern Orlen wird Osteuropas Nummer eins“, 29.05.2006, https://www.handelsblatt.com/unternehmen/industrie/raffinerie-uebernommen-oelkonzern-orlen-wird-osteuropas-nummer-eins/v_detail_tab_print/2660028.html [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

ba pipeline.³⁰⁸ However, receiving no detailed information on the damage itself as well as on the progress in eliminating it, Lithuania came to the conclusion that the halt was a politically motivated result of the sale of Mažeikių Nafta to a Polish as opposed to a Russian company.³⁰⁹

The incident should be understood as an important game changer in the debate on Lithuania's energy security. Following this event, the understanding of energy security has been broadened to include not merely the aspects of security of supply but — as the former Minister for Foreign Affairs A. Valionis suggested — to fuse them with national security issues. This transformative change resulted in a broader network of national institutions involved in the debate on Lithuania's energy security situation. An important example of the changing quality of energy security “management” in Lithuania was the inclusion of the State Security Department of Lithuania (SSDL) in the ongoing debate on the state of the country's energy security situation. The head of the SSDL, Povilas Malakauskas, stressed in 2008 that being a field of multiple overlapping interests, energy security was going to become a priority in the work of this agency.³¹⁰

In addition to the emerging prioritisation of energy security issues at the national level, they were also put at the top of Lithuania's EU policy agenda.³¹¹ This had been followed by an increased promotion of the country's view on the future EU's future energy policy. In this respect, during Kirkilas' meeting with the Prime Minister of Finland, a country which at that time was about to take over the EU presidency, the Lithuanian Prime Minister stressed that Lithuania was hoping for an active and univocal role from the EU in both creating a common energy market as well as protecting it.³¹² These views did not remain only abstract political statements, but were soon reflected in prac-

³⁰⁸ Cf. The Baltic Times, „Pipeline to Mazeikiu may remain dry for up to one year“, 09.08.2006, <https://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/16055/> [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

³⁰⁹ Cf. Neue Zürcher Zeitung, „Wortgefechte zwischen Vilnius und Moskau“, 04.09.2006, <https://www.nzz.ch/articleEFS9L-1.57639> [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

³¹⁰ Cf. Danulytė, Jūratė, „P. Malakauskas: energetinis saugumas - VSD prioritetas“/ “P. Malakauskas: energy security - a priority for the VSD“ (in Lithuanian only), Delfi.lt, 27.05.2008, <https://www.delfi.lt/spausdinti/?id=17184635> [Accessed: 01.02.2021].

³¹¹ Cf. Lukaitytė-Vnarauskiene, Rasa, „G.Kirkilas: Lietuvai svarbiausia energetinis saugumas“/ “G. Kirkilas: Energy security is Lithuania's priority“ (in Lithuanian only), Delfi.lt, 19.10.2006, <https://www.delfi.lt/spausdinti/?id=10986378> [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

³¹² Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, ES energetinis saugumas – pagrindinė Gedimino Kirkilo pokalbių tema Suomijoje, 20.09.2006/ Government of the Republic of Lithuania, EU energy security - the main topic of Gediminas Kirkilas' talks in Finland, <https://lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/es-energetinis-saugumas-pagrindine-gedimino-kirkilo-pokalbiu-tema-suomijoje> [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

tice in the context of negotiations on the renewal of the EU–Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA). Lithuania kept blocking the agreement on the EU’s mandate for negotiations with Russia on the new PCA for several months until energy security issues and provisions on “frozen conflicts” in Georgia and Moldova were included in the negotiating mandate.³¹³

Although Lithuania’s aforementioned diplomatic pressure against the EU did not have any direct positive effects on the renewal of crude oil supplies to the country’s refinery through the Druzhba pipeline, Lithuanian Minister for Foreign Affairs Vaitiekūnas argued that Lithuania succeeded in achieving unity at the EU level through broadening the negotiating mandate to include energy issues.³¹⁴ The EU’s unity was confirmed in 2008 with the proposal of the President of the EC Jose Manuel Barroso to prepare a roadmap for the Baltic States’ integration in the European energy market later to be known as the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan (BEMIP).³¹⁵ Kirkilas identified the top priorities of this plan as construction of “electricity bridges” to Poland and Sweden that “would allow reducing Lithuania’s dependence on energy imports from Russia.”³¹⁶

In light of the nearing final closure of the INPP at the end of 2009, the Kirkilas-led government initiated the project of building a new nuclear power plant in Lithuania. Discussions about Lithuania’s goal to remain a nuclear power producing country had already started in 2005 when then-prime minister Brazauskas claimed that neighbouring Estonia and Latvia could potentially join Lithuania in building a new nuclear reactor on the site of the old INPP after being decommissioned in 2009.³¹⁷ However, the government of Kirkilas decided on developing the nuclear power plant project on the national

³¹³ Cf. Bounds, Andrew/ Tait, Nikki „EU backs mandate for Russia talks“, *Financial Times*, 26.05.2008, <https://www.ft.com/content/726ca390-2b1f-11dd-a7fc-000077b07658> [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

³¹⁴ Cf. *Ibid.*

³¹⁵ Cf. *Aktualijos.lt*, „EK Pirmininkas pažadėjo paramą užtikrinant Lietuvos energetinį saugumą“/ “President of the EC promised support for Lithuania in assuring energy security“ (in Lithuanian only), 18.09.2008, <https://aktualijos.lt/naujienos/2008/09/18/ek-pirmininkas-pazadejo-parama-uztikrinant-lietuvos-energetini-sauguma?print=1> [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

³¹⁶ Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, „Helsinkyje Gediminas Kirkilas kėlė Lietuvos energetinio saugumo klausimą“/ “Gediminas Kirkilas raised the question of Lithuania’s energy security during his visit in Helsinki“ (in Lithuanian only), 28.10.2008, <https://lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/helsinkyje-gediminas-kirkilas-kele-lietuvos-energetinio-saugumo-klausima> [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

³¹⁷ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, „A. Brazauskas: „Laikas pradėti ieškoti investuotojų naujo reaktoriaus statybai“/ “A. Brazauskas: It is the high time to start looking for investors for the construction of a new reactor“ (in Lithuanian only), 06.10.2005, <https://lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/a-brazauskas-laikas-pradeti-ieskoti-investuotoju-naujo-reaktoriaus-statybai> [Accessed: 01.02.2021].

basis. In order to assure financing of the project, the government decided to create a national investor company, LEO LT, together with NDX Energija, which belonged to Lithuania's largest company, VP Market. LEO LT was officially established in May 2008 with the main goal of assuring the reliable functioning of Lithuania's energy system. Building electricity connections to Poland and Sweden and construction of a new power plant were defined as strategic projects of the company.³¹⁸

The company LEO LT and especially its ownership structure with NDX Energija, having gained over 38% of its shares without a call for tender, caused mixed feelings in Lithuanian society. The company's establishment just before the parliamentary elections of 2008 proved to be a political issue, with the LSDP failing to achieve re-election and the incoming government questioning the legality of the company's establishment process.³¹⁹ Therefore the newly formed conservative government decided to abolish LEO LT in November 2009 only one year after its establishment.³²⁰ As a result, the Kirkilas-led government did not succeed in providing a tangible and sound solution for the imminent electricity shortages following the finite closure of the INPP at the end of 2009.

2.4.3. The Second Presidential Term of Valdas Adamkus 2004-2009

Valdas Adamkus, a native Lithuanian who spent most of his adult life in the USA after he and his family fled Lithuania during World War II, was elected as the Lithuanian President in 1998. His first presidential term lasted until 2003 when he was replaced by Rolandas Paksas. However, shortly after Paksas was impeached on three counts of breaching the country's Constitution.³²¹ Following this political crisis Adamkus was reelected for a second term during the early presidential elections in July 2004.

³¹⁸ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, „Pristatyta LEO LT bendrovės veiklos strategija“/ “The strategy of the LEO LT company has been presented“ (in Lithuanian only), 18.09.2008, <https://lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/pristatyta-leo-lt-bendroves-veiklos-strategija> [Accessed: 01.02.2021].

³¹⁹ Cf. Vainilavicius, Justinas, „Leo LT found unconstitutional“, The Baltic Times, 04.03.2009, <https://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/22450/> [Accessed: 01.02.2021].

³²⁰ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, „LEO LT panaikinimas valstybei nekainuos“/ “Abolishment of LEO LT will not cost for the state“ (in Lithuanian only), 23.11.2009, <https://lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/leo-lt-panaikinimas-valstybei-nekainuos> [Accessed: 01.02.2021].

³²¹ Cf. Krupavičius, Algis, Lithuania, in: European Journal of Political Research Vol. 43, Issue 7-8, European Consortium for Political Research, 2004, pp. 1065-1069.

His second term as the President of Lithuania lasted until July 2009. Adamkus, having personal experience of living in a Western society and returning to the presidential office after the impeachment of allegedly pro-Russian Paksas, became a symbol of Lithuania's Euro-Atlantic integration.

The second presidential term of Adamkus represented an important aspect of a broader political process that was characteristic for Lithuania's foreign policy after its accession to the EU and NATO in 2004. It has been argued that with its successful Euro-Atlantic integration Lithuania's long-term strategic foreign policy goal was achieved, leaving a vacuum that had to be filled by formulating a new role for the country.³²² Agreeing on the fundamental idea that Lithuania needed to find its niche in the Euro-Atlantic structures, representatives of the country's political elite were involved in active discussions on what the new role of Lithuania within the changed geostrategic environment could be.³²³ Drawing on the country's historical and cultural ties with the Eastern European region and its recent success in reforming the political and economic spheres, the idea of Lithuania as a regional centre³²⁴ supporting other Eastern European countries in their reform process was raised and actively promoted — first and foremost — by Adamkus.

In October 2004 Adamkus invited the Lithuanian parliamentary parties in the Presidential palace to sign an agreement “On Lithuania's foreign policy goals and tasks for 2004-2008”.³²⁵ It was indicated in this agreement that Lithuania would seek to become a center of inter-regional cooperation between the EU and NATO member states and the organisations' neighbouring Eastern countries.³²⁶ In the context of the EU the President stressed the need to form a “circle of friends” in its neighbourhood and argued that Lithuania, having first-hand experience with post-Soviet transformation, would

³²² Cf. Jonavičius, *Geopolitical Projections of New Lithuanian Foreign Policy*, p. 15.

³²³ Cf. Lopata, p. 128.

³²⁴ Cf. Nekrašas, *Kritiniai pamąstymai apie Lietuvos užsienio politiką*, p. 123.

³²⁵ Valstybės pažinimo centras, „Prezidentūroje partijos susitarė dėl užsienio politikos tęstinumo“/ “In the Presidential Palace political parties agreed on the continuity of foreign policy“ (in Lithuanian only), <https://pazinkvalstybe.lt/prezidenturoje-partijos-susitare-del-uzsienio-politikos-testinumo-22705> [Accessed: 05.03.2021].

³²⁶ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos politinių partijų susitarimas „Dėl pagrindinių valstybės užsienio politikos tikslų ir uždavinių 2004–2008 metais“/ Agreement of the Political Parties of the Republic of Lithuania on the Main Goals and Tasks of the Lithuanian Foreign Policy 2004-2008, https://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/w5_-show?p_r=5042&p_k=1 [Accessed: 05.03.2021].

play an important role in this process.³²⁷ Following this vision, Adamkus, together with his counterparts from Poland, Latvia, and Estonia, was actively involved in the mediation processes during the political crisis in Ukraine after the presidential elections of 2004³²⁸, and in Georgia following its war with Russia in 2008³²⁹.

However, the ongoing developments in Lithuania's energy sector, such as the nearing closure of the INPP, the Druzhba incident, as well as the Russo-Ukrainian gas dispute of 2006³³⁰, reinforced the general perception of increasing vulnerability in Lithuania's energy sector. As a result, since 2006 energy-related foreign policy priorities were often merged with the idea of regional leadership and included in the foreign policy agenda of Adamkus. An important tool for the promotion of Lithuania's interests in the energy field was the organisation of high-level international conferences in Vilnius in 2006³³¹ and 2007³³², and in Kiev in 2008³³³ that were devoted to issues of regional energy security. With high level participants from the EU, Eastern European members and like-minded states attending these conferences, their initiators — first and foremost Adamkus and his Polish counterpart Lech Kaczyński — provided important impulses for the development of the EU-level energy policy. During these discussions Adamkus

³²⁷ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Prezidentas, „Lietuvos Respublikos Prezidento Valdo Adamkaus kalba Lisabonos Technikos universitete: „Mažosios ES pakraščių valstybės: grėsmės, galimybės ir atsakomybė“/ “The speech of the President of the Republic of Lithuania Valdas Adamkus in the Technical University of Lisbon: “The small states of the EU periphery: threats, opportunities and responsibility“ (in Lithuanian only), 31.05.2007, <http://archyvas.lrp.lt/lt/news.full/7922> [Accessed: 05.03.2021].

³²⁸ Cf. Handelsblatt, „Keine schnelle Lösung für Ukraine in Sicht“, 01.12.2004, <https://www.handelsblatt.com/politik/international/kwasniewski-und-adamkus-zu-vermittlung-eingetroffen-keine-schnelle-loesung-fuer-ukraine-in-sicht/2445496.html?ticket=ST-14657265-267iMOeZc0aABPF3endK-ap1> [Accessed: 05.03.2021].

³²⁹ Cf. Delfi.lt, Elta, „V.Adamkus: mes esame su Gruzija“/ “V. Adamkus: we stand with Georgia“ (in Lithuanian only), 12.08.2008, <https://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/vadamkus-mes-esame-su-gruzija.d?id=18078623> [Accessed: 05.03.2021].

³³⁰ Cf. Delfi.lt, BNS, „V.Adamkus: konfliktas dėl Rusijos dujų Ukrainai - pamoka Europai“/ “V. Adamkus: conflict on Russian gas for Ukraine - a lesson for Europe“ (in Lithuanian only), 03.01.2006, <https://www.delfi.lt/spausdinti/?id=8410895> [05.03.2021].

³³¹ Cf. Informacinės visuomenės plėtros komitetas, „Prasidėjo Vilniaus konferencija 2006“/ “Vilnius Conference 2006 has started“ (in Lithuanian only), 02.05.2006, <https://ivpk.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/prasidejo-vilniaus-konferencija-2006> [Accessed: 05.03.2021].

³³² Cf. President of the Republic of Lithuania, „Vilniaus konferencija tiesia kelius į energetinį solidarumą, sako Lietuvos ir Lenkijos prezidentai“/ “Vilnius Conference opens ways to energy solidarity - Lithuanian and Polish presidents say“ (in Lithuanian only), 11.10.2007, <http://archyvas.lrp.lt/lt/news.full/8379> [Accessed: 05.03.2021].

³³³ Cf. President of the Republic of Lithuania, „Remarks by Valdas Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania at Energy Security Summit in Kiev“, 23.05.2008, <http://archyvas.lrp.lt/en/news.full/9117> [05.03.2021].

emerged as an active advocate for the development of a functioning common external energy policy of the EU.³³⁴

In addition to the promotion of topics related to energy security at the EU level, Adamkus was also in favour of involving NATO in the discussion on energy issues. According to the President, the relation between energy and national security was straightforward, thus making NATO's role in this policy area reasonable.³³⁵ In this respect Adamkus, together with his counterpart Kaczynski, spoke out for the development of a transatlantic energy strategy.³³⁶ Adamkus explained his view on the desire to task NATO with energy security issues by drawing on the experience of Georgia: Lithuania needed as many as possible channels and as many as possible mutually binding obligations with its Western partners in order to receive their support in possible contradictory situations, such as in the case of Russo-Georgian military conflict. According to Adamkus, the biggest challenges for Lithuania's national security stemmed from the energy and economic fields and were directly related to the country's infrastructural isolation.³³⁷

It is important to stress that the foreign policy of Adamkus, with its main elements being the emphasis on regional leadership, Eastern partnership, and energy security, was implemented in the context of prevailing close relationship between Lithuania and Poland, largely based on a personal friendship between Adamkus and his Polish counterpart Kaczynski. As a result, the partnership with the larger and more influential Poland provided an important backing for Lithuania's foreign policy goals within the EU and NATO, and raised Lithuania's profile during the crucial period for initiation of the common EU energy policy as well as defining NATO's role in energy. In addition to that, both leaders strongly opposed the development of the Nord Stream pipeline pro-

³³⁴ Cf. Taylor, Simon, „Can the EU unite over energy?“, Politico, 17.10.2007, <https://www.politico.eu/article/can-the-eu-unite-over-energy/> [Accessed: 05.03.2021].

³³⁵ Cf. Delfi.lt, lrt.lt., „V.Adamkus: energetinis saugumas turėtų būti NATO darbotvarkėje“/ „V. Adamkus: energy security should be on NATO's agenda“ (in Lithuanian only), 29.11.2006, <https://www.delfi.lt/spausdinti/?id=11370545> [Accessed: 05.03.2021].

³³⁶ Cf. European Dialogue, President Press Service, „Lithuania and Poland Welcome The EU Eastern Partnership Initiative“, Joint Statement signed by Presidents of Lithuania and Poland, <http://eurodialogue.org/Lithuania-and-Poland-welcome-the-EU-Eastern-Partnership-Initiative> [Accessed: 05.03.2021].

³³⁷ Cf. President of the Republic of Lithuania, „Prezidentas V.Adamkus: Tapusi ES ir NATO nare, Lietuva kelia naujus strateginius iššūkius“/ „V. Adamkus: Having become an EU and NATO member, Lithuania faces new strategic challenges“ (in Lithuanian only), 08.05.2008, <http://archyvas.lrp.lt/lt/news.full/9038?prn=1> [Accessed: 05.03.2021].

ject, claiming that it went against the spirit of European solidarity and the goals of a common European energy policy.³³⁸

All in all, the presidential term of Adamkus was marked by collegial relationships dominating both the national and the European levels. On the national level — as previously argued — Adamkus consulted with the inter-governmental bodies such as the GEUC, CCLEAS and the State Defence Council during the process of formulating Lithuania's position on important foreign and security policy questions. In addition to that, Adamkus shared the representational duty in the European Council with the acting Prime Minister. At the EU level, the President relied on regional coalitions with Poland, and to a lesser extent with Latvia and Estonia. In terms of the thematic scope of Adamkus' foreign policy agenda, the President fused the emerging discussion on energy security with his initial focus on promoting democratic transition in the Eastern neighbourhood.

2.4.4. Andrius Kubilius-led Government 2008-2012

The conservative party HU-LChD emerged as the winner of the parliamentary elections of 2008 and formed coalition with the Liberal and Centre Union (LCU), Liberal Movement of the Republic of Lithuania and the National Resurrection Party. The leader of the HU-LChD, Andrius Kubilius, was nominated as the Prime Minister. Vygaudas Ušackas (independent, delegated by the HU-LChD) became the Minister for Foreign Affairs. He was later replaced by Audronius Ažubalis (HU-LChD) in 2010³³⁹. Rasa Juknevičienė (HU-LChD) was appointed as the Minister of Defence, and Arvydas Sekmokas (HU-LChD) as the Minister of Energy in the newly established Energy Ministry.³⁴⁰

Although working under the conditions of the financial crisis and thus being fully occupied with navigating the country out of it, this government did manage to create

³³⁸ Cf. Reuters, „Lithuania leader worried by Baltic Sea gas pipe“, 05.11.2007, <https://www.reuters.com/article/nordstream-lithuania-idUKL0568747520071105> [Accessed: 02.02.2021].

³³⁹ Cf. Krupavičius, Algis, Lithuania, in: European Journal of Political Research, Vol. 50, Issue 7-8, European Consortium for Political Research, 2011, p. 1045.

³⁴⁰ Cf. Krupavičius, Algis, Lithuania, in: European Journal of Political Research, Vol. 48, Issue 7-8, European Consortium for Political Research, 2009, p. 1023.

an ambitious action plan and make the first practical steps towards tackling the energy security issues of Lithuania. Whereas previous governments were criticised for lacking strategic vision of the energy sector reform³⁴¹, the Kubilius-led government was the first one in Lithuania's history to identify energy as an area of national priority³⁴². Both internal and external factors led to the increased attention on energy by this government. First, starting its work at the end of 2008 with exactly one year left until the finite closure of the INPP and with no alternative electricity supply sources assured by the previous governments, the conservatives had to find solutions without any delays. Second, the growing perception of Lithuania's vulnerability in the energy sector as a result of the Druzhba incident as well as the Russian-Ukrainian gas disputes of 2006 and 2009 motivated the speeding up of reforms in order to secure the strategically important energy sector from possible coercive external influences. Third, the emerging EU's energy policy offered new instruments for achieving more energy security not only through national, but also through international measures.

The reform plan of the Kubilius government rested on the idea of raising the profile of energy related topics at the international level through all possible organisational platforms. An important novelty within this strategy was the shift from the "discussion format" that was actively pursued by the President Adamkus to the practical approach of "creating facts". This approach was used in terms of Lithuania's energy policy within the EU and NATO and was made possible through the advanced development of the common energy policy of the EU and the predefined role of NATO in this area. The coinciding start of the presidential term of Dalia Grybauskaitė, who also preferred a rather practical foreign policy based on facts surely added to the success of this approach by the Kubilius-led government.

In terms of the EU, the government managed to exploit new European legislative measures such as the Third Energy Package to work not only towards their main goal of advancing the creation of a competitive energy market, but also — and more importantly in light of the prevailing vulnerabilities in Lithuania's energy sector — to increase

³⁴¹ Cf. Alfa.lt, „Premjeras Kubilius: deklaracijos mums neberūpi – tik rezultatas“/ “Prime Minister Kubilius: we don't care about declarations anymore - only the result interests us“ (in Lithuanian only), 16.09.2010, <https://apps.alfa.lt/alfaAMP/straipsnis.php?id=10409131> [Accessed: 02.02.2021].

³⁴² Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, Nutarimas „Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės Programos“, 2008 m. gruodžio 9 d. Nr. XI-52, Vilnius, p. 12/ Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, Ruling on the Governmental Programme, https://lrv.lt/uploads/main/documents/files/Apie_vyriausybe/Ankstesnes_vyriausybes/Po_1990_metu/15_vyr_programa.pdf [Accessed: 31.01.2021].

the country's security of supply.³⁴³ The governments' decision to not ask for derogation for the implementation of the Third Energy Package, and favouring the choice of its strictest ownership unbundling model meant that Lithuania was bound to a strict deadline for its transposition, falling in March 2013.³⁴⁴ At the same time the government also made the decision to not ask for derogation from the Security of Supply Regulation, facing the obligation to fulfil the N-1 infrastructure standard through the creation of an alternative natural gas supply route by December 2014.³⁴⁵ As the ability of Lithuania to develop a new supply route for natural gas depended directly on the implementation of the Third Energy Package, it can be argued that with the strategically chosen strictest models for the implementation of the EU's legislation the Kubilius government practically made the finalisation of the LNG terminal in Lithuania mandatory. This strategy of "locking-in"³⁴⁶ the project turned out to have been a crucial step in the reform process: the HU-LChD lost the parliamentary elections of 2012 and a new ruling majority was tasked to form the government, therefore raising the question of its willingness to continue the reforms initiated by the conservatives.

At the same time, Lithuania's hardline approach used for the implementation of the EU's energy-related legislation attracted the attention of the EC and international experts. Most importantly, as Lithuania became the first EU country to implement the Third Energy Package in its strictest form³⁴⁷, the EC treated this case as an important precedent, thus offering its support during Lithuania's negotiations with Gazprom and E.ON, the shareholders of the soon-to-be unbundled company Lietuvos Dujos.³⁴⁸ This case allowed Lithuania to promote its profile as a country struggling to end the Russian

³⁴³ Cf. Pakalkaitė, Lithuania's Strategic Use of EU Energy Policy Tools, p. 3.

³⁴⁴ Cf. European Commission (2010), Commission Staff Working Paper Interpretative Note on Directive 2009/72/EC Concerning Common Rules for the Internal Market in Electricity and Directive 2009/73/EC Concerning Common Rules for the Internal Market in Natural Gas: The Unbundling Regime, https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/2010_01_21_the_unbundling_regime.pdf [Accessed: 15.03.2021].

³⁴⁵ Cf. European Parliament, and Council of the European Union (2010), Regulation (EU) No 994/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council Of 20 October 2010 concerning measures to safeguard security of gas supply and repealing Council Directive 2004/67/EC, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:295:0001:0022:EN:PDF> [Accessed: 15.03.2021].

³⁴⁶ Pakalkaitė, Lithuania's Strategic Use of EU Energy Policy Tools, p. 26.

³⁴⁷ Cf. Socor, Vladimir, „Lithuania Decides to Unbundle Pipelines From Gazprom's Control“, The Jamestown Foundation, 07.07.2011, <https://jamestown.org/program/lithuania-decides-to-unbundle-pipelines-from-gazproms-control/> [Accessed: 03.02.2021].

³⁴⁸ Cf. Pakalkaitė, Lithuania's Strategic Use of EU Energy Policy Tools, p. 17.

domination in its energy sector through tough principled measures and was used in addition to the practical reform steps as a *soft power* instrument.

In addition to this case, there were another two interrelated examples of the Lithuanian government's willingness to support the reform of the country's energy sector by unconventional means. The Kubilius-led government contacted the EC's Directorate-General for Competition (DG COMP) in spring 2011 asking to open up an investigation on Gazprom's role in its allegedly anti-competitive practices in Central and Eastern European gas markets, including the Lithuanian market.³⁴⁹ In September 2012, the EC announced the start of the antitrust investigation against Gazprom regarding the company's three practices in the Central and Eastern European region, namely: 1) the abuse of the company's dominant market position by hindering the free flow of gas across member states; 2) preventing diversification of gas supply; and 3) imposing unfair gas pricing by linking gas to oil prices.³⁵⁰

In October 2012 the government initiated yet another investigation of Gazprom's practices in the natural gas market of Lithuania. This time Lithuania filled a claim against the company under the Arbitration Rules of the Arbitration Institute of the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce (Stockholm Arbitration) stating that Gazprom had violated the privatisation contract of Lietuvos Dujos signed between the Lithuanian state and Gazprom in 2004. According to Lithuania, Gazprom unilaterally changed the initially agreed upon gas pricing formula for Lithuania, and through being the sole supplier forced the country to pay a much higher price for the imported gas. As a result, Lithuania claimed to having overpaid LTL 5 billion (EUR 1.45 billion) or the imported gas from 2004-2012 and asked for a financial compensation.³⁵¹

Although these two investigations were initially aimed at claiming reimbursement of financial losses experienced by Lithuania because of Gazprom's allegedly anti-competitive practices in its natural gas sector, practically the investigations allowed Lithuania to include international actors in the highly contested process of its energy sec-

³⁴⁹ Cf. Gotev, Georgi, „Lithuania steps forward as whistleblower in Gazprom row“, Euractiv, 06.09.2012, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/central-europe/news/lithuania-steps-forward-as-whistleblower-in-gazprom-row/> [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

³⁵⁰ Cf. European Commission, „Antitrust: Commission opens proceedings against Gazprom“, Press release, 04.09.2012, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_12_937 [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

³⁵¹ Cf. Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania, „Lithuania initiates Stockholm arbitration against Gazprom“, 03.10.2012, <https://enmin.lrv.lt/en/news/lithuania-initiates-stockholm-arbitration-against-gazprom> [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

tor reform. As a result of the harsh opposition from Gazprom towards the implementation of the EU's Third Energy Package that was ongoing at that time, Lithuania needed the additional political leverages of the EU in order to push the reforms through. Therefore Lithuania's strategy of involving the EU in the ongoing dispute with Gazprom over the reorganisation process of Lietuvos Dujos was explained by Kubilius as follows:

“[r]egarding this question it is not Lithuania that should talk to Gazprom, and it is not Lithuania that should talk to Moscow; it is Brussels that should talk to Moscow.”³⁵²

The experts have stated that even though Lithuania had formally lost its claim in the Stockholm Arbitration³⁵³, and even though the anti-trust investigation by the EU ended in a deal between the EC and Gazprom³⁵⁴, these two legal proceedings represented an important tactical move by Lithuania aimed at enforcing the energy sector reform. These ongoing investigations allowed Lithuania to lift the reorganisation process in its natural gas sector from the Lithuanian-Russian level, where Lithuania had no independent leverages to deal with its neighbour, to the EU-Russian level.³⁵⁵

The Kubilius-led government has also been using energy policy instruments from the *soft power* toolkit in regards to NATO. Lithuania's strategy for this organisation was related to the proposition to establish an Energy Security Center in Lithuania. The idea for such a center was initially raised in 2008 by the conservative Rasa Juknevičienė, who at that time was working in the opposition during the Kirkilas-led government.³⁵⁶ Although the idea received support from the Kirkilas government, it was left

³⁵² 15min.lt, BNS, „Andrius Kubilius: konflikto tarp Lietuvos ir „Gazprom“ nėra“, 16.03.2011, <https://www.15min.lt/naujiena/aktualu/lietuva/andrius-kubilius-konflikto-tarp-lietuvos-ir-gazprom-nera-56-142027?all#print> [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

³⁵³ Cf. Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania, „The arbitral tribunal has put an end to the dispute between Lithuania and Gazprom“, 23.06.2016, <https://enmin.lrv.lt/en/news/the-arbitral-tribunal-has-put-an-end-to-the-dispute-between-lithuania-and-gazprom> [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

³⁵⁴ Cf. Chee, Foo Yun/ de Carbonnel, Alissa, „EU ends antitrust case against Gazprom without fines“, Reuters, 24.05.2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-eu-gazprom-antitrust-idUSKCN1IP1IV> [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

³⁵⁵ Cf. The Lithuania Tribune, „Stockholm arbitration ruling in Lithuania-Gazprom case ‘not a total loss’“, 23.06.2016, <https://lithuaniatribune.com/stockholm-arbitration-ruling-in-lithuania-gazprom-case-not-a-total-loss/> [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

³⁵⁶ Cf. lrytas.lt, BNS, „Konservatorė R.Juknevičienė siūlo steigti Lietuvoje NATO energetinio saugumo centrą“/ “The Conservative R. Juknevičienė proposes establishing NATO energy security centre in Lithuania“ (in Lithuanian only), 26.02.2008, <https://www.lrytas.lt/lietuvosdiena/aktualijos/2008/02/26/news/konservatore-r-juknevicienne-siulo-steigti-lietuvoje-nato-energetinio-saugumo-centra-5916208/amp/> [Accessed: 03.02.2021].

unrealised during the term of his government.³⁵⁷ The incoming conservative government, by contrast, presented the intention to establish an Energy Security Center in the governmental programme of 2008, indicating that it could be tasked with analysis of ongoing international and regional developments in the energy field.³⁵⁸

The vague idea of an Energy Security Center as a merely analytic unit was then further developed to become a tool for achieving yet another important goal of the Kubilius-led government in the energy domain, namely the desire to include NATO in the debate on Lithuania's energy security issues. As for this objective, it was stated in the governmental programme of 2008 that Lithuania was interested in „[...] developing the EU's energy, foreign and security policy — especially its Eastern and Russia policy — in cooperation with the USA and NATO with the aim of achieving a uniform and effective transatlantic Eastern and energy policy [...]“³⁵⁹ At the same time it was mentioned in the governmental programme that Lithuania's cooperation with the US in the security field had to be broadened, providing it with “new impulses”³⁶⁰. As a result, the idea of an Energy Security Center represented the governments' willingness to broaden the discussion on energy at both the national and international levels by achieving a deeper embeddedness of energy in the broader security political context.

Within this political context, the national Energy Security Center was established in January 2011 with the aim to seek its accreditation as a NATO Center of Excellence.³⁶¹ The Energy minister claimed that creation of such a NATO center in Lithuania could become an important foreign policy instrument for the country, allowing it to increase Lithuania's influence in the Eastern European region.³⁶² This idea received sup-

³⁵⁷ Cf. Delfi.lt, BNS, „Vyriausybė: energetinio saugumo centras galėtų tapti NATO centru“/ “The Government: energy security centre could become a NATO centre“ (in Lithuanian only), 23.04.2010, <https://www.delfi.lt/spausdinti/?id=31408389> [Accessed: 03.02.2021].

³⁵⁸ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, Nutarimas „Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės Programos“, 2008 m. gruodžio 9 d. Nr. XI-52, Vilnius, p. 18/ Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, Ruling on the Governmental Programme.

³⁵⁹ Cf. Ibid, p. 40.

³⁶⁰ Cf. Ibid, p. 43.

³⁶¹ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, Nutarimas „Dėl Biudžetinės Įstaigos Energetinio Saugumo Centro prie Užsienio Reikalų Ministerijos Įsteigimo“, 2010 m. gegužės 4 d. Nr. 536, Vilnius/ Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, Ruling on the Establishment of Energy Security Centre under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.372307?ifwid=bkaxm1q9> [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

³⁶² Cf. Delfi.lt, BNS, „Steigiamam Energetinio saugumo centrui Lietuva sieks NATO pripažinimo“/ “Lithuania will seek NATO's recognition for the Energy security centre being established“ (in Lithuanian only), 04.05.2010, <https://www.delfi.lt/spausdinti/?id=31818387> [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

port during NATO's Chicago Summit in 2012³⁶³ and ended with the agreement to accredit Lithuania's national Energy Security Center as NATO's Center of Excellence (ENSEC COE)³⁶⁴. Establishment of this Centre represented the willingness of the conservative government to include the strategic partner US as a strategic partner in the debate on Lithuania's energy security, and also represented the increased usage of *soft power* instruments aimed at reducing the country's vulnerabilities in the energy domain.

Apart from the Kubilius-led government's active use of international instruments aimed at increasing the energy security of Lithuania, this government also emphasised the importance of the further development of the nuclear power plant project. After the national strategic investor LEO LT that was created by the previous Kirkilas government was abolished, requiring new investors, the conservative government opted for the construction of the VNPP on the regional basis together with Poland, Latvia, and Estonia.³⁶⁵ However, the project was hampered by multiple obstacles, such as the inability of the regional partners to agree on its conditions³⁶⁶, the announcement of the initiation of two rival nuclear power plant projects in the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad³⁶⁷ and in

³⁶³ Cf. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, „Chicago Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Chicago on 20 May 2012“, Press Release (2012) 062, Issued on 20 May 2012, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87593.htm#energy_security [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

³⁶⁴ Cf. Ramoškaitė, Inga, „Energetinio saugumo centras Vilniuje iš nacionalinio lygmens keliai į NATO sferą“/ „The Energy security centre in Vilnius moves from national to NATO level“ (in Lithuanian only), vz.lt, 10.07.2012, <https://www.vz.lt/archive/article/2012/7/10/energetinio-saugumo-centras-vilniuje-is-nacionalinio-lygmens-keliasi-i-nato-sfera> [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

³⁶⁵ Cf. Cibulskis, Gediminas/ Ziminaitė, Karina, „Premjeras Andrius Kubilius: sutartis su strateginiu investuotoju į Visagino atominę elektrinę bus pasirašyta per pusę metų“/ „The Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius: contract with the strategic investor of the Visaginas nuclear power plant will be signed with half of year“ (in Lithuanian only), 15min.lt, 05.12.2010, <https://www.15min.lt/naujiena/aktualu/lietuva/premjeras-andrius-kubilius-sutartis-su-strateginiu-investuotoju-i-visagino-atomine-elektrine-bus-pasirasyta-per-puse-metu-56-127492?all#print> [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

³⁶⁶ Cf. Vaida, Petras, „Poland freezes its role in Visaginas nuclear power plant project“, The Baltic Course, 09.12.2011, <http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/energy/?doc=49979> [Accessed: 10.02.2021]; The Baltic Course, „Sekmoka: Estonia refused to join Lithuania's new NPP project back in 2012“, 08.12.2015, <http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/energy/?doc=113978> [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

³⁶⁷ Cf. tv3.lt, geopolitika.lt, „Atominė elektrinė Kaliningrado srityje: neaiškios perspektyvos“/ „The nuclear power plant in Kaliningrad: unclear perspectives“ (in Lithuanian only), 06.09.2011, <https://www.tv3.lt/naujiena/uzsienis/atomine-elektrine-kaliningrado-srityje-neaiskios-perspektyvos-n554114> [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

Belarus³⁶⁸, and finally, the rejection of the VNPP project by the Lithuanian society during the consultative referendum in 2012³⁶⁹.

All in all, the aforementioned failure to assure the finalisation of the VNPP project notwithstanding, the Kubilius-led government could be seen as the main initiator and strategic enabler of Lithuania's energy sector reform that led to an unprecedented increase in the country's energy security. However, although this government laid down firm foundations for the energy sector reform, the energy security projects themselves had to already be finalised by the incoming government. The active role of President Grybauskaitė was an important factor in assuring continuity of the country's energy policy after the general elections of 2012.

2.4.5. Algirdas Butkevičius-led Government 2012-2015³⁷⁰

The LSDP won the parliamentary elections in 2012 and was tasked with forming the new government. The new leader of the LSDP, Algirdas Butkevičius, became the Prime Minister. Linas Linkevičius (independent, delegated by the LSDP) was appointed as the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Juozas Olekas (LSDP) became the Minister of Defence. Jaroslavas Neverovičius (LLRA) was appointed as the Minister of Energy³⁷¹. and was replaced by Rokas Masiulis (independent) in September 2014.³⁷²

The new government started its work during a crucial period of time for Lithuania's EU and energy policies. At that time the energy security projects of strategic importance — construction of the LNG terminal, electricity lines to Sweden and Po-

³⁶⁸ Cf. tv3.lt, balsas.lt, „Baltarusija atominę elektrinę statys už 20 kilometrų nuo Lietuvos sienos“/ “Belarus will build a nuclear power plant 20 kilometres away from the Lithuanian border“ (in Lithuanian only), 24.09.2008, <https://www.tv3.lt/naujiena/uzsienis/baltarusija-atomine-elektrine-statys-uz-20-kilometru-nuo-lietuvos-sienos-n215377> [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

³⁶⁹ Cf. Euractiv, „Lithuania swings left, abandons nuclear plant project“, 15.10.2012, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/elections/news/lithuania-swings-left-abandons-nuclear-plant-project/> [Accessed: 10.02.2021].

³⁷⁰ The Butkevičius-led government was in charge until December 2016. The final year of this government is not included in the analysis.

³⁷¹ Cf. Krupavičius, Algis, Lithuania, in: European Journal of Political Research Political Data Yearbook 2013, Vol. 52, European Consortium for Political Research, 2014, p. 141.

³⁷² Cf. Gudavičius, Stasys/ Aukštuolytė, Rima, „Paskirtas energetikos ministras – Masiulis“/ “Appointed Energy Minister - Masiulis“ (in Lithuanian only), vz.lt, 22.09.2014, <https://www.vz.lt/archive/article/2014/9/22/prezidente-paskyre-energetikos-ministra> [Accessed: 11.02.2021].

land, and reorganisation of Lithuania's natural gas sector according to the requirements of the EU's Third Energy Package — were ongoing and had to be finalised. Moreover, Lithuania was preparing to take over the presidency of the Council of the EU in July 2013. Although the previous conservative government had initiated both the implementation of the strategic energy projects and the preparation for the Lithuanian EU Presidency, all Lithuanian parliamentary parties, therefore also the LSDP, had agreed to ensure continuity of these projects regardless of the results of the 2012 parliamentary elections.³⁷³ As a result, the term of the Butkevičius-led government can be described as the implementation-phase of the earlier set priorities of Lithuania's energy and EU policies. President Grybauskaitė played an important “watchdog” role in assuring the continuity between the Lithuanian energy policy as formulated by the Kubilius-led government and the one implemented by the Butkevičius-led government.

The governmental programme of 2012 indicated the readiness of the Butkevičius-led government to keep the initial course of the country's EU and energy policies. It was therefore emphasised in the programme that strategic energy projects, such as the LNG terminal and electricity interconnections to Sweden and Poland had to be constructed and finished on time. The single point that demonstrated the desire of the new government to distance itself from the energy policy as developed and implemented by the previous conservative government was the expressed need to “depoliticise” energy policy.³⁷⁴ In terms of Lithuania's energy policy in the EU, the Butkevičius-led government held the political line of his predecessors, claiming that Lithuania's immediate goals were integration in the European energy market and promotion of further development of the EU's energy policy based on solidarity.³⁷⁵

³⁷³ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Seime atstovaujamų politinių partijų susitarimas „Dėl Lietuvos Pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 m. II pusmetį“, 2011 m. spalio 14 d., Vilnius/ Agreement of Parliamentary Parties on Lithuania's EU Council Presidency in 2013, https://www3.lrs.lt/home/pirmininkavimas/Politiniu_partiju_susitarimas.pdf [Accessed: 20.02.2021]; Lietuvos Respublikos Seime atstovaujamų politinių partijų susitarimas „Dėl 2014-2020 metų Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio, saugumo ir gynybos politikos strateginių gairių“, 2014 m. kovo 29 d., Vilnius/ Agreement of of Lithuanian Parliamentary Parties on the Strategic Directions in Foreign and Security Policy in 2014-2020.

³⁷⁴ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo nutarimas, Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės Programos, 2012 m. gruodžio 13 d. Nr. XII-51 Vilnius/ Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, Ruling on the Governmental Programme, p. 24, <https://lr.lt/uploads/main/documents/files/16%20Vyriausybes%20programa.pdf> [Accessed: 20.02.2021].

³⁷⁵ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 41.

Resulting from these commitments, energy security was included in Lithuania's EU Presidency programme under the objective of "Growing Europe".³⁷⁶ Although under this objective most of the attention was paid to the establishment of the EU's internal energy market and promotion of energy-infrastructure interconnectedness of the EU, Lithuania also accentuated the need to further develop the external dimension of the EU's energy policy through inclusion of energy to the agenda of the CSDP.³⁷⁷ In this area Lithuania's main aim was to promote military energy efficiency as a new potential aspect of the CSDP.³⁷⁸ This aim corresponded well with Lithuania's NATO strategy in the energy field, as military energy efficiency was one of the key working areas of the newly established NATO ENSEC COE in Lithuania.³⁷⁹ As a result, inclusion of the military energy efficiency topic to its EU Presidency programme as well represented yet another attempt by Lithuania to broaden the discussion on energy security to include as many actors and as many policies as possible.

In addition to this broadening attempt, another aspect of energy security, namely the question of security of the critical energy infrastructure, had been raised by the Butkevicius-led government. This topic acquired its highest level of attention while the NordBalt electricity cable was being laid between Lithuania and Sweden under the Baltic Sea. It had been reported that Russian warships interfered several times in the construction process, forcing the ships working on the project to change course.³⁸⁰ In addition to this incident, the question of the physical security of Lithuania's new LNG terminal had been raised. It was reported that the FSRU had been possibly been "escorted" by a Russian submarine as it was transported by sea from South Korea, where it was built, to its final destination in the Lithuanian port of Klaipėda. In relation to this inci-

³⁷⁶ Cf. Programme of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, 1 July to 31 December 2013, For a Credible, Growing and Open Europe, pp. 6-9, https://www.eukn.eu/fileadmin/Files/Presidencies/2013_Lithuania/Presidency_programme_EN.pdf [Accessed: 20.02.2021].

³⁷⁷ Cf. Ibid, p. 16.

³⁷⁸ Cf. Ministry of National Defence Republic of Lithuania, „Pirmininkavimas ES Tarybai“/ EU Council Presidency (in Lithuanian only), https://kam.lt/lt/tarptautinis_bendradarbiavimas/europos_sajunga_612/pirmininkavimas_es_tarybai.html [Accessed: 20.02.2021].

³⁷⁹ Cf. NATO Energy Security Center of Excellence, <https://enseccoe.org/en/about/6> [Accessed: 20.02.2021].

³⁸⁰ Cf. Crouch, David, „Lithuania accuses Russia of disrupting work on Baltic power cable“, Financial Times, 02.05.2015, <https://www.ft.com/content/b633b3ea-f0b9-11e4-ace4-00144feab7de> [Accessed: 21.02.2021].

dent the Lithuanian Energy Minister Rokas Masiulis stressed that Lithuania was prepared to guarantee the security of its strategically important energy infrastructure.³⁸¹

An important part of Lithuania's strategy to assure physical security of the new energy infrastructure was its willingness to highlight the importance of this infrastructure for its NATO allies. In this respect, the Energy Ministry of Lithuania started discussions with the US officials about the possibility of importing LNG from the US in 2013, as the Lithuanian FSRU was still under construction. Both Energy Ministers of the Butkevičius-led government — Neverovičius and later Masiulis — stressed the importance of potential LNG imports from the US to Lithuania during their meetings with the representatives of the US government, arguing that the LNG from the US would provide an opportunity to end the Russian monopoly in the Lithuanian gas sector.³⁸²

However, the booming US shale gas revolution notwithstanding, there were legal obstacles hindering American companies' eagerness to export domestically extracted oil and natural gas.³⁸³ Lithuania put forth active diplomatic efforts to convince the US politicians to lift the export ban for NATO allies.³⁸⁴ The active high level political involvement in the negotiations on the perspectives of LNG import from the US demonstrated the strategic importance Lithuania ascribed to the increased cooperation with the US in the energy field. Therefore, when the agreement to receive LNG from the US was finally signed, it was celebrated in Lithuania as a "historic moment".³⁸⁵

All in all, aside from the implementation process of the strategic energy projects that the Butkevičius government had been occupied with, it followed the pre-established

³⁸¹ Cf. Lapienytė, Jurgita, „Energetikos ministras Rokas Masiulis: „Esame pasiruošę apsaugoti savo SGD terminalą“/ “Energy Minister Rokas Masiulis: “We are ready to protect our LNG terminal“ (in Lithuanian only) , 15min.lt, 24.10.2014, <https://www.15min.lt/naujiena/aktualu/interviu/energetikos-ministras-rokas-masiulis-esame-pasiruose-apsaugoti-savo-sgd-terminala-599-461926> [Accessed: 21.02.2021].

³⁸² Cf. Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania, „JAV politikams ir ekspertams pristatyti Lietuvoje vykdomi energetiniai projektai ir LR pirmininkavimas ES Tarybai“/ “Energy projects under implementation in Lithuania and Lithuanian EU Council presidency were presented to politicians and experts of the US“ (in Lithuanian only), 15.11.2013, <https://enmin.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/jav-politikams-ir-ekspertams-pristat...tuvoje-vykdomi-energetiniai-projektai-ir-lr-pirmininkavimas-es-tarybai> [Accessed: 24.02.2021].

³⁸³ Cf. Ashford, Emma, „Why lifting oil export ban can help U.S. foreign policy“, Reuters, 08.10.2015, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ashford-oil-idUSKCN0S12TP20151007> [Accessed: 24.02.2021].

³⁸⁴ Cf. Pavilionis, Žygimantas, Lithuanian Energy Freedom: Will the US Help?, in: World Affairs, Vol. 177, No. 6 (March / April 2015), pp. 67-71; Snow, Nick, „Lithuanian ambassador urges US to move faster on energy exports“, Oil & Gas Journal, 11.01.2015, <https://www.ogj.com/general-interest/economics-markets/article/17245869/lithuanian-ambassador-urges-us-to-move-faster-on-energy-exports> [Accessed: 24.02.2021].

³⁸⁵ Cf. Delfi.lt, BNS, „Istorinis momentas – Lietuva pirmoji Europoje gaus JAV SGD“/ “Historical moment - Lithuania will be the first in Europe to receive LNG from the USA“ (in Lithuanian only), 18.11.2015, <https://www.delfi.lt/spausdinti/?id=69602240> [Accessed: 24.02.2021].

trend of Lithuania's energy policy in searching for new formats for discussion on energy security. In this respect the topics of the military aspects of energy security and protection of critical energy infrastructure were raised within the EU and NATO. In addition to that, Lithuania engaged in an active search for possibilities to import LNG from the US. The goal to be supplied with gas by the strategic partner, the US, had strategic political as opposed to simply economic reasons. Through the involvement of American companies in the energy business Lithuania expected to increase the American presence in the Baltic Sea Region and to attract its attention to the prevailing security situation there.

2.4.6. The Presidency of Dalia Grybauskaitė 2009-2015³⁸⁶

Dalia Grybauskaitė was elected for her first term as Lithuanian president in 2009. Before that Grybauskaitė was the Lithuanian chief negotiator for the country's accession to the EU, worked as the Lithuanian Finance Minister in the Brazauskas-led government, and also became the European Commissioner for Financial Programming and Budget after the country joined the EU in 2004.³⁸⁷ These previous occupations shaped Grybauskaitė's future profile as the Lithuanian president. Her main qualities were identified as strictness, straightforwardness, and pragmatism.³⁸⁸ In this spirit Grybauskaitė formulated her presidency goals back in 2010 as follows: 1) an active and continuous European integration paired with a consistent pursuit of national goals within the EU; 2) implementation of the Euro-Atlantic policy agenda while using international organisations for the assurance of Lithuanian territorial, energy, and technological security; 3) constructive relationships with neighbours based on mutual respect and profit.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁶ The first presidential term of Dalia Grybauskaitė lasted from July 2009 until July 2014, the second term — from July 2014 until July 2019. Since this research focuses on Lithuania's energy policy during the time frame of 2004-2015, the last 4 years of Grybauskaitė's presidency are not included in the analysis.

³⁸⁷ Cf. Britannica, „Dalia Grybauskaitė, president of Lithuania“, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Dalia-Grybauskaitė> [Accessed: 14.03.2021].

³⁸⁸ Cf. Deutsche Welle, „Dalia Grybauskaitė: the Iron Lady of Lithuania“, 09.05.2013, <https://www.dw.com/en/dalia-grybauskaitė-the-iron-lady-of-lithuania/a-16801406> [Accessed: 14.03.2021].

³⁸⁹ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Prezidentė, Lietuvos Respublikos Prezidentės Dalios Grybauskaitės metinis pranešimas 2010 m. birželio 8 d./ President of the Republic of Lithuania, Annual Report, <https://grybauskaitė.lrp.lt/lt/metinis-pranesimas-2010> [Accessed: 14.03.2021].

Two leading aspects of Lithuania's foreign policy under Grybauskaitė were highlighted in her aforementioned presidency goals: the willingness to make practical use of Lithuania's Euro-Atlantic integration, and the inclusion of energy related topics in the discussion on Lithuania's national security. Throughout her first presidential term Grybauskaitė actively worked on these goals at the national and international levels. Concerning the national level, Grybauskaitė became the main overseer of the strategic energy security projects initiated by the conservative Kubilius-led government, with this role strengthened even in the aftermath of the parliamentary elections of 2012, which ended in the new ruling majority and formation of the Butkevičius-led government. Grybauskaitė positioned herself as the guarantor for energy policy continuity after the governmental change.³⁹⁰

At the international level Grybauskaitė promoted the development of the EU's energy policy and, like her predecessor Adamkus, emphasised the importance of a common European approach towards the external energy suppliers, first and foremost, Russia. According to the President, Lithuania was a pioneer in this policy, because at the same time that Europe was still discussing about the need to increase competitiveness in the natural gas sector, Lithuania was already practically implementing reforms in order to achieve this goal.³⁹¹

Concerning Russia, Grybauskaitė's stance towards this particular neighbour worsened constantly. Following the decision of the Ukrainian President Yanukovich's refusal to sign the Association Agreement with the EU during the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius in 2013, Grybauskaitė blamed the Russian side for unprecedented political pressure against Ukraine and its other neighbours.³⁹² The unfolding developments in Ukraine that ended in the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia brought Lithuanian-Russian relations to the lowest level since the regain of Lithuanian independence, with Grybauskaitė calling Russia a "terrorist state" and a threat to European se-

³⁹⁰ Cf. Vakarų ekspresas, Elta, „Dalia Grybauskaitė: svarbu, kad nauja Vyriausybė neskubėtų naikinti to, ką nuveikė ši“/ “Dalia Grybauskaitė: it is important that the new Government does not destroy what the previous one has achieved“ (in Lithuanian only), 29.06.2012, <https://www.ve.lt/naujienos/lietuva/lietu-vos-naujienos/dalia-grybauskaite-svarbu-kad-nauja-vyriausybe-neskubetu-naikinti-to-ka-nuveike-si-768187/> [Accessed: 14.02.2021].

³⁹¹ Cf. Pop, Valentina,, „Taking on Gazprom: Lithuania's battle for energy independence“, Euobserver, 10.06.2013, <https://euobserver.com/lithuania/120406> [Accessed: 14.03.2021].

³⁹² Cf. Krupa, Matthias,, „Wir fürchten uns nicht“, Zeit Online, 28.11.2013, <https://www.zeit.de/2013/49/dalia-grybauskaite-ukraine> [Accessed: 14.03.2021].

curity.³⁹³ Developments in Ukraine revived the Lithuanian role as a moral advocate. In this respect, Grybauskaitė was the main political figure trying to keep the topic of Russian aggression against Ukraine on the Euro-Atlantic political agenda.

As a result of the ongoing Ukrainian crisis, the foreign policy goals of Grybauskaitė were modified following her re-election for a second presidential term in 2014. Drawing on the Russian military involvement in Ukraine, Grybauskaitė's inaugural speech on July 2014 concentrated on the need to increase Lithuania's defence capabilities in order to be able to react to both military and emerging non-conventional energy and cyber threats coming from Russia.³⁹⁴ In the context of steadily growing hostility towards Russia, the arrival of the FSRU "Independence" was greeted by the President Grybauskaitė and celebrated as a major milestone in Lithuania's battle against the Russian grip on the country's energy sector.³⁹⁵

2.5. Chapter Conclusions

This chapter was devoted to the analysis of the conditions at the national level for energy policy formation and implementation in Lithuania. Following this analysis two major tendencies that prevailed in this policy area and shaped its substance in the time frame between 2004 and 2015 could be identified. These tendencies encompassed the radical shift of Lithuania's energy policy from the realm of *low* to *high* politics, as well as the turn in prevailing approaches towards energy policy formation and implementation.

In terms of the evolution of energy policy priorities, this analysis showed that Lithuanian energy policy had undergone a conceptual transformation in 2006, clearly following the disruptions of crude oil supplies through the Druzhba pipeline. Prior to

³⁹³ Cf. Sabet-Parry, Rayyan, „Lithuania President calls Russia 'terrorist state'“, The Baltic Times, 20.11.2014, <https://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/35799/> [Accessed: 14.03.2021].

³⁹⁴ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Prezidentė, Lietuvos Respublikos Prezidentės Dalia Grybauskaitės inauguracinė kalba Seime 2014 m. liepos 12 d./ President of the Republic of Lithuania, Inaugural Speech of the President Dalia Grybauskaitė in Seimas, <https://www.lrp.lt/lt/lietuvos-respublikos-prezidentes-dalios-grybauskaites-inauguracine-kalba-seime/19813> [Accessed: 14.03.2021].

³⁹⁵ Cf. President Dalia Grybauskaitė, „Lithuania's first floating LNG terminal breaks Russian monopoly“, 28.10.2014, <https://grybauskaite.lrp.lt/en/press-centre/president-in-the-media/lithuanias-first-floating-lng-terminal-breaks-russian-monopoly/20727> [Accessed: 14.03.2021].

this crisis an economic view of energy still prevailed, with Lithuanian energy policy concentrated on the main goal of assuring continuous energy supplies to the country. In order to achieve this goal, the ruling social democrat government decided to sell considerable amounts of shares of national gas and oil companies to the Russian suppliers Gazprom and Yukos, arguing that this was the most tangible way to assure the uninterrupted flow of energy to Lithuania. The national institutional setting with the energy portfolio falling under the responsibilities of the Ministry of Economy reflected this view of energy as a part of the economic agenda.

By contrast, the unexpected halt of the crude oil supplies to Lithuania in 2006 following the sale of Mažeikių Nafta to the Polish PKN Orlen strengthened the attitudes of energy being used by Russia to influence political decisions in consumer countries such as Lithuania. The unwillingness of the Russian side to cooperate with Lithuania and the EU in clarifying the circumstances of the supply halt led to the perception of Russia as an unreliable partner abusing its monopolist market position against Lithuania. These attitudes led to the extensive securitisation of Lithuania's energy policy that culminated in classification of energy security as part of the country's national security. Simultaneously, Russia's aggressive foreign and energy policy against Ukraine and Georgia resulted in raising awareness of the immense vulnerabilities prevailing in Lithuania's energy sector. As a result of these developments, Lithuania's main energy policy goal shifted from securing supplies to achieving energy independence from the monopolist supplier Russia.

The prevailing asymmetrical relations with neighbouring Russia that manifested most clearly through Lithuania's over-dependence on energy supplies from this country motivated Lithuania to search for multilateral formats in order to deal with it. On one hand, Lithuania had been an active supporter of the development of a common EU energy policy with a strong external dimension. President Adamkus was actively engaged in pushing the energy security topic to the top of the European agenda through the organisation of multiple international conferences on this issue. In addition to that, the conservative government led by Kubilius managed both: exploiting the policy instruments already available at the EU level in order to push forward the energy sector reforms, and to involve the EC as leverage in Lithuania's negotiations with Gazprom through the initiation of the EC's anti-trust investigation against this company.

On the other hand, Lithuania's Atlanticist political orientation motivated it to search for possibilities to include the US and NATO in the emerging debate on energy security. As a result, Lithuania not only strongly supported the development of NATO's role in energy, but also put forth diplomatic and political efforts in order to achieve the practical use of NATO's instruments in this new area. To this end, Lithuania managed to establish the NATO ENSEC COE, initiated the NATO-EU military cooperation in the energy domain, and raised the question of protecting critical energy infrastructure through NATO channels. In addition to that, Lithuania emphasised the practical and symbolic importance of involving the US as a new supplier of LNG, thus broadening both the strategic partnership with this country and the international involvement in Lithuania's energy policy field.

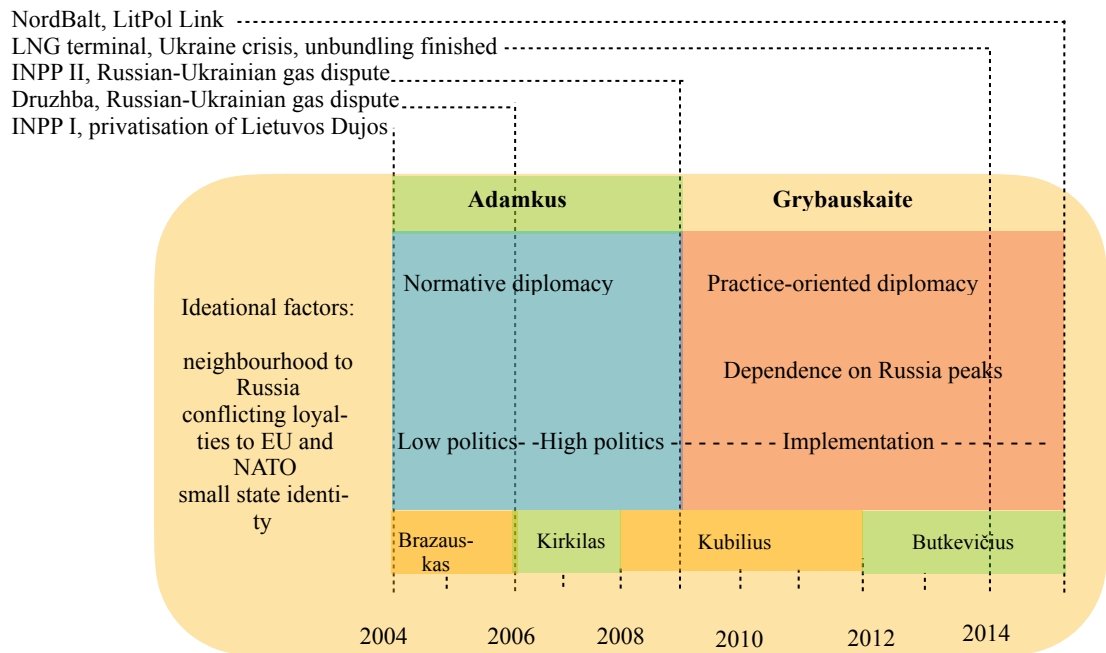
In terms of the prevailing approach of energy policy formation, a clear cleavage between the time frames of 2004-2008 and 2009-2015 could be observed. This analysis showed that the main factor leading to the emergence of this cleavage was the presidential change and the subsequent shift from the collegial to univocal approach in the coordination of energy as an integral part of Lithuania's foreign and security policy. In this respect, President Adamkus was a supporter of the collegial approach for the foreign policy formation and implementation, the best illustration thereof being the practice of dual representation by the President and the Prime Minister of Lithuania during the European Council meetings. Adamkus pursued this approach at the national level as well by relying on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as an important partner during the process of coordinating the foreign and security policy formation and implementation.

President Grybauskaitė, on the other hand, concentrated the levers of the foreign and security policy into her hands. From the very beginning of her presidency, Grybauskaitė took over the responsibility of representing Lithuania during the European Council meetings and in general was a very active and determined advocate of Lithuania's national interests at the European level. In addition to her role in formulating and implementing Lithuania's foreign and security policy, Grybauskaitė also interfered in the decision making process at the level of national politics, especially in the energy field. By and large Grybauskaitė supported the energy sector's reform plan of the Kubilius government, allowing talking about their tandem as one of the most important domestic factors for the reform achievements in this policy area. Moreover, after the governmen-

tal change Grybauskaitė emerged as the crucial guarantor for the continuity of the energy sector’s reform by controlling the work of the new social democrat government.

Figure 7 below summarises the findings concerning the national-level conditions for Lithuania’s energy policy between 2004 and 2015.

Figure 7: *Contextual Map — National Level*



Source: Author’s own compilation

3. EU-level Contextual Conditions for Lithuania’s Energy Policy

As argued in the previous chapter, Lithuania’s accession to the EU was an important turning point in its long-term foreign policy strategy. Lithuania’s membership after making that its main strategic goal for years since regaining political independence turned into the new reality in 2004, leaving Lithuania in a situation of a certain strategic vacuum. Achieving the long-sought foreign policy goal of the EU membership challenged Lithuania not only at the strategic level, thus forcing it to search for new foreign

policy directions, but also at the operational one through the increasingly blurring line between domestic and European politics.

As a result, policy formation and implementation processes in the areas that have traditionally been ascribed to domestic politics were now increasingly influenced by developments at the European level. This chapter analyses such contextual EU-level conditions that have affected Lithuania's energy policy between 2004 and 2015. The analysis starts with a general overview of the main developmental stages and main features of the European energy policy. The analysis then proceeds further with an investigation of the main channels for member states' influence within the multi-level European institutional setup. Finally, Lithuania's *modus operandi* within the EU is analysed by taking into account the small state perspective.

3.1. The Main Features of the EU's Energy Policy

From the very beginning energy played an important role in the European integration process. Two out of three founding treaties that established the European Coal and Steel Community and the European Atomic Energy Community in 1951 and 1957 respectively focused on the energy relations of European countries. The initial focus on energy notwithstanding, it took more than fifty years for an independent energy policy of the EU to be introduced by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU, also known as the Lisbon Treaty) in 2009.³⁹⁶ The main reason behind the late establishment of a common energy policy was the reluctance of the member states to lose their national control over this strategically important policy area.

However, the predominantly horizontal profile of energy issues led to constant overlap with other EU policies. Therefore, the EC has already been dealing with various energy issues since the 1990s³⁹⁷ through its existing competences in policy areas such as the internal market, transport, environment, and — to some extent — foreign relations. Moreover, the EC's role in the energy field increased significantly since the mid

³⁹⁶ Cf. Vogler, John, Energy and Climate Policy, in: Bretherton, Charlotte, Mannin, Michael L. (eds.), *The Europeanization of European politics*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, pp. 138-139.

³⁹⁷ Cf. Matlár, Janne Haaland, *Energy Policy in the European Union*. Nueva York, San Martín's Press, 1997, cited from: Solorio, Israel, Bridging the Gap between Environmental Policy Integration and the EU's Energy Policy: Mapping out the 'Green Europeanisation' of Energy Governance, in: *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, Volume 7, Issue 3, 2011, p. 397.

2000s³⁹⁸. Throughout this period of time the first steps in the EU's energy market liberalisation were made through the introduction of the First³⁹⁹ and the Second⁴⁰⁰ Energy Packages. In addition to that, the first attempts of establishing external energy relationships with third countries have also been made. In this area the EC was involved in developing and promoting the rules-based market multilateralism through the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) of 1991. Moreover, the Energy Community was founded in 2006 with the aim to export the EU's energy market liberalisation rules to partner countries outside of the EU. Finally, since 1999 the EU has entered various PCAs that included chapters on energy, like in the case of the EU-Russia Energy dialogue.⁴⁰¹

These developments notwithstanding, in the long run the EU's actual role in energy proved to be insufficient. One of the main reasons thereof was the EU enlargement of 2004 that brought in several Eastern European countries with high dependency rates on energy imports from Russia.⁴⁰² Soon after their accession it became clear that in order to solve the new members' energy dependence and infrastructural issues, new instruments at the EU level were needed. In addition to that, external pressures such as the Russian-Ukrainian gas crises of 2006 and 2009 revealed the growing vulnerability of the EU in terms of energy supply security, and therefore constituted an important impetus for the development of a unified EU stance on energy.⁴⁰³ Finally, the increasing recognition of the importance of energy in achieving the goals of the EU's environmental policy resulted in the functional spillover from the environmental to the energy area.⁴⁰⁴

Although the general recognition of energy as a policy field that should be dealt with at the European level gradually increased, its remaining strategic importance for

³⁹⁸ Cf. Maltby, Tomas, *European Union Energy Policy Integration: A case of European Commission Policy Entrepreneurship and Increasing Supranationalism*, in: *Energy Policy*, 55, 2013, pp. 438-441; Goldthau, Andreas/ Sitter, Nick, *A Liberal Actor in a Realist World? The Commission and the External Dimension of the Single Market for Energy*, in: *Journal of European Public Policy*, 21:10, 2014, pp. 1454-1457.

³⁹⁹ Cf. European Parliament and the Council, *Directive 98/30/EC concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas*, 22 June 1998, Brussels.

⁴⁰⁰ Cf. European Parliament and the Council, *Directive 2003/55/EC concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas and repealing Directive 98/30/EC*, Brussels, 26 June 2003.

⁴⁰¹ Cf. Goldthau, Sitter, *A Liberal Actor in a Realist World?*, p. 1463.

⁴⁰² Cf. Maltby, p. 435.

⁴⁰³ Cf. Vogler, *Energy and Climate Policy*, p. 137.

⁴⁰⁴ Cf. Solorio, p. 396.

the member states resulted in the formulation of a rather fragmented EU energy policy , which was constrained in both its depth and breadth.⁴⁰⁵ Article 194 of the TFEU , which represents the core legislation in this area, accentuates the “trinity” of the EU’s main energy policy goals: encompassing competitiveness, security of supply, and environmental sustainability It stresses that member states should work on these goals “in a spirit of solidarity”.⁴⁰⁶ At the same time the “solidarity clause” notwithstanding, Article 194 confirms that the EU-level measures “shall not affect a Member State's right to determine the conditions for exploiting its energy resources, its choice between different energy sources and the general structure of its energy supply”⁴⁰⁷, thus leaving the main checks for deciding on the national energy mixes and relations with external suppliers in the hands of the member states. As a result of these provisions, the European energy policy as defined by the Lisbon Treaty belongs to the area of shared competences between the EU and the member states.⁴⁰⁸

Resulting from this rather confusing distribution of competences between the EC and the member states, a type of energy policy governance emerged that can be described as containing both signs of increasing supranationalism as well as active inter-governmental attempts to take the lead in this strategically important policy area. On one hand, it is argued that the strategic importance of energy for the member states and — therefore — their unwillingness to delegate competences to the European level allow for ascribing this policy to the realm of the New Intergovernmentalism (NI).⁴⁰⁹ Characteristic to the post-Maastricht era, the NI describes a new trend of European integration which is characterised by increasing cooperation of the member states without the increase of supranationalism in sovereignty-sensitive policy areas. It is argued that in these areas, including energy, consensus seeking and deliberation emerge as dominant

⁴⁰⁵ Cf. Schmidt-Felzmann, Anke, Editorial: The European Union’s External Energy Policy, in: *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2008, p. 67.

⁴⁰⁶ Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Article 194.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁸ Cf. Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Article 4(2).

⁴⁰⁹ Cf. Bocquillon, Pierre/ Maltby, Tomas, EU Energy Policy Integration as Embedded Intergovernmentalism: the Case of Energy Union Governance, *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 42, No 1, 2020, p. 39.

norms enforced by the European Council and lead to productive policy coordination and decision making.⁴¹⁰

It has been argued that the general trend of the EU-wide scepticism towards a more active role of a supranational EC in the energy area was provoked by the EC itself. Proponents of this view argue that following the Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute in 2006, the EC was trying to promote the development of the common energy policy of the EU by framing energy as a security issue.⁴¹¹ These securitisation attempts proved to be counter-productive, as turning energy into a security issue encouraged member states to strengthen national authority over this strategically important policy area. However, it is important to stress that this explanation, together with the NI perspective in general, merely reflects the positions of the older and bigger EU member states', and fails to take into account the views prevailing in the newer and smaller member states. These states traditionally tend to seek institutionalised, rules-based international regimes in order to deal with security issues (for a more detailed analysis of the small states' perspective within the EU see the subchapter 3.3.).

The EC itself was interested in taking the lead role in the European energy policy. The EC's long-lasting practical involvement in addressing energy as a part of the issues stemming from the areas of internal market, transport, and environment resulted in its pro-integration mission and institutional culture.⁴¹² In addition to this established institutional culture, the so-called "policy windows" — namely the accession of the new highly energy import-dependent Eastern European member states and the Russian-Ukrainian gas disputes — provided additional incentives for the EC to consolidate its role in the energy policy field.⁴¹³ The main practical instrument in the hands of the EC was the Third Energy Package⁴¹⁴ of 2009. The Third Energy Package established the EC's supervision of the process of national electricity and gas market reorganisation

⁴¹⁰ Cf. Bickerton, Christopher J./ Hodson, Dermot/ Puetter, Uwe, *The New Intergovernmentalism: European Integration in the Post-Maastricht Era*, in: *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Volume 53, Number 4, 2015, pp. 703-704.

⁴¹¹ Cf. Natorski, Michal/ Herranz Surrallés, Anna, *Securitizing Moves To Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union's Energy Policy*, in: *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2008, pp. 71-72.

⁴¹² Cf. Maltby, pp. 426-438.

⁴¹³ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 441.

⁴¹⁴ Third Energy Package consists of two directives: (1) Directive 2009/72/EC, (2) Directive 2009/73/EC; and three regulations: (1) Regulation (EC) No 715/2009, (2) Regulation (EC) No 714/2009, (3) Regulation (EC) No 713/2009.

through the Internal Energy Market Progress Reports⁴¹⁵, as well as allowing a start on infringement procedures for those member states failing to liberalise their electricity and natural gas markets on time.⁴¹⁶

In addition to the progress in developing an EU-wide liberalised energy market, important questions in regards to the EU's practical abilities to foster the external dimension of its energy policy, especially in the context of shared competencies between the EC and the member states, had been raised.⁴¹⁷ Although energy relations with external suppliers fell under the competence of the member states according to the Article 194 TFEU, there was evidence of an increasing, although untypical, EC role (thus increasing supranationalism) in this contested area. It has been argued that the EU, being a "regulatory state"⁴¹⁸, approached security of supply as a matter of market failure. This allowed the EC to use its market-correcting tools not only at the internal EU level, but also against external suppliers and partner countries.⁴¹⁹ Having exclusive competences in the competition policy, the EC has proved able to transform these competences into effective leverages in relations with external suppliers.

As a result, over time the EC increased its supranational oversight over the external energy policy dimension through initiating *ex ante* compliance processes aimed at ensuring conformity of the member states' contracts with external suppliers within the EU's internal market rules.⁴²⁰ In this respect one of the first instruments of this kind has been the so-called "Gazprom clause", which became part of the Third Energy Package and was entrenched in Article 11 of the Natural Gas Directive.⁴²¹ This clause was designed to target energy companies from third countries, making them subject to the same unbundling rules as the domestic energy firms of the EU. Keeping in mind that a vast

⁴¹⁵ Cf. Directive 2009/73/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009, Article 52.

⁴¹⁶ Cf. Maltby, pp. 439-440.

⁴¹⁷ Cf. Herranz-Surrallés, Anna, An Emerging EU Energy Diplomacy? Discursive Shifts, Enduring Practices, in: *Journal of European Public Policy*, 23:9, 2016, p. 1387; Maltby, p. 441.

⁴¹⁸ Goldthau, Andreas/ Sitter, Nick, Soft Power with a Hard Edge: EU Policy Tools and Energy Security, in: *Review of International Political Economy*, 22:5, 2015, p. 944.

⁴¹⁹ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 954.

⁴²⁰ Cf. Thaler, Philipp/ Pakalkaite, Vija, Governance Through Real-time Compliance: the Supranationalisation of European External Energy Policy, in: *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2020, p. 6.

⁴²¹ Cf. Directive 2009/73/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009, Article 11.

majority of the EU's external suppliers were state-owned companies, the EC's power gained a strong political dimension through this requirement.⁴²²

In addition to that, with the same aim of ensuring *ex ante* compliance with the EU's internal energy market rules, the EC took over the role of a negotiator with third parties. In this capacity the EC was involved in the talks between Poland and Gazprom on the gas transit and extension of Russian gas supplies through the Yamal-Europe transmission pipeline going from Siberia to Poland, and further to Western Europe in 2010.⁴²³ In the same year the EC entered into the negotiations between Lithuania and Gazprom on the implementation of the Third Energy Package. In both cases the member states — Poland and Lithuania — pro-actively invited the EC to join the bilateral negotiations due to their doubts on the unilateral chances to achieve political solutions in the cases where Gazprom strongly opposed the EU's requirements.⁴²⁴ In addition to this, the EC also managed to receive a mandate to negotiate the legal framework for a Trans-Caspian gas pipeline system with Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan in 2011⁴²⁵, allowing the EU to speak “with one voice” with external suppliers for the first time⁴²⁶.

Furthermore, the EC's role as a co-negotiator on the side of Poland and Lithuania became an important precedent that later resulted in the adoption of Decision 2017/684, which institutionalised the EC's supranational oversight over member states' negotiations with third parties on intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) in the energy field.⁴²⁷ Although the third parties were not obliged to accept the requirements of the EU, their cooperative action was a precondition for their access to the lucrative EU energy market. Therefore, the EC's role in external energy policy can be described as a mixture of soft and coercive power.⁴²⁸ These examples show that although the EU did

⁴²² Cf. Goldthau/ Sitter, *Soft Power with a Hard Edge*, p. 943.

⁴²³ Cf. Thaler/ Pakalkaite, pp. 8-9.

⁴²⁴ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-11.

⁴²⁵ Cf. Buchan, David, *Expanding the European Dimension in Energy Policy: the Commission's Latest Initiatives*, the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, SP 23, October 2011, p. 43.

⁴²⁶ Cf. Euractiv, „EU to Negotiate Trans-Caspian Pipeline“, 12.09.2011, updated: 13.09.2011, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/eu-to-negotiate-trans-caspian-pipeline/> [Accessed: 15.04.2021].

⁴²⁷ Cf. Decision (EU) 2017/684 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2017 on establishing an information exchange mechanism with regard to intergovernmental agreements and non-binding instruments between Member States and third countries in the field of energy, and repealing Decision No 994/2012/EU.

⁴²⁸ Cf. Thaler/ Pakalkaite, p. 6; Goldthau/ Sitter, *Soft Power with a Hard Edge*, p. 949.

not have the final say on energy issues due to the member states keeping important checks in their hands, the trend towards “practical supranationalism” of the European energy policy was taking place through the increasing oversight role of the EC that extended even to the contested area of external energy relations.

The final step in consolidating the EU’s “practical supranationalism” in the energy policy area from 2004 to 2015 was the launch of the Energy Union in 2014. Being a high-profile attempt to solve the major tensions between the member states’ willingness to retain national sovereignty over energy sector on one hand, and the practical need to better coordinate the EU-wide actions in the energy field on the other⁴²⁹, the progress in developing the Energy Union was achieved through the introduction of formally non-binding compliance mechanisms. These included, but were not limited to reporting by governments, monitoring of progress by the EC, and peer-pressure.⁴³⁰ This policy regime belonged to the group of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC)⁴³¹ and was aimed at achieving at least partial delegation of communication and coordination of tasks to the EC as opposed to the full transfer of competences to the European level in the policy areas of strategic importance.⁴³² As a result, introduction of the OMC solved policy coordination issues to some extent that were predestined by the formulation of European energy policy as based on shared competences between the EC and the member states.

3.2. The Main Channels for Member States’ Influence within the EU

In the context of the debate on supranationalisation and the NI as presented above, this subchapter analyses the repercussions of the general institutional framework

⁴²⁹ Cf. 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, in: *Climate Policy*, 16:5, 2016, pp. 548-549.

⁴³⁰ Cf. Bocquillon/ Maltby, p. 43.

⁴³¹ Cf. Blomqvist, Paula, Soft and Hard Governing Tools, in: Ansell, Christopher/ Torfing, Jacob (eds.), *Handbook on Theories of Governance*, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2016, p. 272.

⁴³² Cf. Knodt, Michèle/ Ringel, Marc/ Müller, Rainer, ‘Harder’ soft governance in the European Energy Union, in: *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning*, 22:6, 2020, p. 763.

of the EU in the energy policy area and seeks to identify the main channels for members states' access to the decision making situations. Within the time span of this research (2004-2015) the analysis of the institutional framework of the EU is adjusted according to the developmental stages of the European energy policy and is therefore divided into the pre-communitarisation (2004-2008) and post-communitarisation (2009-2015) phases. While the European energy policy underwent the process of policy initiation during the pre-communitarisation phase, the practical implementation took place during the post-communitarisation phase. It is assumed that decision making processes differed substantially during these two phases and so did the main channels for the member states' influence on them. Moreover, the Lisbon Treaty not only introduced an independent energy policy of the EU, but also brought broader institutional changes. They in turn had far-reaching implications on the power relations within the EU and thus also on the decision making situations in the energy policy area.

As a result, it can be claimed that within the pre-communitarisation and the post-communitarisation phases different institutional constellations were responsible for progress in the European energy policy integration process. During the pre-communitarisation phase, the EC, the European Parliament (EP), the Council of the EU, and the European Council were the most important political bodies involved in the decision-making processes through various institutional interdependencies. On one hand, the EC, the EP, and the Council of the EU were mutually interrelated through the legislative procedure. Whereas the EC played a crucial role in policy initiation through its exclusive right to issue proposals for legislative acts⁴³³, the EP and the Council of the EU were involved in decision making through the codecision (since 2009 renamed to the ordinary legislative procedure) procedure. This "bi-cameral" type of decision making gained increased importance with the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty and became the standard legislative procedure in the EU's after the Lisbon Treaty came into effect.⁴³⁴

On the other hand, its formal right to propose legislative acts notwithstanding, the EC together with the European Council, were involved in a complex relationship at the policy initiation level. Although in the pre-communitarisation phase the European

⁴³³ Cf. Eckhardt, Marieke/ Wessels, Wolfgang, *The European Commission – Agent, Principal and Partner to the European Council?*, in: Ege, Jörn/ Bauer, Michael W./ Becker, Stefan (eds.), *The European Commission in Turbulent Times: Assessing Organizational Change and Policy Impact*, Schriftenreihe des Arbeitskreises Europäische Integration e.V., Band 105, Nomos, Baden-Baden, 2018, p. 32.

⁴³⁴ Cf. European Parliament, „Legislative powers“, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/about-parliament/en/powers-and-procedures/legislative-powers> [Accessed: 05.05.2021].

Council was an informal body of the EU which had no formal competences in decision making, in practice it acted as a strategic shaper of the EU's general political directions and priorities⁴³⁵, and was a „constitutional architect“⁴³⁶, responsible for treaty reforms, and therefore also in charge of expansion of European integration into new policy areas. Because of the EC and the European Council's overlapping competences in the area of policy initiation, the question of their principal-agent relationship has often been discussed.⁴³⁷ However, no univocal agreement on the exact division of powers between these two bodies could be found. Some scholars suggested that the European Council was the true — although informal — policy initiator, whereas others argued that it was the EC that had the final say on which of the European Council's initiatives to turn into official legislative proposals. These ambiguous evaluations suggest that in practice the relationship between the supranational EC and the intergovernmental European Council was based on functional interdependence, leading to either conflictual or cooperative interactions depending on the policy area and the level of an issue's "urgency".⁴³⁸

In terms of initiation of the European energy policy in the time frame between 2004 and 2008, a practical manifestation of this functional interdependence could be observed as energy related topics were pushed onto the European agenda through a "mutually reinforcing partnership"⁴³⁹ between the European Council and the EC. The main impulse in this area resulted from the informal European Council meeting on globalisation which was organised in October 2005 during the British presidency.⁴⁴⁰ Among other issues the heads of states or governments discussed intensively were the possibility to work together towards a European energy policy in the following areas: diversification of energy sources, integration and opening of the European energy mar-

⁴³⁵ Cf. European Council, https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/institutions-bodies/european-council_en [Accessed: 24.04.2021].

⁴³⁶ Wessels, Wolfgang, *The European Council: a bigger club, a similar role?*, in: Edward Best, Thomas Christiansen, Pierpaolo Settembri (eds.), *The Institutions of the Enlarged Union: Continuity and Change*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2008, p. 23.

⁴³⁷ Cf. Eckhardt/ Wessels, pp. 31-52; Bocquillon, Pierre/ Dobbels, Mathias, *An elephant on the 13th floor of the Berlaymont? European Council and Commission relations in legislative agenda setting*, in: *Journal of European Public Policy*, 21:1, 2014, pp. 20-38; Carammia, Marcello/ Princen, Sebastiaan/ Timmermans, Arco, *From Summitry to EU Government: An Agenda Formation Perspective on the European Council*, in: *JCMS*, Volume 54, Number 4, 2016, pp. 809-825.

⁴³⁸ Cf. Bocquillon/ Dobbels, p. 34.

⁴³⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 29-30.

⁴⁴⁰ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 29.

ket, development of an “operational approach” for the EU’s dialogue with major external energy suppliers, and development of a common strategy for energy efficiency.⁴⁴¹ During this informal summit the European Council agreed on the pressing need to develop a common energy policy of the EU and consequently asked the EC to formulate follow-up proposals in this area⁴⁴².

Further steps in the energy policy initiation process were also carried out in a cooperative manner between these two political bodies. The EC fulfilled the mandate given by the European Council by releasing its first Green Paper on energy in March 2006⁴⁴³. This document laid the foundations for the future European energy policy based on competitiveness, security of supply and sustainability. The European Council approved it and asked the EC to develop an energy action programme.⁴⁴⁴ In January 2007 the EC presented an ambitious programme linking climate and energy policies and stressed the need for both revising the existing legislation and adopting new measures.⁴⁴⁵ Experts argue that the European Council accepted the EC’s programme only thanks to the strong backing of the German Presidency and the Chancellor Angela Merkel’s personal involvement.⁴⁴⁶ As a result, the European Council invited the EC to draft legislative proposals aimed at implementing the action programme.⁴⁴⁷ The EC came up with its “20 20 by 2020” legislative proposals in 2008⁴⁴⁸, which were subsequently approved by the Council of the EU and the EP, and became the foundation for the inception of a common European energy policy.

⁴⁴¹ Cf. Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, *Prospects for the European Union in 2006 and retrospective of the UK’s Presidency of the EU, 1 July to 31 December 2005*, Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs by Command of Her Majesty, January 2006, p. 33, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/272236/6735.pdf [Accessed: 05.05.2021].

⁴⁴² Cf. *Ibid*, p. 33.

⁴⁴³ Cf. European Commission, *GREEN PAPER, A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy*, COM(2006)105, Brussels, 8.3.2006.

⁴⁴⁴ Cf. European Council, *Presidency Conclusions, 23/24 March 2006, 7775/1/06 REV 1, CONCL 1*, pp. 13-17.

⁴⁴⁵ Cf. Bocquillon/ Dobbels, p. 30.

⁴⁴⁶ Cf. Wurzel, Rüdiger K.W., *Environmental, Climate and Energy Policies: Path-Dependent Incrementalism or Quantum Leap?*, in: *German Politics*, 19, 3-4, 2010, p. 467; Bocquillon/ Dobbels, p. 30.

⁴⁴⁷ Cf. European Council, *Presidency Conclusions, 8/9 March 2007, 7224/1/07 REV 1, CONCL 1*, pp. 13-14.

⁴⁴⁸ Cf. European Commission, *„20 20 by 2020: Europe’s climate change opportunity“*, COM(2008)30 final, 23.1.2008, Brussels.

The retrospective presentation of the energy policy initiation process clearly demonstrated that both the European Council and the EC were crucial actors cooperating closely in this area. However, neither the European Council nor the EC were monolithic political bodies. On the contrary, their work was organised at various political and administrative levels possessing different abilities to influence political processes. As for the intergovernmental European Council, interests of the big member states, first and foremost Germany, France, and the UK, were represented the best.⁴⁴⁹ In addition to the big member states, the country holding the rotating presidency also had important leverages, allowing it to exert more influence on the decisions of the EU.⁴⁵⁰ In the pre-communitarisation phase before the Lisbon Treaty came into force the member states' presidencies covered the work of both the European Council and the Council of the EU, thus allowing the country holding it to steer the processes at both the political-strategic and legislative levels. Furthermore, not only structural, but also issue-specific and personal power mattered in the European Council: even small member states could also become influential thanks to their expertise and interest on particular topics and as a result of the personal influence of their national leaders.⁴⁵¹

It is important to stress that in being an informal body the European Council did not possess independent administrative resources and was therefore fully dependent on the country holding the presidency and national administrations for completing the preparatory work for summits, including for drafting summit conclusions.⁴⁵² This feature of the European Council's task distribution and management in the pre-Lisbon period corresponded the level of its workload: the European Council was described as an "institution" of serial issue processing, meaning that it addressed only a few topics at a time, and thus stood in contrast to the EC and the Council of the EU, which worked in the mode of parallel processing, which dealt simultaneously with various issues alongside each other.⁴⁵³

⁴⁴⁹ Cf. Tallberg, Jonas, Bargaining Power in the European Council, in: *JCMS*, Volume 46, Number 3, 2008, p. 690.

⁴⁵⁰ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 697.

⁴⁵¹ Cf. *Ibid*, pp. 692-693; 698-700.

⁴⁵² Cf. Bocquillon/ Dobbels, p. 24.

⁴⁵³ Cf. Carammia/ Princen/ Timmermans, p. 811.

Therefore, the work of the EC as well as of the Council of the EU, was based on the involvement of a complex political-administrative apparatus, which provided not only technical organisational support, but also offered additional channels for the member states to influence the policy formation process of the EU. The EC was extremely heterogeneous in terms of both horizontal and vertical interactions.⁴⁵⁴ On one hand, the political level of the EC consisted of Commissioners, the President of the EC, and their cabinet members, whereas the bureaucratic level was comprised of issue-specific General Directorates (DGs). The political level was fully dependent on the bureaucratic one for all preparatory works, whereas the bureaucratic level could function only within the political frames set by the Commissioners. On the other hand, at both the political and bureaucratic levels the Commissioners and their corresponding DGs were forced to cooperate with each other, especially in horizontal policy areas such as energy.

During the pre-communitarisation phase in the EC lead by José Manuel Barroso, energy issues were coordinated by the Latvian Commissioner Andris Piebalgs. However, no independent DG for energy existed at that time. Instead, energy and transport issues were managed jointly by the DG Transport and Energy (TREN).⁴⁵⁵ In the time frame between 2004 and 2008, this DG was led by the Directors General Francois Lamoureux until 2006 and then Matthias Ruete from 2006-2010. In the relevant literature it is often argued that the DGs represented an important power channel for so-called “bureaucratic politics”⁴⁵⁶. According to this view, actors at the bureaucratic level were involved in a specific decision making structure comprised of regularised ways of producing action through pre-selecting the major players, determining their points of entrance into the decision making process, and distributing particular advantages and disadvantages for each decision-making situation.⁴⁵⁷

The lead DG was the place where drafting of legislative proposals was initiated through gathering relevant legal and practical information, contacting external stakehol-

⁴⁵⁴ Cf. Kassim, Hussein/ Connolly, Sara/ Dehousse, Renaud/ Rozenberg, Olivier/ Bendjaballah, Selma, *Managing the house: the Presidency, agenda control and policy activism in the European Commission*, in: *Journal of European Public Policy*, 24:5, 2017, p. 657.

⁴⁵⁵ Cf. Schön-Quinlivan, Emmanuelle, *DG Transport and Energy: a Case Study in Resistance*, in: Schön-Quinlivan, Emmanuelle (ed.), *Reforming the European Commission*, Palgrave Studies in European Union Politics, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2011, p. 167.

⁴⁵⁶ Hartlapp, Miriam/ Metz, Julia/ Rauh, Christian, *Linking Agenda Setting to Coordination Structures: Bureaucratic Politics inside the European Commission*, in: *Journal of European Integration*, 35:4, 2013, p. 426.

⁴⁵⁷ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 428.

ders, and setting up the first legal draft “that fixes a political position on the issue in question”⁴⁵⁸. It is argued that this rather informal phase was crucial for determining the frame and focus of a legislative objective.⁴⁵⁹ The drafting phase was followed by the inter-service consultation during which other relevant DGs were requested to approve the proposal. The final stage involved the political level of representatives of the Commissioners’ cabinets and eventually the Commissioners themselves depending on whether the proposal reached this top-level as an “A point” (approved without debate in the subsequent Commissioners’ College meeting) or as a “B point” (resulted in a direct discussion on the legislative proposal by the Commissioners).⁴⁶⁰ All in all, the settled procedure of legislative drafting demonstrates that to a great extent the bureaucratic level was responsible for the substance of the proposed legislation with the political level only intervening in the cases of inter-service disagreements. This prevailing organisational logic of the EC notwithstanding, it is argued that since 2004 increased attempts to centralise the decision making authority by the Commission Presidents Barroso and his successor Jean Claude Juncker could be observed.⁴⁶¹

A similar decision-making logic based on concentration of crucial leverages in the hands of preparatory bodies prevailed also in the Council of the EU. As in the case of the EC, the Council of the EU was both a horizontally and vertically divided institution. Horizontally it was split into nine formations according to policy areas. In addition, the Council of the EU had three hierarchical levels: working groups at the bottom, Committee of Permanent Representatives in two formations according to policy areas (Coreper I and Coreper II) in the middle, and ministers of the member states at the top.⁴⁶² Being an intergovernmental institution, the Council was composed of member states’ representatives at all three levels. The members of the working groups, being experts in a specific policy area, were therefore either attached to the permanent representations in Brussels or to national ministries and agencies.⁴⁶³ The member states’ perma-

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 429.

⁴⁵⁹ Cf. Jordan, Andrew/ Schout, Adriaan, *The Coordination of the European Union: Exploring the Capacities of Networked Governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 219-220.

⁴⁶⁰ Cf. Hartlapp/ Metz/ Rauh, pp. 430-431.

⁴⁶¹ Cf. Kassim/ Connolly/ Dehousse et al., p. 654.

⁴⁶² Cf. Häge, Frank M., *Committee Decision-making in the Council of the European Union*, in: *European Union Politics*, Volume 8 (3), 2007, pp. 302-303.

⁴⁶³ Cf. Ibid, p. 303.

ment representatives to the EU met in the Coreper II, which deals with legislative proposals in sensitive policy fields such as General Affairs and External Relations, Justice and Home Affairs, or Economic and Financial Affairs. The deputies of the permanent representatives met in the Coreper I to deal with less politically sensitive issues including energy.⁴⁶⁴

At the ministerial level energy issues were ascribed to the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (TTE). In this configuration energy ministers met three to four times per year to discuss and adopt relevant legislation proposals.⁴⁶⁵ However, just like in the case of the Commissioners of the EC, the ministers themselves directly discussed only a relatively small amount of legislative proposals on which no agreement could be found on a working level (the so-called “B points”).⁴⁶⁶ The “B points” often involved politically contested legislative proposals that could not be agreed upon at the level of working groups that traditionally dealt with rather technical issues.⁴⁶⁷ It is important to stress that although the decision making process in the Council was formally organised through the voting method, in practice the consensus culture prevailed, making voting a rather rare procedure.⁴⁶⁸ In this context it is also argued that the involvement of the EP in the decision making process through the codecision and later the ordinary legislative procedure substantially politicised the decision making process⁴⁶⁹, and therefore played an important role in the growing inability of the preparatory bodies to reach early agreements on legislative proposals.⁴⁷⁰

The academic literature suggests that the aforementioned tendencies of institutional inter- and intradependencies that prevailed in the pre-communitarisation phase were further strengthened with the Lisbon Treaty coming into effect. First of all, the post-communitarisation phase marked the formal institutionalisation of the European

⁴⁶⁴ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 303.

⁴⁶⁵ Cf. Council of the European Union, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/configurations/tte/> [Accessed: 08.05.2021].

⁴⁶⁶ Cf. Häge, *Committee Decision-making in the Council of the European Union*, p. 303.

⁴⁶⁷ Cf. Fouilleux, Eves/ de Maillard, Jacques/ Smith, Andy, Technical or political? The working groups of the EU Council of Ministers, in: *Journal of European Public Policy*, 12:4, 2005, p. 612.

⁴⁶⁸ Cf. Mattila, Mikko, Contested decisions: Empirical analysis of voting in the European Union Council of Ministers, in: *European Journal of Political Research* 43, 2004, p. 31.

⁴⁶⁹ Cf. Häge, Frank M., Politicising Council Decision-making: The Effect of European Parliament Empowerment, in: *West European Politics*, 34:1, 2011, pp. 18-47.

⁴⁷⁰ Cf. Häge, *Committee Decision-making in the Council of the European Union*, p. 321.

Council into the EU's governance system, consequently strengthening its role vis-a-vis the EC in the area of policy initiation.⁴⁷¹ This trend was especially visible in the cases of large-scale crises and projects of large political impact⁴⁷², and was an illustration of the already discussed broader phenomenon of NI representing a new type of integration without supranationalism. However, the strengthening role of the European Council depended not only on the increasingly sovereignty-sensitive issues dominating the European agenda as the thesis of the NI claims, but also on institutional changes brought on by the Lisbon Treaty.

On one hand, the Treaty introduced the position of a permanent President of the European Council, who “shall not hold a national office”⁴⁷³ and therefore should act as an independent broker during negotiations among the member states. As a result, the introduction of this leading position provided the intergovernmental European Council with a “supranational moment” earlier possessed exclusively by the EC. On the other hand, the President of the EC is appointed jointly by the EP and the European Council⁴⁷⁴, providing them with important leverages to control the various personalities leading the EC. Alternatively, it has been argued that the President of the EC elected by the European Council and the EP, and thus having their backing, had a mandate to formulate a more politically ambitious agenda for the EC.⁴⁷⁵ All in all, it can be claimed that during the post-communitarisation phase the inter-institutional links between the EC and the European Council were strengthened and their abilities to shape the political agenda of the EU were fused through growing interdependencies between the leading figures of these political bodies.

However, the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty, introducing a standing presidency for the European Council, had limited the influence of the member states in using this

⁴⁷¹ Cf. Bauer, Michael W./ Ege, Jörn/ Becker, Stefan, *The European Commission and the Disintegration of Europe – Taking Stock and Looking Ahead*, in: Ege, Jörn/ Bauer, Michael W./ Becker, Stefan (eds.), *The European Commission in Turbulent Times: Assessing Organizational Change and Policy Impact*, Schriftenreihe des Arbeitskreises Europäische Integration e.V., Band 105, Nomos, Baden-Baden, 2018, p. 13.

⁴⁷² Cf. Alexandrova, Petya, *Institutional issue proclivity in the EU: the European Council vs the Commission*, in: *Journal of European Public Policy*, 24:5, 2017, p. 755.

⁴⁷³ TFEU, Article 9 B (6).

⁴⁷⁴ Cf. TFEU, Article 9 D (7).

⁴⁷⁵ Cf. Peterson, John, *Juncker's political European Commission and an EU in crisis*, in: *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Volume 55, Number 2, 2017, p. 349.

body as a channel for their interests.⁴⁷⁶ This was particularly true in the case of small member states, because for them the rotating presidency had previously represented the main way to gain the ability to steer the political processes in the European Council that was traditionally dominated by the bigger member states. It has also been argued that introduction of the permanent President, of which there had been two in the period of time between 2009 and 2015: Herman Van Rompuy (2009–2014) and Donald Tusk (2014–2019), although partially representing a move towards supranational representation of the member states, continued the traditionally entrenched tendency of the European Council to primarily serve the interests of the bigger member states.⁴⁷⁷

Thus, as a result of the reform, in the post-communitarisation phase member states remained in charge only of the rotating presidency of the Council. As the EC retained its exclusive right of initiative, playing a crucial role in determining the Council's agenda, the country holding the presidency's role was limited "to selecting and prioritising issues from the spectrum proposed by the Commission."⁴⁷⁸ It has been therefore argued that instead of agenda-setting, the country holding the presidency was merely trusted with agenda-structuring responsibilities.⁴⁷⁹ Moreover, as the Lisbon Treaty strengthened the role of the EP through turning codecision into the standard legislative procedure of the EU, now known as "ordinary legislative procedure"⁴⁸⁰, and thus equipping the EP with veto power, the decision-making process in the Council was hampered to a great extent.⁴⁸¹

At the same time, introduction of the permanent presidency of the European Council had positive effects on further integration in the energy policy field. As a result of the planning being made easier than it had been in the case of the former rotating presidencies, the first permanent President Van Rompuy established the new practice of

⁴⁷⁶ Cf. Leconte, Cécile, Eurosceptics in the Rotating Presidency's Chair: Too Much Ado About Nothing?, in: *Journal of European Integration*, 34:2, 2012, p. 133.

⁴⁷⁷ Cf. Tömmel, Ingeborg, The standing president of the European Council: intergovernmental or supranational leadership?, in: *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 39, no. 2, 2017, p. 175.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 177.

⁴⁷⁹ Cf. Tallberg, Jonas, The agenda-shaping powers of the EU Council Presidency, in: *Journal of European Public Policy* 10:1, 2003, p. 8.

⁴⁸⁰ Cf. European Union, https://europa.eu/european-union/law/decision-making/procedures_en [Accessed: 10.05.2021].

⁴⁸¹ Cf. Häge, Frank M./ Naurin, Daniel, The effect of codecision on Council decision-making: informalization, politicization and power, in: *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 20, No. 7, 2013, p. 954.

thematic European Council summits. Two such summits were devoted exclusively to energy policy and took place in February 2011 and May 2013. These summits marked an important turning point, as during them energy issues were discussed for the first time independently from their connections to climate, economic, or financial policy.⁴⁸² The far-reaching effect of these summits was the impetus to develop the idea of an Energy Union, which was sketched by the then Polish Prime Minister Tusk in April 2014.⁴⁸³ Close cooperation for implementing this idea followed between Tusk and Juncker, who was running as a *Spitzenkandidat* for the position of the President of the EC at that time. The upcoming election of Juncker as the new President of the EC and Tusk as the next standing President of the European Council resulted in a unique backing for the Energy Union by the presidents of the two most influential European institutions.⁴⁸⁴ As a result, a speedy legislative proposal by the EC followed: in February 2015 it published the Energy Union Package⁴⁸⁵ and the European Council endorsed it in the following month⁴⁸⁶.

Finally, the communitarisation of the energy policy laid-out by the Lisbon Treaty had important implications on the internal structure of the EC, and thus on its intra-institutional relations. In relation to the introduction of an independent energy policy of the EU, the energy portfolio was separated from the DG TREN and a new unit — the DG ENER led by Dominique Ristori — was established. The first Commissioner for Energy in the post-Lisbon period was Günther Oettinger (2010-2014) during the second term of Barroso as the President of the EC. Oettinger was succeeded by Miguel Arias Cañete in 2014. Following the announcement of energy as one of the five presidency priorities of the Juncker Commission, Maroš Šefčovič was elected as the EC's Vice-President in charge of the Energy Union. The introduction of this position strengthened the political and institutional coordination of this ambitious European energy policy project.

⁴⁸² Cf. Thaler, p. 578.

⁴⁸³ Cf. Tusk, Donald, „A united Europe can end Russia's energy stranglehold“, *Financial Times*, 21.04.2014, <https://www.ft.com/content/91508464-c661-11e3-ba0e-00144feabdc0> [Accessed: 11.05.2021].

⁴⁸⁴ Cf. Thaler, p. 579.

⁴⁸⁵ Cf. European Commission, “Energy Union Package”, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the European Investment Bank, COM(2015) 80 Final, 2015.

⁴⁸⁶ Cf. European Council, “Conclusions of the 19/20 March 2015 European Council”, EUCO 11/15, 2015.

All in all, it can be argued that the weight of the European Council, the EC, and the Council changed slightly between the pre-communitarisation and the post-communitarisation phases, as did the main channels for members states' influence on the decision-making processes. Although the European Council and the EC demonstrated a high level of inter-institutional cooperation during both the initiation (2004-2008) and implementation (2009-2015) phases of the European energy policy, institutional changes introduced by the Lisbon Treaty resulted in the member states' — first and foremost the small ones' — loss of direct access to the policy initiation stage. Whereas during the pre-communitarisation phase member states had the possibility to lead the European Council during their six-month presidency, a role that included not only coordination, but also agenda-setting prerogatives, individual member states lost this right in the post-communitarisation phase after the introduction of the position of a standing President of the European Council, and thus were forced to rely on their individual or case-by-case influence. Furthermore, prior to 2009 member states could utilise not only their own presidency term as a channel of influence, but could also attempt to form coalitions with other countries holding the presidency.⁴⁸⁷ In the post-communitarisation phase this interload⁴⁸⁸ channel of influence was basically reduced to searching for backing from the big member states that were normally not as easy to access as smaller member states.

Moreover the EC, being a supranational institution and thus representing the interests of the EU as whole and not those of particular member states, constituted an important channel of influence for those member states able to justify the relevance of their policy priorities for the EU as a whole. This is the reason why during the pre-communitarisation phase the EC was a sought-after partner of the member states, especially the small ones, leading to the definition of the EC as the “small member states' best friend”⁴⁸⁹. However, after the Lisbon Treaty came into effect the EC's role in the field of policy initiation had been increasingly contested by the European Council. Therefore, it can be assumed that this body also, at least to some extent, lost its previous importance as a channel for member states' influence.

⁴⁸⁷ Cf. Tallberg, *Bargaining Power in the European Council*, p. 697.

⁴⁸⁸ Cf. Varwick/ Eichenhofer/ Windwehr/ Wäschle, pp. 221-256.

⁴⁸⁹ Bunse, Simone/ Magnette, Paul/ Nicolaïdis, Kalypso, *Is the Commission the Small Member States' Best Friend?*, Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies (SIEPS), Stockholm, 2005.

3.3. The Small State Perspective within the EU

Within the EU the size of its member states has important implications on their abilities to influence decision-making processes within the predominantly multi-level institutional setup. It is argued that structural disadvantages of smaller states not only result in lesser voting weights in the Council that are allocated relatively according to the population of each member state⁴⁹⁰, but also in a smaller say in working groups and committees. Moreover, due to financial and administrative constraints small member states are unable to offer attractive “side payments” in exchange for favourable decisions and are generally seen as less valuable coalition partners.⁴⁹¹ Finally, despite all member states formally possessing the veto right in the European Council, small member states, in contrast to their larger counterparts, are expected to use it seldom and only in special situations.⁴⁹²

These limitations notwithstanding it is argued that small states can become influential in the EU if they successfully adapt their strategies to overcome their structural smallness.⁴⁹³ In this respect two main small states’ strategies for seeking influence in the EU can be identified. According to the traditional strategy, small states can focus on the “damage control” and thus try to prevent negative results from international negotiations through their veto power. This strategy is of a reactive nature, and rather risky, as blocking important decisions can potentially harm long-term relations with larger partner countries. An alternative “smart state strategy”, in contrast, stresses the proactive exploitation of small states’ structural weaknesses.⁴⁹⁴ It is argued that political circumstances are often favourable for small states’ “smart strategy”, as larger member states normally do not see them as rivals, and therefore grant them more freedom with “laun-

⁴⁹⁰ Cf. European Parliament, „Council of the European Union: Facts and Figures“, Briefing, December 2019, p. 5, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/646113/EPRS_BRI\(2019\)646113_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/646113/EPRS_BRI(2019)646113_EN.pdf) [Accessed: 27.05.2021].

⁴⁹¹ Cf. Thorhallsson, *How Do Little Frogs Fly*, p. 2.

⁴⁹² Cf. Thorhallsson, Baldur, *Can Small States Influence Policy in an EU of 25 Members?*, in: Busek Erhard/ Hummer, Waldemar (eds.), *Der Kleinstaat als Akteur in den Internationalen Beziehungen*, Verlag der Liechtensteinischen Akademischen Gesellschaft, 2004, p. 346.

⁴⁹³ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 336.

⁴⁹⁴ Cf. Grøn, Caroline Howard/ Wivel, Anders, *Maximizing Influence in the European Union after the Lisbon Treaty: From Small State Policy to Smart State Strategy*, in: *Journal of European Integration*, 33:5, 2011, p. 530.

ching policy initiatives, building coalitions and acting as mediators.”⁴⁹⁵ Generally, small states can “concentrate on a narrow range of vital interests and ignore almost everything else”⁴⁹⁶, taking international politics for granted because their actions cannot have any large-scale influence on world politics.

Three main directions that small states can use for their “smart state” strategy, result from these “bargaining assets”⁴⁹⁷, namely acting as lobbyists, mediators, or norm entrepreneurs.⁴⁹⁸ Acting through the lobbyist-role, small states can try to influence the pre-decision-making processes of the EU. Therefore, the EC, with its agenda-setting powers, is traditionally seen as the main target for states trying to insert their policy preferences into legislation proposals during the crucial drafting phase. It is argued that after this phase proposals become increasingly difficult to change, and thus the smaller states’ policy preferences, if accepted at this stage, are more likely to be approved, avoiding possible opposition by larger states during negotiations in the Council.⁴⁹⁹ In the long-run, through permanent consultations during the drafting phase, small states often manage to create “routine working process” with the personnel of the EC, which in turn allows them to provide insights into their specific national situations and increases the chances to draft legislative proposals that are favourable for them.⁵⁰⁰ Finally, the relationship between small states and the EC is mutually beneficial, as it “increases the Commission’s power base and aids its policy initiatives [...]”⁵⁰¹ that are often rivalled by large member states.

Furthermore, as small states are not able to push their national interests as openly as larger states, they tend to engage as mediators seeking compromises among the conflicting parties.⁵⁰² It is argued that the revised Council presidency after Lisbon that encompassed issues of *low politics* provides small states with good chances to pursue

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 530.

⁴⁹⁶ Koehane, Robert O., The Big Influence of Small Allies, in: Foreign Policy, No. 2, Spring 1971, pp. 162-163.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 162.

⁴⁹⁸ Cf. Grøn/ Wivel, p. 530.

⁴⁹⁹ Cf. Ibid, pp. 530-531.

⁵⁰⁰ Cf. Thorhallsson, Can Small States Influence Policy in an EU of 25 Members?, pp. 343-344.

⁵⁰¹ Maltby, p. 436.

⁵⁰² Cf. Grøn/ Wivel, p. 533.

such a problem-solving role.⁵⁰³ Finally, small states can also act as norm entrepreneurs, framing their political preferences as “desirable” behaviour that should be followed by others as well.⁵⁰⁴ Generally, it is argued that all three action directions of small states work best if applied in the predominantly institutionalised context where clear rules and responsibilities prevail. By contrast, rather informal “behind the scenes” deals are normally made among large member states.⁵⁰⁵

It is widely discussed that in order for these “smart strategies” to succeed, small states have to follow several general rules. First of all, due to their limited administrative capacities they must prioritise, and thus direct their financial and human resources to those policy areas and specific issues that can bring them biggest political gains.⁵⁰⁶ Second, instead of using hard bargaining-based strategies, small states should rather focus rather on persuasion-based ones, as this negotiation style can potentially allow them to demonstrate their specific expert knowledge and willingness to seek European, not exclusively national, goals.⁵⁰⁷ Finally, it appears helpful for small member states to negotiate with “packages” bringing into negotiations several often unrelated topics in order to “trade their less important issues for relevant ones.”⁵⁰⁸

In addition to the above-mentioned formal adaptation of small states’ strategies to succeed in the European-level negotiations, there are some initial features that provide small states with additional negotiating advantages. Among them are flexible working procedures that are traditionally typical for small states. As a result of the prevailing informal working culture, national negotiators for small states can contact national ministerial level officials directly more often than their counterparts from big countries, and therefore adapt their negotiating positions quickly.⁵⁰⁹ In addition to this, officials from small states are generally granted a relatively large autonomy in formula-

⁵⁰³ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 533.

⁵⁰⁴ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 534.

⁵⁰⁵ Cf. Luša, Đana/ Kurečić, Petar, The Number and Geographical Scope of the EU Foreign Policy Initiatives of Small Member States: Does „Smallness“ Matter?, in: *CIRR XXI (72)*, 2015, p. 56.

⁵⁰⁶ Cf. Thorhallsson, Can Small States Influence Policy in an EU of 25 Members?, p. 338.

⁵⁰⁷ Cf. Thorhallsson, How Do Little Frogs Fly?, p. 3.

⁵⁰⁸ Urbelis, The Relevance and Influence of Small States, p. 67.

⁵⁰⁹ Cf. Thorhallsson, How Do Little Frogs Fly?, p. 2.

ting national positions which also results in quicker adaptation to the negotiation processes.⁵¹⁰

Within this general small states' perspective there are several widely recognised practical examples of such countries' successful performance in the international arena. Among them is the active role and successful performance of the Nordic states in such policy fields as environment, human rights, as well as humanitarian and developmental assistance.⁵¹¹ The Nordic — especially Swedish and Finnish — influence on the civilian dimension of the European security and defence policy (ESDP) is often also stressed.⁵¹² For its part Denmark is known for its active involvement in international military operations.⁵¹³ Since 2008 Estonia has also made a name for itself as a hallmark for cyber security.⁵¹⁴ Estonia developed its leadership role in cyber security after the massive country-wide cyber attack following its dispute with Russia over the relocation of a Soviet monument within the capital of Tallinn in 2007. It became an important example for demonstrating how small states can transform their vulnerabilities into competences.

As a member of the EU Lithuania also followed the general action logic of small states in the time frame between 2004 and 2015. It focused on a limited number of issues ranging from democracy promotion eastwards, especially during the second term of President Valdas Adamkus, to the accentuation of energy security issues, especially during the Kubilius-led government and the first presidential term of Grybauskaitė. It is important to stress that even though these two areas of Lithuania's interest had different agendas at the tactical level, their main strategic goal was the same, namely to reduce Russia's influence on the country and region's political sphere. Within this strategic constellation, especially in the area of energy, Russia was perceived as the main source

⁵¹⁰ Cf. Thorhallsson, *Can Small States Influence Policy in an EU of 25 Members?*, pp. 339-340.

⁵¹¹ Cf. Ingebritsen, Christine, *Norm Entrepreneurs Scandinavia's Role in World Politics*, in: *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 37(1), 2002, pp. 11-23; Magnúsdóttir, Gunnhildur Lily/ Thórhallsson, Baldur, *The Nordic States and Agenda-Setting in the European Union: How do Small States Score?*, in: *Icelandic Review of Politics & Administration*, Vol. 7, No 1, 2011, pp. 203-224.

⁵¹² Cf. Jakobsen, Peter Viggo, *Small States, Big Influence: The Overlooked Nordic Influence on the Civilian ESDP*, in: *JCMS*, Vol. 47, No 1, 2009, pp. 81-102.

⁵¹³ Cf. Mariager, Rasmus/ Wivel, Anders, *From Nordic Peacekeeper to NATO Peacemaker: Denmark's Journey from Semi-neutral to Super Ally*, in: Brady, Anne-Marie/ Thorhallsson, Baldur (eds.), *Small States and the New Security Environment*, in: *The World of Small States*, Vol 7. Springer, Cham, 2021, pp. 103-117; Urbelis, *The Relevance and Influence of Small States*, p. 64.

⁵¹⁴ Cf. Raś, Kinga, *Estonia as a Leader in Increasing Cybersecurity*, Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM), Bulletin No 68 (1641), 11 May 2018, https://pism.pl/publications/Estonia_as_a_Leader_in_Increasing_Cybersecurity [Accessed: 13.06.2021].

of vulnerability with the potential to destabilise not only economic, but also the political field of Lithuania. Just like in the case of Estonia's cyber strategy, the ongoing Lithuanian dependence on Russia in the energy field gradually turned into a trigger to increase Lithuania's competence over energy at the international level.

Immediately after Lithuania's accession to the EU it was still strongly limited by financial and administrative constraints as well as by its status as a newcomer to the EU. The latter aspect resulted in serious limitations of Lithuania's performance. Although Lithuania identified itself as an expert on issues related to Russia, it was soon confronted by the complexity of European positions towards this country, and thus had to adapt its working methods from confrontational to more cooperative ones. The best example for Lithuania's disregard of the unwritten European negotiating rules comes from the case when Lithuania decided to block the EU-Russia PCA in 2008 in order to achieve progress on the Druzhba pipeline crisis and the frozen conflicts in Moldova and Georgia.⁵¹⁵ Lithuania's uncooperative hard bargaining style brought opposite effects, leaving it isolated and under strong criticism at both the national and European levels.⁵¹⁶

After this diplomatic failure Lithuania modified its strategy and started working towards the process of empowering its vulnerability (being direct neighbour to Russia) in order to increase its "action competence" at the international stage. Thus an important step towards the adaptation of the small states' "smart strategy" was made by shifting from a purely normative accentuation of Lithuania's role as a regional centre and democracy promoter in the post-Soviet Eastern Europe, to the more practical and benefit-oriented energy security aspects. Through its new focus on energy issues Lithuania was able to link its main security interest based on diminishing Russian influence domestically and in the Eastern European region with the emerging broader European debate on energy and climate.

International opinions about Lithuania's performance within the EU were reflected in the analysis conducted by the European Council on Foreign Relations. The European Foreign Policy Scorecard of 2012 identified Lithuania as a leader in three out of four categories of the EU's relations with Russia, namely on protracted conflicts, energy

⁵¹⁵ Cf. Lobjakas, Ahto, „EU: Lithuania's Motives In Blocking Russia Pact Difficult To Gauge“, Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty, 15.05.2008, <https://www.rferl.org/a/1117489.html> [Accessed: 08.06.2021].

⁵¹⁶ Cf. Pastore, Gunta, Small New Member States in the EU Foreign Policy: toward 'Small State Smart Strategy'? In: *Baltic Journal of Political Science*, No 2, December 2013, pp. 72-74.

issues, and diversification of gas supply routes to Europe.⁵¹⁷ One leadership position was given to Lithuania in 2013, namely for promoting visa liberalisation for the Eastern Partnership countries.⁵¹⁸ In 2014 which marked the Ukraine crisis and its culmination — the illegal annexation of Crimea — Lithuania was identified as a European forerunner in the area of resisting Russian pressures on the Eastern Partnership countries.⁵¹⁹ Furthermore, Lithuania's support for the release of the Ukrainian opposition leader Juliya Tymoshenko and further support in seeking a visa-free agreement with Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova was included in its leadership portfolio.⁵²⁰ The year 2015 added further aspects of Lithuania's active leadership on issues concerning Russia's role in Eastern Europe and energy security: the ECFR identified Lithuania as a leader in developing sanctions towards Russia, supporting free press in Russia, as well as continuing its active attempts to diversify gas supplies away from Russia as the main supplier.⁵²¹

All in all, theoretical observations and practical examples show that small states are able to overcome structural disadvantages related to their size. However, a substantial “action competence” is needed in order to become an influential small state. This competence can bring the most positive results when small states show leadership on a particular issue, pursue a cooperative approach in framing their national positions, and have a good understanding of the European policy-making rules. As time was needed for knowledge about internal working processes to be internalised and personal networks within the EU to be established, older small states generally had better chances to become influential in the EU than the newcomers.⁵²² Lithuania's experience as a small state in the EU confirmed this observation, as throughout its membership years the country experienced both isolation because of its uncompromising stance towards Russia, as well as later recognition as a small state able to influence European policies on the topics it identified as national priorities.

⁵¹⁷ Cf. European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), „European Foreign Policy Scorecard 2012“, p. 136, https://ecfr.eu/archive/page/-/ECFR_SCORECARD_2012_WEB.pdf [Accessed: 03.06.2021].

⁵¹⁸ Cf. European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), „European Foreign Policy Scorecard 2013“, p. 137, https://ecfr.eu/archive/page/-/ECFR73_SCORECARD_2013_AW.pdf [Accessed: 03.06.2021].

⁵¹⁹ Cf. European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), „European Foreign Policy Scorecard 2014“, p. 119, https://ecfr.eu/archive/page/-/ECFR94_SCORECARD_2014.pdf [Accessed: 03.06.2021].

⁵²⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 121.

⁵²¹ Cf. European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), „European Foreign Policy Scorecard 2015“, p. 114, https://ecfr.eu/archive/page/-/ECFR125_SCORECARD_2015.pdf [Accessed: 03.06.2021].

⁵²² Cf. Luša, Kurečić, p. 49.

3.4. Chapter Conclusions

This chapter dealt with the EU-level conditions that had an impact on the formulation and implementation of Lithuania's energy policy during the time frame between 2004 and 2015. These crucial European conditions included the specific process of communitarisation of the European energy policy, changing channels for member states' influence within the institutional setup of the EU as a result of the Lisbon Treaty coming into effect, as well as opportunities and limitations related to small states' performance within the EU.

Concerning the process of launching a common EU energy policy it was identified that the British European Council presidency in 2006 played an important role in launching official EU-level discussions on this topic. Reasons for this special timing ranged from internal developments within the EU, with vulnerable Eastern and Central European countries having joined the EU in 2004, to external shocks such as Russian-Ukrainian gas disputes. Within this context it is important to underline that until 2009 when the Lisbon Treaty came into effect and changed the inter-institutional power balance within the EU, countries holding the presidency constituted an important channel for accessing decision making situations at the European level. This was true not only for the countries holding the presidency themselves, but also for other — especially small — member states using the presidency holders as an important interload channel.

The existing detailed record on further steps within the process of developing the EU's energy policy showed that the European Council and the EC acted as a mutually reinforced engine for energy policy communitarisation. For Lithuania as a small state with limited abilities to influence developments in the European Council dominated by big European states, contacts with the EC were crucial for inserting its preferences related to the EU's role in energy. Within the EC, DG TREN was dealing with energy issues and was possibly an important channel for Lithuania's preferences in negotiating the BEMIP deal and shaping the EU's position towards the future Third Energy Package, and especially its "Gazprom clause". In the Council, energy issues were discussed in the Coreper I with Deputy Permanent Representatives representing the member states' interests. However, due to Lithuania's low voting weight within the TTE Council configuration, it is no surprise that it could not substantially influence the decision making pro-

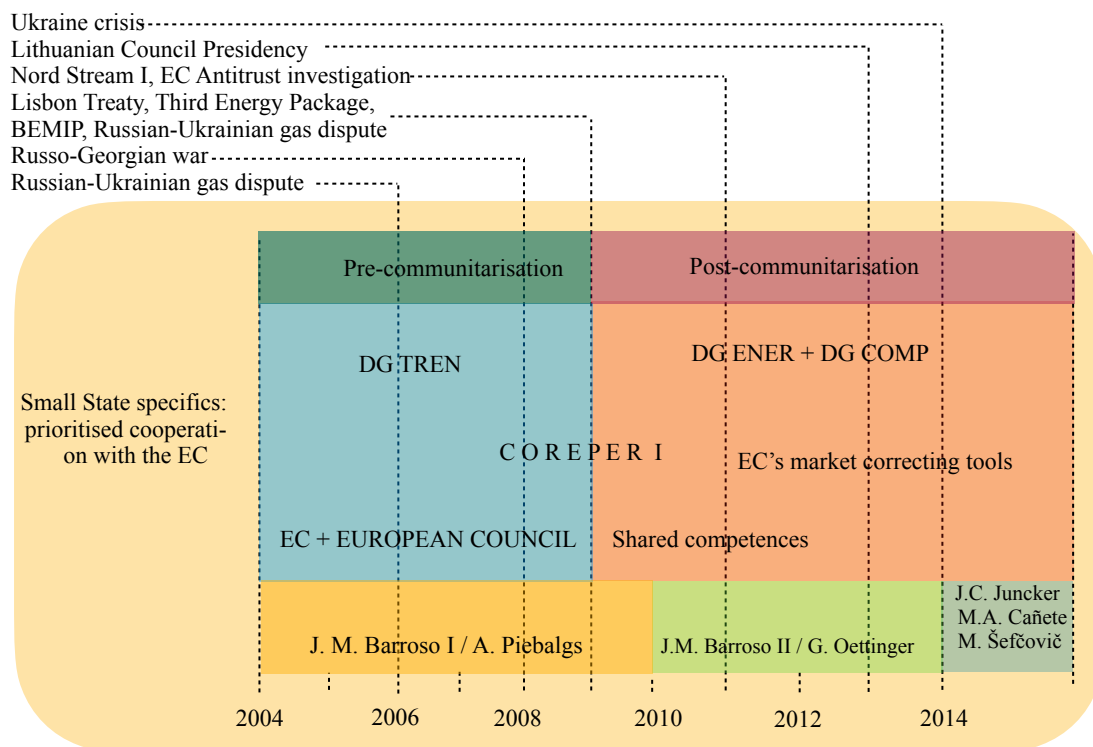
cesses at this stage. An important example illustrating this was the failed Lithuanian attempt to influence inter-state negotiations on the new EU-Russia PCA. As this strategy led to reputational damage for the country, it later focused more on institutionalised channels for the spread of its influence, therefore focusing on the contacts with the EC.

However, the Lisbon Treaty, which introduced an independent European energy policy, provided a mixed record on the level of possible institutionalisation in this policy area. With competences in this new European policy area being shared between the EC and member states, enough room was left for the member states to proceed with their individual national policies, especially in the area of external energy relations. However, the analysis of the EC's role in the EU's energy policy showed that it had effectively transformed its market correcting power into important policy tools that stretched into the area of external energy relations. In this respect, the anti-monopoly investigation of Gazprom activities in several Eastern European countries (including Lithuania) provided an important example thereof. Resulting from the possibly far-reaching implications of this investigation, not only on Lithuania's energy security strategy, but also on the EC's role in the EU's energy policy, the Directorate-General Competition (DG Comp) that performed this investigation emerged as an important additional channel of influence for Lithuania.

Finally, the analysis of the small state perspective demonstrated that small states had important leverages at their disposal, allowing them to influence decision making situations within the EU. Beside the internal conditions, such as having smaller administrations and more flexible domestic decision making procedures that were promotive factors for their successful performance, the small states' adaptation to the prevailing working culture within the EU was yet another important condition. Following Lithuania's rather problematic initial diplomacy within the EU that was based on a mixture of hard-bargaining and the accentuation of the normative dimension of the EU-Russia relations, Lithuania gradually managed to turn its complicated relationship with Russia into a policy tool.

According to the findings discussed in this chapter, Figure 8 below summarises the EU-level conditions for Lithuania's energy policy between 2004 and 2015.

Figure 8: *Contextual Map — EU-level*



Source: Author's own compilation

4. NATO-level Contextual Conditions for Lithuania's Energy Policy

Beside Lithuania's membership in the EU, the NATO-level was yet another international arena decisive for the country's energy security aspirations between 2004 and 2015. Resulting from Lithuania's Atlanticist strategic orientation, defining and establishing NATO's role in energy represented an important foreign policy goal for the country. Aside from Lithuania's interest in broadening the discussion on energy to various international formats, the fundamental aim was to more tightly involve its strategic partner, the US, into the discussion on Lithuanian and European energy security. The organisational specifics of NATO as an intergovernmental organisation provided both chances and limitations for Lithuania's influence on the process of expanding the Alliance's role in this area. This chapter analyses the process of introducing energy security into NATO's agenda, highlighting the main features of its role in this policy area. In addition to that, further analysis discusses the main channels for member states political

influence in NATO and, similar to the case of the EU, consults the small state perspective, thus evaluating the impact of structural limitations as well as potential advantages for smaller member states' roles within this organisation.

4.1. The Main Features of NATO's Role in Energy

Established in 1949 as an organisation for collective defence, NATO has traditionally dealt with conventional military threats. However, the international security environment has changed significantly since NATO's establishment: the bipolar East-West conflict ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Balkan Wars broke out in 1992, and the US were hit by terrorist attacks in September 2001.⁵²³ These key events showed that the very nature of threats had changed significantly from clearly definable, territory-bound and prevalingly military ones, to complex threats that stemmed from remote parts of the world and included both military and non-military aspects.⁵²⁴ In order to preserve its relevance under these new international conditions, the Alliance has undergone several transformational stages and developed from a purely defensive organisation to an institution of comprehensive security management.⁵²⁵

Within this new international security environment energy has become one of the newest areas of NATO's involvement. Together with other topics such as international terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and cyber and maritime security, energy is considered to be an emerging security challenge to NATO.⁵²⁶ However, the process of incorporating energy into the overall strategy of the Alliance has not been an easy or straightforward task. For a long time energy security was considered a "potentially divisive subject"⁵²⁷ among the member states. The main dividing line went between the Central and Eastern European countries that argued for a clear

⁵²³ Cf. Varwick, Johannes, *Die NATO: Vom Verteidigungsbündnis zur Weltpolizei?*, C. H. Beck oHG Verlag, München, 2008, pp. 43-44.

⁵²⁴ Cf. Varwick, Johannes, *NATO in (Un-)Ordnung: Wie transatlantische Sicherheit neu verhandelt wird*, Wochenschau-Verlag, Schwalbach, 2017, pp. 48-53.

⁵²⁵ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 26.

⁵²⁶ Cf. Zyga, Ioanna-Nikoletta, *Emerging Security Challenges: A Glue for NATO and Partners?*, Research Paper, No 85, Research Division, NATO Defence College, Rome, November 2012, p. 2.

⁵²⁷ Rühle, Michael/ Grubliauskas, Julijus, *NATO and Energy Security: Infrastructure Protection and Beyond*, in: *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol. 11, No. 3, 2012, p. 66.

role of NATO in energy, and Germany with France being particularly sceptical about broadening NATO's reach into this area.⁵²⁸

Among the main reasons behind the reluctance of the older and larger member states to broaden NATO's agenda to include energy was their concern over possible interference in the field of strategically important national energy issues. In addition to that, they argued about the need to avoid militarisation of energy at any cost. Finally, concerns over possible "Russia-bashing" by countries heavily dependent on energy imports were widespread, fearing the effect of endangering NATO-Russia relations.⁵²⁹ The prevailing context were disadvantageous for Lithuania's attempts to include energy into NATO's agenda as it had to discuss the rationale behind this proposal with the sceptical majority of the member states.

However, contrary to the German and French scepticism, the US had been generally supportive of the idea of including energy-related aspects on the agenda of the Alliance since the intensification of political tensions in the Persian Gulf in the 1970s.⁵³⁰ Although at that time the European NATO members were not willing to engage in energy security, there was a mixture of reasons that finally found a common denominator among the Allies in this area in the early 2000s. On one hand, the member states interested in the involvement of the Alliance in this area made use of Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty, stating that the member countries had the right to initiate discussions with the Allies on any question that in their opinion constituted a security threat for them.⁵³¹ They organised various conferences dedicated to the elaboration of security aspects of energy and raising awareness.⁵³² At the same time the ongoing international developments demonstrated connections between energy and security in practice. These developments involved the growing threat of a blockade of the Straits of Hormuz by Iran, repeated attacks on NATO fuel supplies for its troops in Afghanistan, instances of

⁵²⁸ Cf. Bocse, Alexandra-Maria, NATO, Energy Security and Institutional Change, in: *European Security*, Vol. 29, No. 4, 2020, pp. 442-444.

⁵²⁹ Cf. Rühle, Michael, *Energiesicherheit als strategische Herausforderung des Nordatlantischen Bündnisses*, in: *Zeitschrift für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik*, 8, 2015, p. 187.

⁵³⁰ Cf. Rühle, Michael, Discussion on the topic „NATO and Energy Security: A Readout From Chicago“, Atlantic Council of the United States, Washington, D.C., 05.05.2012, Transcript, p. 5, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/commentary/event-recap/nato-and-energy-security-a-readout-from-chicago/> [Accessed: 10.06.2019].

⁵³¹ Cf. The North Atlantic Treaty, Article 4, Washington D.C., 4 April 1949.

⁵³² Cf. Rühle, *Energiesicherheit als strategische Herausforderung des Nordatlantischen Bündnisses*, p. 187.

terrorist attacks on energy infrastructure, the emergence of the Stuxnet malware that damaged Iranian nuclear facilities, and the energy cut-offs to Ukraine and some EU countries by Russia in 2006.⁵³³

Resulting from the growing sensitivity of NATO member states to the energy-related security issues, this area was included in the agenda of the Alliance through several steps. An important first phase was the initiation of the discussion on possible NATO's possible role in energy that happened in the period of time between the approval of the NATO's Strategic Concept of 1999 and the Riga Summit in 2006. Although NATO's Strategic Concept of 1999 barely indicated that NATO's security interests could potentially be affected "by the disruption of the flow of vital resources"⁵³⁴, the Declaration of the Riga Summit already urged the need to define concrete areas in which NATO could "add value to safeguard the security interests of the Allies and, upon request, assist national and international efforts"⁵³⁵.

The Alliance responded to this urge during the Bucharest Summit of 2008, identifying five broad energy-related areas for NATO's engagement, stretching from intelligence sharing, projecting stability and advancing international cooperation, to supporting consequence management and providing protection of critical energy infrastructure.⁵³⁶ With the decisions of the Bucharest summit having paved the way for more precise considerations of NATO's role in the area of energy security, the real breakthrough within this process was achieved two years later. The new Strategic Concept of NATO adopted in 2010 indicated the need to integrate energy considerations into NATO's activities "on the basis of strategic assessments and contingency planning"⁵³⁷. It has been argued that at this point the Alliance moved from the initial stage of discussions over *whether* energy belonged to the NATO's agenda to the question of *how* energy issues

⁵³³ Cf. Rühle, Discussion on the topic „NATO and Energy Security: A Readout From Chicago“, pp. 5-7.

⁵³⁴ The Alliance's Strategic Concept, Approved by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington D.C., 24 April 1999, paragraph 24.

⁵³⁵ Riga Summit Declaration, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Riga on 29 November 2006, paragraph 45.

⁵³⁶ Cf. Bucharest Summit Declaration, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 3 April 2008, paragraph 48.

⁵³⁷ Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Adopted by Heads of State and Government at the NATO Summit in Lisbon, 19-20 November 2010, p. 17.

had to be addressed by the Alliance.⁵³⁸ The Lisbon Summit Declaration of 2010 reinforced this qualitative shift from a rather theoretical to a practical approach towards energy by tasking NATO to “integrate, as appropriate, energy security considerations in NATO’s policies and activities.”⁵³⁹

Therefore, after energy was included in NATO’s mandate, the process of enforcing it and maintaining its relevance within the Alliance followed.⁵⁴⁰ Although by now no NATO operation had been launched with the official aim to deal with energy-related security issues⁵⁴¹, this topic has been approached through other, non-military angles. One example in this respect was the decision to grant the Lithuanian Energy Security Centre the status of a Centre of Excellence of NATO that was made during the Chicago Summit of 2012.⁵⁴² The creation of the ENSEC COE reflected the process of successful institutionalisation of the new topic, thus allowing an opportunity to gather NATO’s energy-related expertise in one place.⁵⁴³

In addition to that, establishing linkages between energy and other issues of wide interest for all member states proved to be of particular importance at this stage. In this respect special attention has been paid to the connections between energy and cyber security, budget savings, and environmental considerations.⁵⁴⁴ Through the inter-linkage of energy and cyber security the focus on the protection of critical infrastructure has been strengthened. It has been recognised that “hyper-connectivity” and interdependencies being a dominant characteristic of the modern critical infrastructure, especially in the areas of energy, transport, and communications, resulted in new vulnerabilities for NATO.⁵⁴⁵ Recognising that protection of critical energy infrastructure remains primarily a national responsibility of the member states, NATO mainly acts through training and

⁵³⁸ Cf. Rühle, Discussion on the topic „NATO and Energy Security: A Readout From Chicago“, p. 5.

⁵³⁹ Lisbon Summit Declaration, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Lisbon, 20. November 2010, paragraph 41.

⁵⁴⁰ Cf. Bocse, p. 447.

⁵⁴¹ Cf. Varwick, NATO in (Un-)Ordnung: Wie transatlantische Sicherheit neu verhandelt wird, p. 52.

⁵⁴² Cf. Chicago Summit Declaration, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Chicago on 20 May 2012, paragraph 52.

⁵⁴³ Cf. Rühle, Energiesicherheit als strategische Herausforderung des Nordatlantischen Bündnisses, p. 196.

⁵⁴⁴ Cf. Bocse, pp. 448-449.

⁵⁴⁵ Cf. Prior, Tim, NATO: Pushing Boundaries for Resilience, CSS Analyses in Security Policy, No. 213, Center for Security Studies (CSS), ETH Zurich, September 2017, p. 2.

exercises in this area.⁵⁴⁶ Including protection of crucial sea lanes into the discussion on critical energy infrastructure provides broader action scope for NATO: both “Operation Active Endeavour” and “Operation Ocean Shield” in their broader contexts are seen as having positively contributed to energy security.⁵⁴⁷

In terms of interlinkages between energy security, budget savings, and environmental considerations, NATO has developed the “smart energy” approach.⁵⁴⁸ The main goal of this approach is to increase operational energy efficiency of NATO’s armed forces. It is argued that more energy-efficient armed forces have multiple positive effects, such as reduction of logistic burden, increase in the operational capabilities of troops through the reduced need for fuel convoys, reduced reliance on fuel deliveries, and an increase in the level of energy security for military operations, reduction of the energy supply chains and thus the overall costs of military operations, and the limitation of the carbon footprint of armed forces.⁵⁴⁹ As the “smart energy” approach focused on practical application of energy-related aspects to the everyday activities of the military forces, it allowed NATO to bind energy as an emerging security challenge to its traditional activities.⁵⁵⁰

Finally, the Ukraine crisis of 2014 demonstrated that energy had become an integral part of hybrid warfare⁵⁵¹ and had to therefore be approached as an issue of not only operational, but also strategic importance. Therefore, during the Wales Summit of 2014 the NATO member states agreed to raise strategic awareness on energy-related security threats through enhancing intelligence-sharing, intensifying energy security

⁵⁴⁶ Cf. NATO, „NATO’s role in energy security“, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49208.htm [Accessed: 20.05.2021].

⁵⁴⁷ Cf. NATO, „Operation Active Endeavour (Archived)“, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_7932.htm [Accessed: 20.05.2021]; NATO, „Operation Ocean Shield“, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_topics/141202a-Factsheet-OceanShield-en.pdf [Accessed: 20.05.2021]; Warwick, NATO in (Un-)Ordnung: Wie transatlantische Sicherheit neu verhandelt wird, p. 52.

⁵⁴⁸ Cf. NATO, „NATO’s role in energy security“, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49208.htm [Accessed: 20.05.2021].

⁵⁴⁹ Cf. Kavaliūnaitė, Sigita/ Genys, Dainius/ Melchiorre, Tiziana, Ensuring Energy Security in NATO: a Sociological Approach, Energy Security: Operational Highlights, No 10, NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence, 2016, p. 26.

⁵⁵⁰ Cf. Rühle, Energiesicherheit als strategische Herausforderung des Nordatlantischen Bündnisses, p. 190.

⁵⁵¹ Cf. Ibid, p. 191.

consultations among allies, and expanding links with other relevant international organisations.⁵⁵²

All in all, the process of incorporating energy into NATO's agenda demonstrated that there was a complex set of circumstances that allowed this controversial topic to reach the level of sufficient acceptance among the member states of the Alliance. On one hand, the internal pressure to engage NATO in this area that came from the side of the new, in terms of energy, extremely vulnerable member states, combined with the generally supportive stance of the US created a critical mass in the Alliance that could not be ignored. Resulting from the factually entrenched superior role of the US in NATO, the Eastern European countries had crucial backing that allowed them to successfully push energy towards inclusion on NATO's agenda.

On the other hand, for the Alliance, as an intergovernmental organisation, to agree on a thematic expansion into the realm of energy, the issue had to acquire a minimum level of universal relevance for all member states. As a result, multiple external energy-related developments in various parts of the world that started dominating the public sphere around 2006-2009 provided crucial evidence of the close inter-linkage between energy and security, thus allowing this topic to qualify as an emerging security challenge that could and had to be dealt with at the collective NATO level. In consideration of these political developments the following subchapter discusses crucial institutional conditions prevailing in NATO that allowed it to incorporate energy into its agenda.

4.2. The Main Channels for Member States' Influence

The founding North Atlantic Treaty does not specify the exact institutional design of NATO. It barely states that the "Parties [...] establish a Council, on which each of them shall be represented, to consider matters concerning the implementation of this Treaty."⁵⁵³ The North Atlantic Council (NAC) is therefore the only institution mentio-

⁵⁵² Cf. NATO, „NATO's role in energy security“, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49208.htm [Accessed: 20.05.2021].

⁵⁵³ The North Atlantic Treaty, Washington D.C. - 4 April 1949, Article 9, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm [Accessed: 22.05.2021].

ned in the founding Treaty and the main decision making body of NATO. According to the Treaty, all other “subsidiary bodies”⁵⁵⁴ are to be established if necessary. Although atypical for a military organisation, the initial institutional imprecision proved to be beneficial for NATO, especially in light of the transformational processes that it has undergone since its establishment.⁵⁵⁵

The fundamental feature of NATO is its dual civilian-military composition. Both civilian and military structures are divided into three hierarchical levels: 1) the decision-making bodies NAC and the Military Committee that are supported in their work by 2) International Staff (IS) and International Military Staff (IMS), and 3) various political and military administrative bodies.⁵⁵⁶ Within this dual composition, NATO’s military structure is subordinate to the political one⁵⁵⁷, therefore the NAC has primacy over the IMS. The NAC is composed of representatives from all member states and can meet at the levels of the heads of states and governments, foreign and defence ministers, or permanent representatives to NATO.⁵⁵⁸

Resulting from its nature as an intergovernmental organisation of sovereign states NATO bases its activities on decisions made in consensus among all of its members. According to the consensual decision-making process, decisions are regarded accepted if no objections have been expressed by any of the member states.⁵⁵⁹ This process is also known as “silent procedure”⁵⁶⁰, which has proven extremely beneficial in allowing the Alliance to act in politically sensitive situations⁵⁶¹. Moreover, the consensual decision-making is meant to assure equality of all member states apart from their structural differences. Thus every member state, including the small ones, has the right to disagree with the proposed decisions by “breaking the silence”⁵⁶².

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid, Article 9.

⁵⁵⁵ Cf. Varwick, NATO in (Un-)Ordnung: Wie transatlantische Sicherheit neu verhandelt wird, p. 64.

⁵⁵⁶ Cf. NATO, „NATO Organization“, <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/structure.htm#MS>, [Accessed: 25.05.2021].

⁵⁵⁷ Cf. Ibid, p. 64.

⁵⁵⁸ Cf. NATO, „North Atlantic Council“, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49763.htm [Accessed: 25.05.2021].

⁵⁵⁹ Cf. Nauta, David, The International Responsibility of NATO and Its Personnel during Military Operations, Leiden, Boston: Brill Nijhoff, 2018, pp. 72-73.

⁵⁶⁰ Varwick, Die NATO: Vom Verteidigungsbündnis zur Weltpolizei?, p. 49.

⁵⁶¹ Cf. Nauta, p. 73.

⁵⁶² Varwick, NATO in (Un-)Ordnung: Wie transatlantische Sicherheit neu verhandelt wird, p. 66.

These consensual decision-making rules notwithstanding, the intergovernmental nature of NATO naturally results in stronger positions of bigger and more influential countries. In the time span between the creation of NATO and the end of the East-West conflict, unity about both the urgency of the Soviet threat and the leading role of the US in guaranteeing security in the Euro-Atlantic area prevailed. In the post-Cold War period after the unifying existential Soviet threat was gone, power relations within the Alliance have changed. Although the US remain the biggest and strongest NATO member state in terms of both its economic and military might⁵⁶³, NATO member states' positions towards many security-related issues often diverge, allowing for talk about the emergence of NATO as a two-tier or even a multi-tier organisation.⁵⁶⁴

Within this constellation alongside the US, it is France, Germany, and the UK that constitute the main power centres of the Alliance. France and Germany build the core of the “traditionalist camp” being in favour of keeping the status quo role of NATO and maintaining its profile as a defence organisation in the traditional security sense. The US and the UK, on the contrary, arguing for NATO’s global role in addressing a broader set of security challenges represent the “reformist camp” of the Alliance.⁵⁶⁵ The new members from Central and Eastern Europe are seen as pushing for both, the Article 5 reassurance in the face of the perceived reemergent threat from Russia⁵⁶⁶ and expansion of NATO’s role into non-traditional security sectors such as energy and cyber.⁵⁶⁷ The US’s supportive stance towards the inclusion of new security challenges to the agenda of NATO combined with its principled attitude towards Russia made this country the most sought-after partner for countries like Lithuania.

In the context of increasing fragmentation within the Alliance, processes related to the drafting of NATO’s new Strategic Concept of 2010 constituted an important turning point in terms of reconciling the diverging views of the member states and creating a new channel for their influence. This document was meant to define the long-term strategy of NATO in the changing security environment and at the same time had to ac-

⁵⁶³ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 187.

⁵⁶⁴ Cf. Noetzel, Timo/ Benjamin Schreer, Does a multi-tier NATO matter? The Atlantic Alliance and the Process of Strategic Change, in: *International Affairs*, Vol. 85, No. 2, 2009, p. 211.

⁵⁶⁵ Cf. *Ibid*, pp. 215-216.

⁵⁶⁶ Cf. Varwick, NATO in (Un-)Ordnung: Wie transatlantische Sicherheit neu verhandelt wird, p. 93.

⁵⁶⁷ Cf. Bocse, pp. 442-444.

commodate the diverging security interests of member states belonging to both the “traditionalist” and the “reformist” camps. The reconciliation was achieved mostly thanks to a certain power shift from the side of the member states towards the office of the Secretary General and the IS.⁵⁶⁸ During the NATO Summit in Strasbourg and Kehl in 2009 the member states tasked Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen to draft the new Strategic Concept of the Alliance.⁵⁶⁹ Consequently Rasmussen appointed a Group of Experts led by the former Secretary of State of the United States Madeleine K. Albright to lay the groundwork for this crucial long-term document for the Alliance.⁵⁷⁰

It has been argued that the member states’ decision to forego the traditional *line-by-line drafting* among the capitals and to involve Rasmussen and the Expert Group in the process played an important role in reaching an agreement on the future role of NATO. As a result, following the recommendations of the high-level Expert Group⁵⁷¹ the emerging security challenges, among them also the contested energy security topic, found their way into the Strategic Concept⁵⁷², which the member states adopted during the Lisbon Summit “without major deliberations or disagreements.”⁵⁷³ The active engagement of Rasmussen in the process of strategy-drafting fits into the broader picture of his strong proactive role as Secretary General that lead to the strengthening of the IS’s influence within the organisational structure of NATO.⁵⁷⁴

In addition to that, the already existing academic research analysing the process of including energy into NATO’s agenda shows that the IS acted as an important policy entrepreneur in this area, also in the period of time before and after the adoption of the Strategic Concept of 2010.⁵⁷⁵ High officials of the IS saw energy as a potential driver of

⁵⁶⁸ Cf. Noetzel, Timo/ Schreer, Benjamin, More flexible, less coherent: NATO after Lisbon, in: Australian Journal of International Affairs Vol. 66, No. 1, 2012, p. 21.

⁵⁶⁹ Cf. Ibid, p. 23.

⁵⁷⁰ Cf. NATO, „NATO’s New Strategic Concept“, <https://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/experts-strategic-concept.html> [Accessed: 25.05.2021].

⁵⁷¹ Cf. NATO, NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement. Analysis and Recommendations of the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO, 17 May 2010, p. 46, <https://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/expertsreport.pdf> [Accessed: 25.05.2021].

⁵⁷² Cf. Rühle, Energiesicherheit als strategische Herausforderung des Nordatlantischen Bündnisses, p. 189.

⁵⁷³ Noetzel/ Schreer, More flexible, less coherent, p. 24.

⁵⁷⁴ Cf. Mouritzen, Hans, In spite of reform: NATO HQ still in the grips of nations, in: Defense & Security Analysis, 29:4, 2013, pp. 345-346.

⁵⁷⁵ Cf. Bocse, p. 448.

international security developments and therefore supported the idea of defining NATO's role in this area.⁵⁷⁶ Already before 2010 Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer pledged for regular consultations among the member states concerning the prevailing energy trends, initiated a collective investigation of NATO's strategic vulnerabilities in the energy field, as well as preparation to respond to crisis situations.⁵⁷⁷

In 2010 a new unit, the Emerging Security Challenges Division, was created within the IS and tasked to "monitor and anticipate international developments that could affect Allied security"⁵⁷⁸ in the areas of terrorism, proliferation of WMD, cyber defence, and energy security. Consequently, an Energy Security Section was established as a part of this division and has since then been led by Michael Rühle. The Energy Security Section is playing the independent role of information provider for the Alliance through its engagement with private and intergovernmental organisations, organisation of workshops, and publication of policy papers on the key energy security developments.⁵⁷⁹

All in all, the analysis showed that within NATO there have been several important channels of influence for the member states that were willing to promote the inclusion of energy aspects in the agenda of the Alliance. First, contacts with the delegation of the US were crucial. Backing from the most influential country in the Alliance has increased the chances for success in broadening NATO's agenda to this policy area. As a result, contacts to American colleagues on all political levels as well as collaborative work in the Deputy Permanent Representatives Committee responsible for the development of NATO's role in the energy security area⁵⁸⁰ was of high importance for Lithuania. Second, contacts with the Office of the Secretary General Rasmussen and the Group of Experts during the drafting stage of the Strategic Concept of 2010 have constituted an important channel for the promotion of member states' interests in the energy security area. Finally, contacts with the "traditionalist" camp of NATO led by Germany and France were crucial in accommodating the differing views on energy security issues

⁵⁷⁶ Cf. Rühle, Michael, NATO and Energy Security: from Philosophy to Implementation, in: *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 10 (4), 2012, p. 389.

⁵⁷⁷ Cf. de Hoop Scheffer, Jaap, NATO and the Challenge of Energy Security, in: *The RUSI Journal*, 153:6, 2008, p. 59.

⁵⁷⁸ NATO, „New NATO division to deal with Emerging Security Challenges“, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_65107.htm [25.05.2021].

⁵⁷⁹ Cf. Bocse, p. 448.

⁵⁸⁰ Cf. Rühle, *Energiesicherheit als strategische Herausforderung des Nordatlantischen Bündnisses*, p. 193.

in NATO, possibly through “trading” support for policy initiatives preferred by these countries.

The following subchapter draws on these channels of influence within NATO and elaborates on possible chances and limitations for the smaller member states’ — among them Lithuania’s — influence on the formation of the Alliance’s agenda for the energy security area.

4.3. Small States’ Influence in NATO

The profile of NATO as an intergovernmental organisation of sovereign states participating directly in the decision making process and, by contrast to the EU, not bound by any supranational structures has important implications on the small states’ strategies in this organisation. Since engagement through supranational institutions is seen as the most beneficial way to pursue small states’ national interests, the absence of a supranational body within the NATO framework forces the smaller member states to look for alternative options that would allow them to compensate their structural limitations within the Alliance. All of these options lead to their direct engagement with bigger and more influential member states.

The realist-inspired concepts of bandwagoning and balancing are useful in analysing such direct interactions between small and large member states. Although traditionally applied in analysing the reasons that motivate countries to form alliances with or against “the principal source of danger”⁵⁸¹, these concepts can also be used to explain the behaviour among allied member states within an alliance.⁵⁸² In this respect, bandwagoning within NATO can be understood as an attempt by smaller member states to support the US’s, the most influential member state’s, policy priorities in exchange for its protection. Balancing, on the other hand, implies forming alliances with other states in NATO in order to outweigh the dominant policy priorities of the US.⁵⁸³

⁵⁸¹ Walt, Stephen M., Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power, in: *International Security*, Vol. 9, No. 4, 1985, p. 4.

⁵⁸² Cf. Varwick, NATO in (Un-)Ordnung: Wie transatlantische Sicherheit neu verhandelt wird, pp. 27-28.

⁵⁸³ Cf. Bailes/ Thorhallsson, pp. 104-105.

Both bandwagoning and balancing, although traditionally understood in military-strategic terms, can also include elements of soft power, thus resulting in taking sides with the USA (bandwagoning) or other NATO member states (balancing) on the political-diplomatic and psycho-social levels.⁵⁸⁴ Yet another view suggests that smaller member states are generally expected to take the role of mediators during conflict situations within the Alliance as a result of their vital interest in keeping NATO “viable, credible and outwardly united”⁵⁸⁵.

In the area of energy security, NATO’s split into the “traditionalist” and “reformist” camps as previously discussed suggests that those member states interested in the inclusion of energy-related security aspects into NATO’s agenda were involved in bandwagoning strategies with the US and UK. Alternatively, the balancing strategy could describe other NATO members’ who were sceptical towards NATO’s “expansion” into this area willingness to build coalitions with the „traditionalists“ Germany and France with the aim to outweigh the positions of the “reformists” US and UK. Within this context, promotion of the energy security topic in NATO constituting an integral part of Lithuania’s national interests motivated the country to engage into the strategy of a “super-loyal” ally⁵⁸⁶ with the US unconditionally supporting its political line on topics that were generally divisive among the NATO member states.

The best example thereof was Lithuania’s support for the military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Lithuania’s supportive stance towards the US’s intervention in Iraq provoked a dispute with the European countries — first and foremost France — in the crucial time just before Lithuania’s accession to the EU.⁵⁸⁷ Therefore Lithuania’s willingness to risk the relations with the European partners and its support for a military mission in a remote region that was generally outside the area of Lithuania’s national interests suggested that this move was an attempt to preserve the US’s attention to the Eastern flank of NATO in the context of its general reorientation towards “out-of-area” missions. Similarly, Lithuania’s support for the American intervention in Afghanistan

⁵⁸⁴ Cf. Joffe, Josef, *Defying History and Theory: The United States as the Last Remaining Superpower*, in: Ikenberry, G. John (ed.), *America Unrivaled: The Future of the Balance of Power*, Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 2002, pp.172–177.

⁵⁸⁵ Bailes/ Thorhallsson, p. 105.

⁵⁸⁶ Cf. Koehane, Robert O., *The Big Influence of Small Allies*, p. 168.

⁵⁸⁷ Cf. *The Irish Times*, „Chirac's comments on EU candidate countries criticised by media, officials“, 20.02.2003, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/chirac-s-comments-on-eu-candidate-countries-criticised-by-media-officials-1.349540> [Accessed: 02.08.2021].

and its active participation in the subsequent NATO-led ISAF mission was described as “punching above its weight”⁵⁸⁸.

In general it has been argued that small states’, among them Lithuania’s, active involvement in these operations was surprising as, according to the existing scholarly debate on small states, they “generally ought to emphasize internationalist principles, international law and the avoidance of conflicts with other states.”⁵⁸⁹ Moreover, such operations were expensive and required considerable administrative capabilities. On the other hand, small states’ activism during the US-led international military operations was a natural way to create “positive social capital” in the eyes of the US, and therefore assure security guarantees for themselves.⁵⁹⁰ Similarly, the small states’ engagement has been interpreted as a way to seek prestige and recognition within the Alliance and subsequently translate it into political rewards.⁵⁹¹

Beside the active involvement in military operations, another possible way to demonstrate loyalty to the US and the common goals of the Alliance was the allocation of appropriate defence spending as required by the 2% military spending target. However, the academic literature suggests that in the area of defence spending and other “burden-sharing” initiatives, small NATO member states traditionally tend to free-ride, attempting to “minimize their individual burden for collective defence”.⁵⁹² This was true in the case of Lithuania, which spent around 1% of its GDP on defence from 2004 to 2015, with the historically low rate of 0,765% of the GDP being reached in 2013.⁵⁹³ Therefore, although participation in extra-territorial military operations was both expen-

⁵⁸⁸ NATO, International Military Staff, Remarks by the Chairman of the Military Committee, General Ray Henault at the occasion of his visit to Lithuania, <https://www.nato.int/ims/opinions/2007/o071129a.html> [Accessed: 02.08.2021].

⁵⁸⁹ Männik, Erik, Small States: Invited to NATO — Able to Contribute?, in: *Defense & Security Analysis*, 20:1, 2004, p. 22.

⁵⁹⁰ Cf. Banka, Andris, Reclaiming a Good Ally Status: Baltic Coping Strategies in the America First World, in: *European Security*, 30:2, 2021, p. 161.

⁵⁹¹ Cf. Pedersen, Rasmus Brun/ Reykers, Yf, Show them the Flag: Status Ambitions and Recognition in Small State Coalition Warfare, in: *European Security*, 29:1, 2020, p. 17.

⁵⁹² Janeliūnas, Tomas/ Zapolskis, Martynas, Lithuania as a Rational Free Rider in NATO, in: Czulda, Robert/ Madej, Marek (eds.), *Newcomers No More? Contemporary NATO and the Future of the Enlargement from the Perspective of “Post-Cold War” Members*, International Relations Research Institute in Warsaw, Jagello 2000 - NATO Information Center in Prague, Latvian Institute of International Affairs in Riga, in cooperation with Atlantic Treaty Association in Brussels sponsored by NATO Public Diplomacy Division, 2015, p. 74.

⁵⁹³ Cf. The World Bank, Military Expenditure (% of GDP) - Lithuania, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS?end=2019&locations=LT&start=1993&view=chart> [Accessed: 02.08.2021].

sive and potentially casualty-related, high international visibility made such operations a more attractive way to seek recognition from the US as opposed to appropriate defence spending that traditionally provided less publicity.

Lithuania's involvement in this operation had positive implications for both its general stance in NATO and for the promotion of its national security agenda, first and foremost, in the eyes of the US. Although since its accession to NATO Lithuania's national priorities within this organisation stretched from the establishment of the permanent NATO air-policing mission in Lithuania⁵⁹⁴, to contingency planning for the Baltics⁵⁹⁵, to the introduction of energy security issues in NATO's agenda, gaining the political support of the US on these issues was the crucial step towards positive NATO-level solutions.

4.4. Chapter Conclusions

This chapter was devoted to the investigation of the specific NATO-level conditions that have potentially had an impact on the process of pursuing Lithuania's national energy security interests within this organisation. In this respect the crucial phase for Lithuania was the process of initiating the NATO-wide discussion on security-related energy aspects with the aim of evaluating their potential for becoming an integral part of NATO's agenda. During this phase Lithuania's contacts with the representatives of the US have been of vital importance. The US being the most powerful country within the Alliance and traditionally having a supportive stance for the inclusion of energy in NATO's agenda, provided to be crucial backing for Lithuania's energy security interests and helped to persuade both sceptical Germany and France. There is a reason to suspect that Lithuania's support for the US's military intervention in Iraq in 2003 and later its active participation in the NATO-led military operation in Afghanistan represented the

⁵⁹⁴ Cf. Socor, Vladimir, „Permanent Status Sought for NATO's Baltic Air-Policing Mission“, Jamestown Foundation, Eurasia Daily Monitor, Volume 9, Issue 27, <https://jamestown.org/program/permanent-status-sought-for-natos-baltic-air-policing-mission/> [Accessed: 02.08.2021].

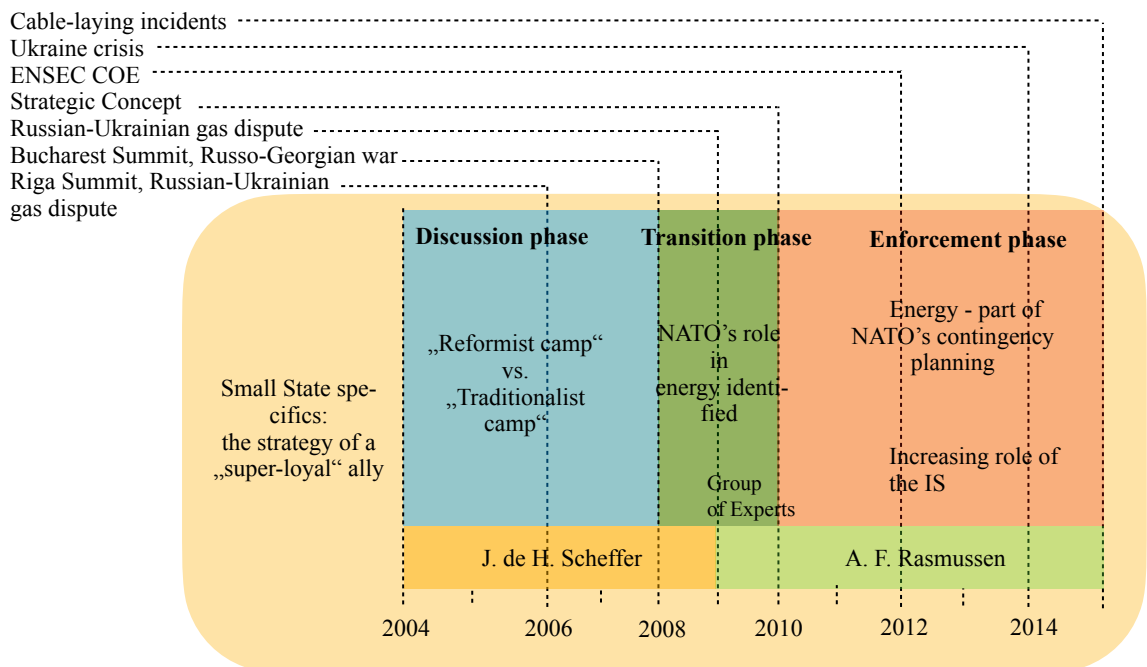
⁵⁹⁵ Cf. Demmer, Ulrike/ Neukirch, Ralf „Fear of Russia: NATO Developed Secret Contingency Plans for Baltic States“, Spiegel International, 07.12.2010, <https://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/fear-of-russia-nato-developed-secret-contingency-plans-for-baltic-states-a-733361.html> [Accessed: 02.08.2021].

bandwagoning strategy between Lithuania and the US helping to frame Lithuania’s image as a loyal ally deserving support for its specific national security interests.

The analysis shows that during the following stages of including energy in NATO’s agenda yet another important channel of influence for Lithuania emerged. The strong leadership of Secretary General Rasmussen and the creation of the Energy Security Section within the newly established Emerging Security Challenges Division represented two examples of great relevance in this respect. Secretary General Rasmussen was tasked with drafting the Strategic Concept of 2010 and for this reason appointed the Group of Experts. Moreover, the Energy Security Section, being part of the IS of NATO, supported Lithuania in the process of seeking the accreditation of its national Energy Security Center as a NATO Center of Excellence.

Figure 9 below summarises the contextual developments at the NATO level that were crucial for Lithuania’s attempts to promote its national interests related to the inclusion of energy security topics onto NATO’s agenda.

Figure 9: *Contextual Map — NATO-level*



Source: Author’s own compilation

5. Tracing the “Securitisation-induced Europeanisation” Causal Mechanism

This chapter is devoted to the empirical investigation of Lithuania’s energy security strategy in the EU and NATO through the prism of the proposed “securitisation-induced Europeanisation” causal mechanism. This analysis is conducted in chronological order and divided into two main temporal parts that reflect the major contextual shifts in Lithuania’s energy policy. The first temporal part of the investigation stretches from 2004-2008 and represents the period of the Brazauskas and Kirkilas-led governments, and the presidential term of Adamkus at the domestic level, the “pre-communitarisation phase” of the European energy policy at the EU-level, and the “discussion phase” for the inclusion of energy security aspects to the NATO agenda. The second temporal part of the investigation covers the time span from 2009-2015 and represents the period of the Kubilius and Butkevičius-led governments, and the presidential term of Grybauskaitė at the domestic level, the “post-communitarisation phase” of energy at the EU-level, and the “enforcement phase” of the energy security topic at the NATO-level.

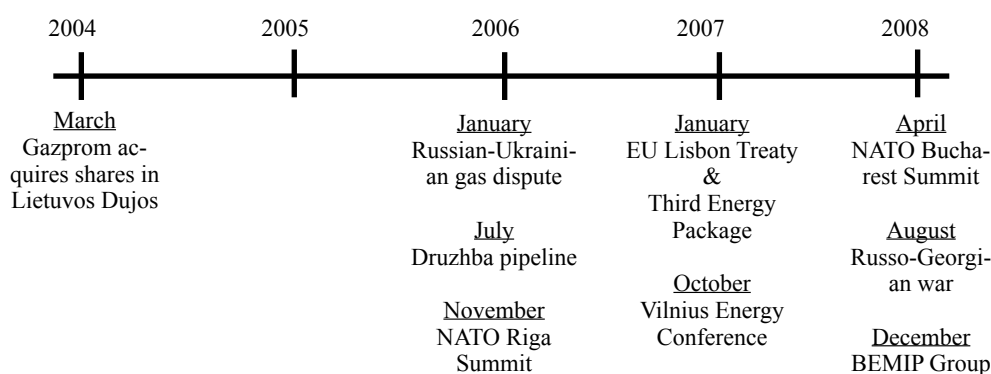
Within these temporal stages the incremental development of the “securitisation-induced Europeanisation” causal mechanism is observed. This process is approached through the prism of key events that have shaped the national and international political discourse in the energy security field in a given period of time. The validity of the causal interrelation between the securitisation and Europeanisation processes as a mediator between the “dependence-reliance-pattern” and Lithuania’s energy sector reform is analysed with the help of first-hand testimonies by experts who were involved in those key events as well as through investigation of multiple relevant documents and secondary sources.

5.1. Lithuania’s Energy Security Strategy in the EU and NATO from 2004-2008

The analysis of contextual conditions that prevailed between 2004-2008 in Lithuania's energy policy field allowed this period of time to be described as shaped by the major clash between the predominantly pragmatic energy policy pursued by the Brazauskas-led government and the normative presidency style of Adamkus, with the EU and NATO rather divided on the prospects of common positions towards energy security. In addition to that, Lithuania's distinct status as a newcomer to both the EU and NATO continued to restrict its international performance. Russia, on the other hand, was actively involved in energy and territorial disputes with its "near abroad" countries including Ukraine, Georgia, and Lithuania itself.

As a result, indicators stemming from the clusters of "restricting circumstances", "international measures", "Lithuanian diplomatic/tactical measures", and "facilitating conditions" were all present during this period of time. The cluster "restricting circumstances" encompassed the inclusion of Gazprom into the ownership structure of Lietuvos Dujos and the Druzhba pipeline incident. In addition to that, four indicators from the cluster of "international measures" emerged during this period of time, namely the NATO Riga Summit, negotiations on the EU's Lisbon Treaty and the Third Energy Package, the NATO Bucharest Summit, and the introduction of the BEMIP High Level Working Group. "Lithuanian diplomatic/tactical measures" included organisation of the Vilnius Energy Security Conference. Finally, the cluster "facilitating conditions" encompassed the Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute of 2006 and the Russo-Georgian War of 2008. The timeline below illustrates the chronological order of these events.

Figure 10: *Timeline of key events during the timeframe 2004-2008*



Source: Author's own compilation

Although the incremental development of the “securitisation-induced Europeanisation” mechanism is observed and analysed on the basis of chronological events as presented in the timeline, it is important to stress that it was not single events, but rather their various constellations that led to the interactive dynamics between the securitisation and Europeanisation elements of the proposed causal mechanism.

5.1.1. Privatisation of Lietuvos Dujos

The sale of Lietuvos Dujos shares to Gazprom was agreed to by the Lithuanian Brazauskas-led government in January 2004 and was completed in March of the same year.⁵⁹⁶ This deal demonstrated that at the time of Lithuania’s EU and NATO accession, increasing Russian involvement in the country’s energy sector was not perceived as incompatible with its membership in the Euro-Atlantic organisational structures. On the contrary, the two-step privatisation strategy of the company was intended to merge Lithuania’s long-term political orientation towards the West through the sale of one part of the available shares to the German E.ON Ruhrgas, with the immediate need to ensure gas supplies to the country by engaging more closely with the supplier Gazprom.

Both the Brazauskas-led government and President Adamkus were in favour of the sale, arguing that privatisation was badly needed in order to modernise the company and increase its profits.⁵⁹⁷ However, Brazauskas and Adamkus tended to stress different aspects of the planned sales deal: with regard to the “strategic importance” of Lietuvos Dujos for Lithuania, Adamkus emphasised the need to retain control of the company by the Lithuanian state and the Western strategic investor E.ON Ruhrgas, and therefore ur-

⁵⁹⁶ Cf. Irytas.lt, BNS, „Gazprom“ dominavimo Lietuvoje istorija: svarbiausios jos datos“/ “The history of “Gazprom“ domination in Lithuania: the timeline“ (in Lithuanian only), 01.03.2016, <https://www.irytas.lt/verslas/energetika/2016/03/01/news/-gazprom-dominavimo-lietuvoje-istorija-svarbiausios-jos-datos-826340> [Accessed: 05.10.2021].

⁵⁹⁷ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Prezidentas, „Lietuvos Respublikos Prezidento kalba pasitarime su parlamentinių partijų atstovais dėl privatizavimo strategijos“/ “The speech of the President of the Republic of Lithuania during discussion with representatives of the parliamentary parties over the privatisation strategy“ (in Lithuanian only), 10.01.2000, <http://adamkus.president.lt/one.phtml?id=985> [Accessed: 05.10.2021].

ged to not allow Gazprom acquiring more than 25% of the company's shares.⁵⁹⁸ Brazauskas, on the other hand, stressed the need to ensure continuous gas supplies to the country and thus argued that not only a substantial part of the company's shares should be sold to the supplier but also a long-term gas supply contract with Gazprom guaranteeing stable supplies until 2015 should be negotiated.⁵⁹⁹ The government had its final say on the privatisation process and so the long-term gas supply contract became an integral part of the deal between the Lithuanian state and Gazprom who acquired 34% of Lietuvos Dujos shares.⁶⁰⁰ Commenting on the deal Lithuania has entered into, Adamkus openly questioned its long-term consequences for the country.⁶⁰¹

The assessment of the consequences of the privatisation deal differed not only between the Lithuanian President and the Prime Minister, but also by the contract parties — the Lithuanian state, and Gazprom. According to the Lithuanian plan, the inclusion of E.ON Ruhrgas into the stakeholder structure of Lietuvos Dujos was sufficient leverage in ensuring its long-term goal of European integration in the energy field. The Russian part, on the contrary, called the privatisation deal „a landmark event enhancing Russian-Lithuanian economic integration“⁶⁰². The future events showed that Gazprom and E.ON Ruhrgas controlling the majority of Lietuvos Dujos shares together were able to hamper the process of liberalising the Lithuanian natural gas sector, and thus managed blocking Lithuania's plans to become an integral part of the European energy market as long as until 2014.

⁵⁹⁸ Cf. Delfi.lt, BNS, „Prezidentas: "Lietuvos dujų" pardavimas turi būti skaidrus“/ “The President: the sale of “Lietuvos Dujos“ has to be transparent“ (in Lithuanian only), 28.08.2001, <https://www.delfi.lt/verslas/verslas/prezidentas-lietuvos-duju-pardavimas-turi-buti-skaidrus.d?id=459449> [Accessed: 05.10.2021].

⁵⁹⁹ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, „Ministras Pirmininkas su “E.ON AG” valdybos pirmininku aptarė Lietuvos energetikos ūkio perspektyvas ir plėtrą“/ “The Prime Minister and the chairman of the board of “E.ON AG“ discussed the perspectives and development of Lithuania's energy branch“ (in Lithuanian only), 17.09.2003, <https://lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/ministras-pirmininkas-su-e-on-ag-valdybos-pirmininku-aptare-lietuvos-energetikos-ukio-perspektyvas-ir-pletra> [Accessed: 05.10.2021].

⁶⁰⁰ Cf. Delfi.lt, „Vyriausybė pritarė „Lietuvos dujų“ sutarčiai su „Gazprom““/ “The Government agreed on the contract between “Lietuvos Dujos“ and “Gazprom“ (in Lithuanian only), 17.03.2004, <https://www.delfi.lt/verslas/verslas/vyriausybe-pritare-lietuvos-duju-sutarčiai-su-gazprom.d?id=3938915> [Accessed: 05.10.2021].

⁶⁰¹ Cf. President of the Republic of Lithuania, „President comments the Government's decision on privatisation of the Company Lietuvos dujos“, 03.10.2001, <http://adamkus.president.lt/en/one.phtml?id=2393> [Accessed: 05.10.2021].

⁶⁰² Russian News Agency ITAR-TASS, „Gazprom's deal with Lietuvos Dujos to step up economic integration“, 24.03.2004, Lexis Nexis Database: [advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3s8m00d8.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:604M-T031-JC8F-838F-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance-1.lexis-1.com-1zf6r3s8m00d8.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:604M-T031-JC8F-838F-00000-00&context=1516831) [Accessed: 05.10.2021].

However, the first indications of possible limitations of closer energy ties with Russia in general and the privatisation deal with Gazprom in particular emerged as early as February 2004, when natural gas supplies to Lithuania were halted as a result of the Russian-Belorussian gas dispute. Following this event, the idea of setting up a strategic gas reserve in Lithuania in order to avoid future disruptions was discussed for the first time.⁶⁰³ The supply disruptions in the midst of the privatisation process that was originally meant to assure uninterrupted gas supply to the country, raised questions about Russia's reliability as a supplier for the first time and clearly demonstrated that being tied to inflexible energy infrastructure could pose a security of supply risk for the consumer country.

As a result, around 2004 an infrastructural initiative aimed at reducing the risk of possible supply disruptions was proposed by Lithuania and Poland. The neighbouring countries urged a proposed connection for the Baltic region to join the rest of the EU through the "Amber pipeline", which would go from Russia, through the Baltic States and Poland, and further onwards into Germany.⁶⁰⁴ This proposal was based on the idea that by developing Lithuania's role as a transit country for Russian gas, the security of supply guarantees could be effectively increased. During this time the project also became the official Lithuanian-Polish proposal for an alternative to the Nord Stream pipeline project. The feasibility of the latter project had been discussed since the early 2000s with Germany and Russia signing the memorandum of understanding in September 2005. This formalised their intention to build the offshore gas pipeline that would connect Russia as a supplier to its main Western European consumer, Germany, directly and bypassing all transit countries.⁶⁰⁵

⁶⁰³ Cf. Neff, Andrew, "Lithuania Considers Strategic Gas Reserve to Avoid Another Disruption in Russian Supplies", IHS Global Insight, 01.04.2004, Lexis Nexis Database: [advance-1lexis-lcom-lzf6r3s8m00d8.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4C2G-1Y00-01DF-W50S-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance.lexis-lcom-lzf6r3s8m00d8.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4C2G-1Y00-01DF-W50S-00000-00&context=1516831) [Accessed: 05.10.2021].

⁶⁰⁴ Cf. Polish News Bulletin, "New Gas Pipeline Concept - Amber Across the Baltics and Poland", 12.04.2005, Lexis Nexis Database: advance-1lexis-lcom-lzf6r3sa2074c.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4FXM-7770-0046-S3WN-00000-00&context=1516831 [Accessed: 07.10.2021]; Lietuvos Respublikos Prezidentas, "Krynicos ekonominiame forume Lietuvos vadovas pristatė regioninio bendradarbiavimo kryptis"/ "The head of Lithuanian state presented directions for regional cooperation in the Krynica Economic Forum" (in Lithuanian only), 09.09.2004, <http://archyvas.lrp.lt/lt/news.full/5230> [Accessed: 06.10.2021].

⁶⁰⁵ Cf. dw.com, "Die Geschichte des Nord-Stream-Projekts", 25.07.2021, <https://p.dw.com/p/3y1No> [Accessed: 07.10.2021].

From its inception the Nord Stream pipeline project faced strong opposition in Lithuania and Poland. The arguments against it ranged from environmental to security concerns, but the underlying notion was that it was a betrayal of the new, infrastructurally isolated EU member states. It was even reported that Lithuanian Prime Minister Brazauskas referred to the planned pipeline as a “[g]as variation of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact”⁶⁰⁶, as it had been negotiated behind the backs of the Eastern European countries and was meant to serve the interests of Russia and Germany. As a result, this pipeline project provoked the feeling of being treated unjustly, especially in Lithuania, which was obliged by the EU to shut down the INPP. Brazauskas related these two issues by stating that the EU “forced” Lithuania to shut down the INPP while simultaneously being offered no alternatives, and even neglecting its interests in relation to the new infrastructural projects.⁶⁰⁷ Adamkus also expressed a similar opinion by stating:

“I believe I can understand the Russian position but I can’t understand Germany’s position. As a member of the EU, they acted without even extending the courtesy of advising the Baltic states [about their plans].”⁶⁰⁸

In reaction to the advancing development of the Nord Steam pipeline project, Lithuanian and Polish decision makers openly warned their EU and NATO partners about the possible Russian political motives behind the project as early as in 2006. The General Rapporteur of the NATO PA Jos van Gennip reported on the prevailing views towards energy security in the NATO member states and stressed that:

“Poland and Lithuania, in particular, were incensed that German officials had made no attempt to coordinate an overall pipeline strategy within Europe prior to negotiating with Russia. Both warned their European partners that Russia seemed increasingly inclined to use energy for political and diplomatic ends that were not in Europe’s greater interests.”⁶⁰⁹

Yet another episode that revealed Lithuania’s declining energy security situation was related to the announcement of Gazprom’s plans to substantially increase gas prices

⁶⁰⁶ Spiegel International, SPIEGEL Interview with Lithuanian Prime Minister Algirdas Brazauskas, „Leader Says Planned Russian-German Pipeline 'Extremely Dangerous'“, 10.10.2005, <https://www.spiegel.de/international/spiegel/spiegel-interview-with-lithuanian-prime-minister-algirdas-brazauskas-leader-says-planned-russian-german-pipeline-extremely-dangerous-a-379543.html> [Accessed: 07.10.2021].

⁶⁰⁷ Cf. Ibid.

⁶⁰⁸ Wagstyl, Stefan, „Lithuanian leader hits back at Russia’s energy policy“, Financial Times, 03.05.2006, <https://www.ft.com/content/4278c7e4-dac3-11da-aa09-0000779e2340> [Accessed: 07.10.2021].

⁶⁰⁹ van Gennip, Jos, (Netherlands), General Rapporteur, „Energy Security“, NATO Parliamentary Assembly, General Report, 170 ESC 06 E rev 1, Economics and Security, November 2006, p. 5.

for Lithuania up to the average European level. While commenting on Gazprom's plans Brazauskas showed no optimism towards Lithuania's chances at changing them back and stated that the increase in gas prices had to be considered Lithuania's "payment for membership in the European Union"⁶¹⁰. Therefore, just like in the case of the obligation to shut down the INPP stemming from Lithuania's membership in the EU, the substantial increase in energy prices after the country's accession to the EU and the subsequently growing budgetary burden was also associated with certain sacrifices that the country had made by its decision to join the EU.

5.1.2. Russian-Ukrainian Gas Dispute of 2006

Russia's Gazprom cut-off natural gas supplies to Ukraine on January 1, 2006 following Ukraine's rejection to pay an increased "European" price for this commodity.⁶¹¹ The increase in price charged by Gazprom was related to the outcome of the Orange Revolution of 2004 in Ukraine that brought the pro-Western President Viktor Yushchenko to power.⁶¹² The increase of energy prices as a reaction to the change of the political course reflected the broader Russian strategy towards its energy-dependent neighbours in the "near abroad". As previously discussed, Lithuania experienced a similar increase in natural gas prices in 2005 as a reaction to its accession to the EU and NATO.

An important element of this gas dispute was Gazprom's successful blockade of gas deliveries to Ukraine by alternative suppliers. Since 2002 Ukraine had a supply contract with Turkmenistan that foresaw Turkmen natural gas deliveries to Ukraine via Russia.⁶¹³ This contract notwithstanding, in December 2005 during the escalating conflict with Ukraine, Gazprom achieved a deal with Turkmenistan who agreed to instead

⁶¹⁰ ITAR-TASS, „Gazprom to increase gas price for Lithuania“, 09.06.2005, Lexis Nexis Database: [advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sa206f0.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6049-R4Y1-DYRH-02V0-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance.lexis-1com-1zf6r3sa206f0.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6049-R4Y1-DYRH-02V0-00000-00&context=1516831) [Accessed: 07.10.2021].

⁶¹¹ Cf. Stern, Jonathan, The Russian-Ukrainian gas crisis of January 2006, Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, 2006, p. 7.

⁶¹² Cf. Dickinson, Peter, „How Ukraine's Orange Revolution shaped twenty-first century geopolitics“, Atlantic Council, 22.11.2020, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/how-ukraines-orange-revolution-shaped-twenty-first-century-geopolitics/> [Accessed: 01.11.2021].

⁶¹³ Cf. Stern, p. 7.

sell Gazprom the amount of gas initially foreseen for Ukraine.⁶¹⁴ In case of refusal Gazprom threatened to block Turkmenistan's access to the pipeline that was used to supply Ukraine.⁶¹⁵ As a result, the Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute involved a precedent for politically motivated constraints on third party access to energy infrastructure.

The cut-off of gas supplies to Ukraine had repercussions in the EU member states too. Consumers in Hungary, Austria, Slovakia, Romania, France, Poland, Italy, and Germany were affected by this dispute as natural gas volume to be delivered to these countries fell drastically in the middle of winter. The exact reason for supply disruptions remained unclear and was limited to speculations of either Gazprom having reduced volume not only for Ukraine, but also for the European consumers, or Ukraine having misused its position as a transit country and having diverted gas initially foreseen for the European market for its own needs.⁶¹⁶

Although affected by the dispute, the EU took „a neutral stance of non-involvement in the conflict“⁶¹⁷. Commenting on this issue in an expert interview, Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs, who was directly involved in these developments, argued that Russia used this dispute in order to subordinate Ukraine, not in order to hurt the EU. The European countries' experience of January 2006 was therefore seen as collateral damage.⁶¹⁸ However, although the EU restrained itself from expressing strong criticism towards the parties in conflict, it drew important lessons-learned later that same year. First of all, an emergency meeting of the newly established Gas Coordination Group took place on 4 January in order to discuss the implications of the Russian-Ukrainian dispute in terms of the security of supply of the EU.⁶¹⁹ The group met again in October 2006 upon the request of Commissioner Piebalgs in order to discuss the gas

⁶¹⁴ Cf. Dornblüth, Gesine/ Rumpf, Matthias, „Nach dem Gas-Streit: Russlands Energiepolitik im Wandel“, Deutschlandfunk, 09.02.2006, https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/nach-dem-gas-streit.724.de.html?dram:article_id=98390 [Accessed: 01.11.2021].

⁶¹⁵ Cf. Euractiv, „Interview – EU Competition Commissioner Neelie Kroes on energy“, 22.03.2006, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/competition/interview/interview-eu-competition-commissioner-neelie-kroes-on-energy/> [Accessed: 01.11.2021].

⁶¹⁶ Cf. Stern, pp. 8-9.

⁶¹⁷ Sirutavičius, Vladas, Ukraine: the Orange Revolution and its Aftermath, Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review 2005, Vilnius, 2006, p. 162.

⁶¹⁸ Author's Interview #4.

⁶¹⁹ Cf. Bogle, Sally, „EU Ponders Lessons of Gas Supply Security as Russia-Ukraine Dispute Ends“, IHS Global Insight, 04.01.2006, Lexis Nexis Database, [advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sqp0095.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4HYK-GD10-01DF-W3BP-00000-00&context=1516831](https://www.lexisnexis.com/docview/advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sqp0095.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4HYK-GD10-01DF-W3BP-00000-00&context=1516831) [Accessed: 31.10.2021].

supply situation for the coming winter and was drawing on upon experience of the recent supply disruptions between the supplier Gazprom and the transit country Ukraine.⁶²⁰

The EU-level discussions concerning limited connectedness and infrastructural issues among the member states intensified in 2006. Although this topic had been actively discussed since the British presidency term in the second part of 2005⁶²¹, the January 2006 dispute between Europe's supplier Gazprom and the main transit country Ukraine emphasised looming vulnerabilities that inflexible gas transportation systems and an absence of alternative supply routes posed to the EU. In this spirit the EC acknowledged the status of Lithuania and the other two Baltic States for the first time as an „energy island“ in its Green Paper on energy that was published in March 2006.⁶²² According to the Lithuanian officials, this status was ascribed to the Baltic region “by active diplomatic efforts of Lithuania”⁶²³. The recent Gazprom dispute with Ukraine had most likely helped Lithuania to strengthen its arguments about the direct link between dependence on a single supplier and threats for security of supply.

Generally, the Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute of 2006 can be seen as an important step in consolidating the Polish-Lithuanian cooperation on democracy promotion and energy security issues in Eastern Europe. On one hand, Adamkus established his role as a democracy promoter to the East through his active mediation efforts during the Orange Revolution in Ukraine.⁶²⁴ On the other hand, the gas dispute of 2006 was interpreted as Russian blackmail designed to prevent Ukraine's drift from its sphere of influence by damaging its reputation as a transit country. These developments resulted in Adamkus' calls for a common EU position towards Russia in order to mitigate its wil-

⁶²⁰ Cf. European Commission, „Gas Coordination Group meets to evaluate the gas supply situation ahead of winter“, Press Release, IP/06/1334, Brussels, 6 October 2006, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/press-corner/detail/en/IP_06_1334 [Accessed: 03.09.2021].

⁶²¹ Author's Interview #4.

⁶²² Cf. Commission of the European Communities, Green Paper, „A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy“, Brussels, 8.3.2006 COM(2006) 105 final, p. 6.

⁶²³ Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2006 metų veiklos ataskaita, Pritarta Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2007 m. kovo 21 d. nutarimu Nr. 307/ Governmental Report Concerning its Activities in 2006 (in Lithuanian only), p. 109.

⁶²⁴ Cf. The Baltic Times, „Adamkus tries hand at mediating in eye of Ukrainian maelstrom“, 01.12.2004, <https://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/11508/> [Accessed: 08.10.2021].

lingness to use energy as a political tool over its neighbours⁶²⁵, and reflected the normative foreign policy that was typical for Adamkus' presidency.

Poland, on the other hand, emerged as an active initiator of practice-oriented proposals for the EU in order to counteract future supply disruptions. Together with Hungary, the Czech Republic and Austria, Poland presented a plan for diversification of energy supplies in Eastern and Central Europe.⁶²⁶ Poland also raised the idea of a European Energy Security Treaty during the Council of the EU meeting in March 2006, urging the development of “mutual security guarantees” in order to assure assistance for countries affected by “natural disasters, terrorist activity, grid failures as well as potential political pressure”⁶²⁷ in the energy field. Therefore, immediately after the Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute, Poland emerged as an active actor willing to initiate European countermeasures in response to Russia's energy-related political pressures.

Lithuanian and Polish evaluation of the events related to the Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute resulted in their common position that the external branch of European energy policy should be strengthened. Corresponding views at the EU-level had been expressed in June 2006 when the EC and the EU's High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana published a joint proposal for the development of an external European energy policy.⁶²⁸ Within this process the Russo-Ukrainian gas dispute could be interpreted as an event that created an important “policy window”⁶²⁹, allowing awareness to be raised about the risks for security of supply stemming from collective European and individual member states' over-dependence on a single energy supplier. Lithuania, together with Poland, used this dispute in order to thematise the importance of a coordinated European approach towards external energy policy.

⁶²⁵ Cf. Wagstyl, „Lithuanian leader hits back at Russia's energy policy“.

⁶²⁶ Cf. Brutschin, Elina, *Shaping the EU's Energy Policy Agenda: the Role of Eastern European Countries*, in: Tosun, Jale/ Biesenbender, Sophie/ Schulze, Kai (eds.), *Energy Policy Making in the EU: Building the Agenda*, London: Springer Verlag, 2015, p. 199.

⁶²⁷ Council of the European Union, *Proposal for a European Energy Security Treaty - presentation by the Polish delegation*, Brussels, 9 March 2006, 7160/06, p. 2, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7160-2006-INIT/en/pdf> [Accessed: 01.11.2021].

⁶²⁸ Cf. Consilium, *An External Policy To Serve Europe's Energy Interests*, Paper from Commission/SG/HR for the European Council, S160/06, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/reports/90082.pdf [Accessed: 01.11.2021].

⁶²⁹ Maltby, 441.

5.1.3. The Druzhba Pipeline Incident

The Druzhba pipeline incident in Lithuania was directly related to the sale of the Lithuanian crude oil refining company Mažeikių Nafta. After the company's previous owner, the Russian oil company Yukos, filed for bankruptcy, Mažeikių Nafta — the biggest company in Lithuania and the Baltic region — had to be re-sold. There were four bidders willing to acquire shares of the refinery: the Russian company Lukoil, the Russian-British joint-venture TNK-BP, the Kazakh company KazMunayGaz, and the Polish PKN Orlen.⁶³⁰ At the early stage of the sale process Prime Minister Brazauskas favoured the joint Russian-British venture TNK-BPH. However, Yukos, holding a majority 53.7 % of Mažeikių Nafta shares and seeing its bankruptcy as a politically motivated seizure organised by the Kremlin, refused to sell its assets to a Russian company.⁶³¹ The oppositional parties in the Lithuanian Parliament Seimas — first and foremost the HU-LChD — were also against the sale of Mažeikių Nafta to a Russian company, claiming that selling assets to a Kremlin-controlled entity would pose a threat for the national security of Lithuania.⁶³² Within this tense interest structure the Polish company PKN Orlen emerged as a compromise between the interested parties.

Immediately after the decision to sell the refinery to PKN Orlen was made in June 2006, the Lithuanian side voiced its concerns about possible Russian counter-reaction to these developments. President Adamkus raised this issue in the beginning of July during his visit in Berlin, stating that the Russian side sent hints about possible halts of crude oil deliveries.⁶³³ In addition to that, experts warned that Russia was planning to acquire Mažeikių Nafta outside of the official sale process by either forcing Lithuania to rethink its decision or by making the deal uncompetitive for PKN Orlen.⁶³⁴ As a reac-

⁶³⁰ Cf. Kramer, Andrew E., „Lithuania suspects Russian oil grab - Business - International Herald Tribune“, The New York Times, 27.10.2006, <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/27/business/worldbusiness/27iht-embargo.3312013.html> [Accessed: 20.10.2021].

⁶³¹ Cf. Peach, Gary,, „Deal of the century“ finalized 's PKN Orlen buys Mazeikiu Nafta for \$2.3 billion“, The Baltic Times, 20.12.2006, <https://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/17045/> [Accessed: 20.10.2021].

⁶³² Cf. Schmid, U., „Neue Energie-Dispute an der Ostsee“, Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 03.04.2006, Lexis Nexis Database: [advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sfn0854.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4JMK-YWJ0-TWB6-82TV-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance-1.lexis-1.com-1zf6r3sfn0854.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4JMK-YWJ0-TWB6-82TV-00000-00&context=1516831) [Accessed: 03.09.2021].

⁶³³ Cf. Radio Free Europe, „Newline - July 12, 2006“, 12.07.2006, <https://www.rferl.org/a/1143671.html> [Accessed: 20.10.2021].

⁶³⁴ Cf. Kramer, „Lithuania suspects Russian oil grab - Business - International Herald Tribune“, The New York Times.

tion to the concerns expressed by Lithuania, US Vice President Dick Cheney thematised them during his visit to Vilnius, stating that “[n]o legitimate interest is served when oil and gas become tools of intimidation or blackmail, either by supply manipulation or attempts to monopolize transportation.”⁶³⁵

The concerns about planned Russian intimidation action turned out to be true, as at the end of July the Russian authorities announced technical problems in the branch of the Druzhba pipeline system that brought crude oil to Lithuania. It was argued that a leak occurred near the Belorussian-Lithuanian border where the pipeline branch going to Lithuania and Belarus separated from the main export pipeline that brought oil to the Western European countries. As a result, the Western consumers were assured to receive supplies without disruptions and only Lithuania would be affected by the leakage.⁶³⁶

Following these developments, Lithuania approached the EU asking for its assistance in restoring the crude oil flow by the Druzhba pipeline. However, the news record shows that at the beginning the EU was hesitant to offer its assistance on this issue, leading to warnings by Lithuanian diplomats and politicians to tie the Druzhba issue with the upcoming negotiations on the renewal of the EU-Russia PCA.⁶³⁷ Likely seeing the halt as a technical issue, the EU expected Lithuania and Russia to solve the incident on a bilateral basis. Although Lithuania had claimed from the very beginning that the halt was politically motivated, the EU’s reluctance to offer its support on the issue illustrated the still prevailing clash between Lithuania and the mainstream EU perception of Russia as a reliable supplier. Several interview partners stressed that the EU’s perception of Russia’s hidden foreign policy interests behind its energy policy did not change until the annexation of Crimea in 2014.⁶³⁸ Therefore Adamkus’ warnings about Russia’s plans to conquer Lithuania through economy and energy with reference to the Druzhba pipeline incident⁶³⁹ remained practically unanswered.

⁶³⁵ The White House, President George W. Bush, Office of the Vice President, „Vice President's Remarks at the 2006 Vilnius Conference“, 04.05.2006, <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/05/print/20060504-1.html> [Accessed: 20.10.2021].

⁶³⁶ Cf. Socor, Vladimir, „Russian Oil Supplies to Lithuania Cut Off“, Jamestown Foundation, Eurasia Daily Monitor, Volume 3, Issue 150, 03.08.2006, <https://jamestown.org/program/russian-oil-supplies-to-lithuania-cut-off/> [Accessed: 20.10.2021].

⁶³⁷ Cf. The Baltic Times, „Barroso finally expresses support for refinery“, 14.03.2007, <https://www.baltic-times.com/news/articles/17510/> [Accessed: 20.10.2021].

⁶³⁸ Author’s Interview #1, #3, #6.

⁶³⁹ Cf. Vaida, Petras, „Adamkus fears of Russia's intervention“, The Baltic Course, 16.09.2008, http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/baltic_states_cis/?doc=5187 [Accessed: 20.10.2021].

However, in an interview Commissioner Piebalgs stressed that the EC knew about the importance of this issue for Lithuania, assisted it, and even offered the Russian side to help fixing the leakage.⁶⁴⁰ However, no technical information about the details of the issue and no interest in this proposal was shown by Russian authorities, which only led to further support for Lithuania's version of events about Russian political motives behind the halt.⁶⁴¹ Despite having no hope for the future re-opening of the pipeline⁶⁴², Lithuania pushed this topic further to the European agenda. However, as the halt of crude oil supplies by the Druzhba pipeline had no negative implications on other EU member states except for Lithuania, its securitisation attempts remained unsuccessful and even counter-productive. As a result, no immediate positive implications on Europeanisation processes in the energy field could be identified.

5.1.4. The NATO Riga Summit

The Riga Summit in 2006 represented the first event for NATO of such importance on territory that previously belonged to the Soviet Union. Because of this reason this Summit carried a strong symbolic meaning for the Baltic States, emphasising their new role as members of the Trans-Atlantic family and enjoying “the same level of security as any other Allied nation.”⁶⁴³ Attention that has been shown for the Baltic States by choosing Riga as the location for NATO's Summit undoubtedly encouraged Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia to try uploading their security interests onto the Trans-Atlantic agenda. The timing was extremely favourable for an upload since — as Daniel Fried, Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs at the US Department of State

⁶⁴⁰ Author's Interview #4.

⁶⁴¹ Cf. tv3.lt, BNS, „V. Adamkus žada nebesidomėti „Družba“/ “V. Adamkus is going to ignore “Družba“ (in Lithuanian only), 11.10.2007, <https://www.tv3.lt/naujiena/lietuva/v-adamkus-zada-nebesidometi-druzba-n171028> [Accessed: 20.10.2021].

⁶⁴² Reuters, „Russia won't re-open oil pipeline, Lithuania says“, 11.10.2007, <https://www.reuters.com/article/lithuania-russia-oil-idUKL1159854520071011> [Accessed: 20.10.2021].

⁶⁴³ President of the Republic of Lithuania, Address by H. E. Mr. Valdas Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania, at NATO's Riga Summit, 29.11.2006, <http://archyvas.lrp.lt/en/news.full/7314> [Accessed: 01.11.2021].

put it: “[t]he Riga Summit is part of a process of NATO intellectually and organizationally and militarily finding its place in a 21st Century world.”⁶⁴⁴

Lithuania worked on fostering the Trans-Atlantic discussion on energy security, stressing NATO’s nature as “a political Alliance”⁶⁴⁵ and urging its use for discussing strategically important security issues.⁶⁴⁶ Linkevičius stressed in the interview that Lithuania’s interest in developing NATO’s role in energy was a natural reaction to the vast vulnerabilities prevailing in its energy sector and in turn having negative political implications on the country.⁶⁴⁷ Therefore, from the Lithuanian point of view, energy and politics were highly intertwined and thus justifying the upload of this topic to the NATO level. However, Linkevičius admitted that at that time Lithuania’s activism in demanding a more active involvement from NATO in the energy field was not always positively accepted during the NATO ambassadors’ discussions.⁶⁴⁸

The available record on the preparations for the Riga Summit shows that at that time there were big differences between the American and European stance on NATO’s future role in energy. The Americans seemed to be confident about the potential of energy to become part of NATO’s agenda, as representatives from various state agencies supported this idea. Beside Daniel Fried, who described energy as “a critically important issue”⁶⁴⁹ and saw its growing strategic importance, especially after the recent Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute, also the Supreme Allied Commander for Europe (SACEUR) Gen. Jim Jones and Senator Richard G. Lugar were actively involved in fostering the Euro-Atlantic debate on energy security.⁶⁵⁰ Senator Lugar commented on the

⁶⁴⁴ Fried, Daniel, Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State, Roundtable With European Journalists, „NATO/Riga Summit Issues“, Washington, DC, October 4, 2006, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/73756.htm> [Accessed: 01.11.2021].

⁶⁴⁵ President of the Republic of Lithuania, Address by H. E. Mr. Valdas Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania, at NATO's Riga Summit.

⁶⁴⁶ Cf. Ibid.

⁶⁴⁷ Author’s Interview #3.

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁹ Fried, Daniel, Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs, U. S. Department of State, Remarks to Defense Writers Group, „NATO: Upcoming Summit in Riga, Latvia“, November 21, 2006, Washington, DC, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/76737.htm> [Accessed: 01.11.2021].

⁶⁵⁰ Cf. Ibid.

recent supply cut-off to Ukraine by stressing the destructive potential of energy blackmail: “[...] energy is becoming the weapon of choice for those who possess it.”⁶⁵¹

The American decisiveness to engage in energy at the Euro-Atlantic level notwithstanding, the question where and how to dock the energy security topic within NATO’s agenda remained unresolved in 2006.⁶⁵² Therefore the Riga Summit can be regarded as an important starting point in this discussion, as it was during this Summit that the member states officially tasked the NAC to:

“consult on the most immediate risks in the field of energy security, in order to define those areas where NATO may add value to safeguard the security interests of the Allies and, upon request, assist national and international efforts.”⁶⁵³

According to the Lithuanian governmental report, the country actively worked on this outcome and saw it as a positive development, opening the ways for NATO’s future engagement on energy issues.⁶⁵⁴

5.1.5. The Vilnius Energy Security Conference 2007

Following the pre-established tradition of Vilnius’ international conferences that had been taking place in the capital of Lithuania since 1997, which focused on fostering good relations in the neighbourhood and regional cooperation⁶⁵⁵, a similar conference was organised in 2007 focusing on energy security. With high level representation from Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Romania, Kazakhstan, as well as the EU and the US, the conference focused on the future of European energy policy

⁶⁵¹ Lugar, Dick, U.S. Senator for Indiana, Speech delivered at the Brookings Institution, “U.S. Energy Security – A New Realism”, 13.03.2006, p. 6, <https://grist.org/wp-content/uploads/2006/03/20060313lugar.pdf> [Accessed: 01.11.2021].

⁶⁵² Fried, Roundtable With European Journalists, „NATO/Riga Summit Issues“.

⁶⁵³ Riga Summit Declaration, paragraph 45.

⁶⁵⁴ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2006 metų veiklos ataskaita, p. 110.

⁶⁵⁵ Cf. Informacinės visuomenės plėtros komitetas, „Prasidėjo Vilniaus konferencija 2006“.

with emphasis on its external branch. The initiators of this conference were Lithuanian President Adamkus and Polish President Kaczynski.⁶⁵⁶

With this joint initiative, the common Lithuanian-Polish approach towards energy security was strengthened. This approach consisted of both geopolitical and normative elements. The geopolitical element was strongly represented by Poland and was based on the perception of energy as a tool of intimidation used by Russia in order to sustain political influence in Eastern Europe. The normative element being a typical feature of Adamkus' presidency emphasised solidarity with the Eastern European countries aspiring for Euro-Atlantic integration. Based on combination of these two elements, a joint Lithuanian-Polish urge to develop a European external energy policy based on solidarity culminated in 2007.⁶⁵⁷

This urge was recognised and covered by international media, suggesting that the “resounding view from countries east of Berlin was that the EU’s common external energy policy was a good idea. It just needed to happen.”⁶⁵⁸ Energy Commissioner Piebalgs presented the EU’s response to the global energy challenges, and despite being generally positive about the future perspectives of common European energy policy, indicated the need to work more closely on its external dimension:

“[t]he EU [...] has - at least in its beginning - a single energy policy, a common energy market and shared policy targets. We will also have new mechanisms for solidarity among Member States. What we now need is a single EU voice in the external energy relations.”⁶⁵⁹

Although representatives from the Eastern European member states and the EC were urging to speed up development of the EU’s energy policy, the Vilnius Energy Security Conference was a proof that there was still a long way to go before a single Eu-

⁶⁵⁶ Cf. BNS, „Presidents, Top-Ranking Officials to Discuss Global Energy Security in Vilnius Forum“, 09.10.2007, Lexis Nexis Database: <https://advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3slv0104.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4PVR-8GD0-TX7D-813R-00000-00&context=1516831> [Accessed: 04.11.2021].

⁶⁵⁷ Cf. Flückiger, Paul, „Neue Öl-Pipeline soll Russland umgehen; Georgien, Litauen und die Ukraine wollen Energie in Zukunft aus Aserbaidshjan beziehen - Andere Lieferanten noch zögerlich“, Die Welt, 12.10.2007, Lexis Nexis Database: advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sci00f7.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4PWD-6BD0-TWCN-F0R4-00000-00&context=1516831 [Accessed: 04.11.2021].

⁶⁵⁸ Taylor, „Can the EU unite over energy?“, Politico.

⁶⁵⁹ Piebalgs, Andris, Energy Commissioner, „EU's response to the global energy challenges“, Eumonitor.eu, Speech at the Vilnius Energy Security Conference, Vilnius, 11 October 2007, https://www.eumonitor.eu/9353000/1/j9vvik7m1c3gyxp/vhoxfom7n6wg?ctx=vgv62rns92q2&tab=1&start_tab1=200&layout=print&printmo=1 [Accessed: 04.11.2021].

ropean voice in external energy relations could be reached. High level attendees from Germany, France, as well as the main EU supplier, Russia, refused to take part in the conference, thus sending a clear signal about their scepticism towards Lithuanian-Polish proposals. Lithuanian Prime Minister Kirkilas even noted that Russia's President Putin not only refused to participate in the conference, but also invited French President Nicolas Sarkozy to visit Russia at exactly the same time, thus trying to "thwart" the event in Lithuania.⁶⁶⁰ During the conference President Adamkus stressed that for the time being national, instead of European, solutions were still preferred by some EU member states:

"[i]t is a matter of concern that some European countries prefer to deal with energy security related challenges individually, instead of acting in a united manner based on core Euro-Atlantic values. Energy partnerships born from such relationships are weak and cannot be relied upon when the crises come."⁶⁶¹

All in all, although on one hand the Vilnius Energy Security Conference of 2007 demonstrated the enduring rift between the Western and Eastern European perspectives on the external dimension of European energy policy, at the same time it signalled the consolidation of Lithuanian and Polish joint attempts to push their national preferences on energy to the European level.

5.1.6. Negotiations on the Lisbon Treaty and the Third Energy Package

The EU-level negotiations on the Lisbon Treaty were a direct consequence of the unsuccessful ratification process of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (Constitutional Treaty). The Constitutional Treaty was signed in Rome on the 29 October 2004, but was rejected by national referenda in France and Netherlands in the first half of 2005.⁶⁶² Following these developments, the Luxembourg EU Council presiden-

⁶⁶⁰ Cf. Poland Business Newswire, „Lithuania says Russia trying to thwart Vilnius energy security conference“, 09.10.2007, Lexis Nexis Database: <https://advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3slv0104.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4PVW-XGN0-TX60-R02X-00000-00&context=1516831> [Accessed: 04.11.2021].

⁶⁶¹ BNS, „EU Should Contribute to Bridges Between "Energy Islands" -- Lithuanian President (corrected version, corrects in last para)“, 11.10.2007, Lexis Nexis Database: <https://advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3slv01e2.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4PW5-6Y00-TX7D-80D9-00000-00&context=1516831> [Accessed: 04.11.2021].

⁶⁶² Cf. European Parliament, „Draft treaty establishing a constitution for Europe (not ratified)“, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/about-parliament/en/in-the-past/the-parliament-and-the-treaties/draft-treaty-establishing-a-constitution-for-europe> [Accessed: 05.11.2021].

cy, led by then Prime Minister Juncker, announced the “period for reflection, clarification and discussion”⁶⁶³, expressing the hope that the Constitutional Treaty could still be ratified. In January 2007, Angela Merkel, launching the German term of the EU Council presidency, announced that the time of reflection was over, and Europe had to move forward.⁶⁶⁴

On the basis of this declaration, the June 2007 European Council mandated an Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) under the subsequent Portuguese presidency to work out a solution for the “constitutional” crisis.⁶⁶⁵ The basis of this solution was a decision reached by the European leaders to negotiate the adoption of two treaties: the Reform Treaty changing the Treaty on the European Union (Treaty of Maastricht), and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union changing the Treaty on the European Economic Community (Treaties of Rome).⁶⁶⁶ The result of this process was the Lisbon Treaty, encompassing both amending treaties. The Lisbon Treaty was signed in December 2007 and ratified by all member states by November 2009.⁶⁶⁷

Within this extended process of negotiations on the new treaty for the EU, Lithuania played the role “of a good European”, demonstrating its unconditional support for the European project. Just six months after its accession to the EU, Lithuania became the first country to ratify the Constitutional Treaty in November 2004 by an overwhelming majority in its Parliament.⁶⁶⁸ The haste in ratifying this Treaty was met with a certain level of scepticism by the expert community in Vilnius claiming that although this move of the Lithuanian Parliament was meant to demonstrate Lithuania’s apprecia-

⁶⁶³ Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the European Union, „Jean-Claude Juncker states that there will be a period for reflection and discussion but the process to ratify the Constitutional Treaty will continue with no renegotiation“, Press Release, 17.06.2005, <http://www.eu2005.lu/en/actualites/communiqués/2005/06/16jclj-ratif/index.html> [Accessed: 05.11.2021].

⁶⁶⁴ Cf. European Commission, Speech by Angela Merkel, Chancellor of the Federal republic of Germany, to the European Parliament in Strasbourg on Wednesday, 17 January 2007, <https://ec.europa.eu/dorie/fileDownload.do;jsessionid=V7B6MjLMWkjQyhRQMCYc112Pdp1QYcjqSYPNtM01X1yy8SLTjXp4!213109669?docId=300145&cardId=300145> [Accessed: 05.11.2021].

⁶⁶⁵ Cf. Council of the European Union, Brussels European Council 21/22 June 2007, Presidency Conclusions, 11177/1/07 REV 1, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/94932.pdf [Accessed: 05.11.2021].

⁶⁶⁶ Cf. Kühnhardt, Ludger, European Union - The Second Founding: The Changing Rationale of European Integration, Schriften des Zentrum für Europäische Integrationsforschung (ZEI), Band 67, Nomos, 2010, p. 88.

⁶⁶⁷ Cf. European Parliament, Factsheets on the European Union, „The Treaty of Lisbon“, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/5/the-treaty-of-lisbon> [05.11.2021].

⁶⁶⁸ Cf. Mahony, Honor/ Žemaitytė, Jurgita, „Lithuania first to ratify EU Constitution“, Euobserver, 11.11.2004, <https://euobserver.com/news/17736> [05.11.2021].

tion of the European integration process and its loyalty to it, in reality it ended up signalling the country's political inexperience.⁶⁶⁹

Later Lithuania's President Adamkus played an important brokerage role during the June 2007 European Council meeting when a dispute between Poland and the rest of the EU broke out concerning introduction of the "double majority" voting system in the new treaty.⁶⁷⁰ Adamkus expressed his support to his Polish colleague and put forth effort to find a compromise. In the aftermath Polish President Kaczynski thanked Adamkus for his contribution to the resolution of this dispute as well as for his input in the establishment of the European energy solidarity clause.⁶⁷¹ This clause was one of the novelties of the Lisbon Treaty.⁶⁷² The available media record shows that Lithuania and Poland may well have represented the joint "Eastern European view" on this clause that contradicted the preferences of other generally more influential member states.

Lithuania and Poland saw an important European-level instrument in the solidarity clause, allowing the ability to curb those bilateral energy projects between some member states and Gazprom that contradicted energy security interests of other member states or the EU as a whole. This instrument was efficiently used in practice in 2016 when Poland, supported by Lithuania and Latvia, sued the EC in the General Court of the European Union for approving an exemption for Gazprom in operating the OPAL gas pipeline⁶⁷³. Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia based their claim on the argument that the decision of the EC to grant Gazprom additional capacities of the pipeline breached the principle of energy solidarity and threatened "the security of gas supply in the European

⁶⁶⁹ Cf. Songaila, Gintaras/ Vaiškūnas, Jonas, "G. Songaila, J. Vaiškūnas. Lisabonos sutartis: per greitai sutinkame"/ "G. Songaila, J. Vaiškūnas. The Lisbon Treaty: we hurry to agree" (in Lithuanian only), delfi.lt, 29.04.2008, <https://www.delfi.lt/news/ringas/lit/gsongaila-jvaiskunus-lisabonos-sutartis-per-greitai-sutinkame.d?id=16851647> [Accessed: 05.11.2021].

⁶⁷⁰ Cf. President of the Republic of Lithuania, „President Adamkus signs, together with other leaders of EU member states, the Lisbon Treaty“, 13.12.2007, <http://archyvas.lrp.lt/en/news.full/8629?prn=1> [Accessed: 05.11.2021].

⁶⁷¹ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Prezidentas, „Lenkijos vadovas dėkoja Prezidentui V.Adamkui už tvirtą poziciją Europos Vadovų Taryboje“/ "The head of Poland thanks President V. Adamkus for his strong position during the European Council meeting" (in Lithuanian only), 05.07.2007, <http://archyvas.lrp.lt/lt/news.-full/8094> [Accessed: 05.11.2021].

⁶⁷² Cf. Council of the European Union, Brussels European Council 21/22 June 2007, Presidency Conclusions, Annex I, IGC Mandate, p. 22.

⁶⁷³ The OPAL pipeline is an onshore extension of the undersea Nord Stream pipeline running from Greifswald, Germany to the Czech Republic. Cf. OPAL, „OPAL - Die Grösste Erdgaspipeline Nordwest-Europas“, <https://www.opal-gastransport.de/netzinformationen/ostsee-pipeline-anbindungsleitung> [Accessed: 08.11.2021].

Union, in particular in central Europe.”⁶⁷⁴ In 2019 the General Court of the European Union agreed with Poland and decided that the EC’s decision of 2016 violated the principle of energy solidarity.⁶⁷⁵ Following Germanys’ appeal, the European Court of Justice delivered a final judgement favourable to Poland in July 2021.⁶⁷⁶

Similar differences of opinion between the Eastern European countries, as represented by Lithuania and Poland, and some Western European countries emerged concerning the question of inclusion of the clause on third party access⁶⁷⁷, also known as “reciprocity” or “Gazprom clause” in the Third Energy Package.⁶⁷⁸ The aim of this clause was to make sure that companies from non-EU countries would comply with the same unbundling rules as the European ones, and thus would not be granted an “indiscriminate acquisition of EU energy grids [...]”.⁶⁷⁹ Both Lithuania and Poland were interested in the introduction of this clause seeing it as a powerful European leverage in constraining Russia’s energy policy based on dealing with different member states separately.⁶⁸⁰ Other member states led by France, Germany, and Italy opposed the strict unbundling and “reciprocity” passages of the EC’s energy market liberalisation plan⁶⁸¹ arguing that competition could be achieved also without ownership unbundling and through introduction of specific safeguards concerning the ownership structure of the transmission system operators.⁶⁸²

⁶⁷⁴ General Court of the European Union, „The General Court annuls the Commission decision approving the modification of the exemption regime for the operation of the OPAL gas pipeline“, PRESS RELEASE n° 107/19, Luxembourg, 10 September 2019, <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2019-09/cp190107en.pdf> [Accessed: 08.11.2021].

⁶⁷⁵ Cf. Judgment of the General Court of 10 September 2019, Republic of Poland v European Commission, Case T-883/16, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX:62016TJ0883> [Accessed: 08.11.2021].

⁶⁷⁶ Cf. Knight, Aimee, „Poland wins dispute over the OPAL gas pipeline“, World Pipelines, 16.07.2021, <https://www.worldpipelines.com/business-news/16072021/poland-wins-dispute-over-the-opal-gas-pipeline/> [Accessed: 08.11.2021].

⁶⁷⁷ Cf. Directive 2009/73/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009, Article 32.

⁶⁷⁸ For broader analysis see: Brutschin.

⁶⁷⁹ Euractiv, „‘Gazprom clause’ issues Russia ultimatum for energy co- operation“, 20.09.2007, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/med-south/news/gazprom-clause-issues-russia-ultimatum-for-energy-co-operation/> [Accessed: 05.11.2021].

⁶⁸⁰ Cf. Molis, p. 27.

⁶⁸¹ Cf. Taylor, Simon, “EU struggles to agree on anti-Gazprom clause“, Politico, 21.05.2008, <https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-struggles-to-agree-on-anti-gazprom-clause/> [Accessed: 07.11.2021].

⁶⁸² Cf. Euractiv, “Eight EU states oppose unbundling, table ‘third way’“, 01.02.2008, updated: 28.09.2012, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/eight-eu-states-oppose-unbundling-table-third-way/> [Accessed: 07.11.2021].

Although introduction of the “reciprocity” clause reflected the principled position of Lithuania in terms of the EU’s dealings with external energy suppliers, the country’s support for the strict unbundling rules for its energy market was a matter of interesting developments at the domestic political level. Initially the Kirkilas-led government was also planning to oppose the strict EC’s plan for liberalisation of the internal energy market and was willing to apply for a derogation from the full ownership unbundling in the gas sector.⁶⁸³ Such derogation was foreseen by the EC for those countries whose transmission systems belonged to vertically integrated undertakings⁶⁸⁴, and thus was eligible in Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.⁶⁸⁵ However, as in 2008 the HULChD managed to form a majority in the Committee of European Affairs in Seimas, it consequently changed Lithuania’s planned “fence-sitting” strategy on implementation of the ownership unbundling.⁶⁸⁶ As Kubilius put it:

“after consulting Lithuanian experts we decided to implement this directive as fast as possible because the status quo was very harmful for Lithuania. That is how the political decision to renounce all possible derogations that the directive was offering was born. The Kirkilas-led government did not object to it too much. It was a unique achievement: an oppositional political force managed to change the political line of the government.”⁶⁸⁷

Following this decision Lithuania became the first EU member country that opted for the full ownership unbundling in the gas sector dominated by Gazprom. In 2010 during the transposition phase of the Third Energy Package, the decision of the Lithuanian government to not ask for derogation provoked a harsh reaction from Gazprom and E.ON Ruhrgas. The largest shareholders of Lietuvos Dujos demanded that the Lithuanian government ask the EC for derogation. However, the EC sent an official refusal, claiming that in Lithuania’s case no derogation could be applied as the country had re-

⁶⁸³ Cf. BNS, „Lithuania Set to Seek Exemption from EU Energy Liberalization Rules“, 04.06.2008, Lexis Nexis Database: <https://advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3snk0045.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4SNR-S5P0-TX7D-8028-00000-00&context=1516831> [Accessed: 08.11.2021].

⁶⁸⁴ Cf. European Commission, Commission Staff Working Paper, Interpretative Note on Directive 2009/72/EC Concerning Common Rules For the Internal Market in Electricity and Directive 2009/73/EC Concerning Common Rules for the Internal Market in Natural Gas, „The Unbundling Regime“, Brussels, 22 January 2010, p. 6.

⁶⁸⁵ Cf. Grigas, Agnia, *The New Geopolitics of Natural Gas*, Harvard University Press, 2017, p. 155.

⁶⁸⁶ Author’s Interview #2.

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid.

nounced it back in 2008.⁶⁸⁸ As a result, the decision that was made in the Committee on European Affairs had fundamental implications on the course of negotiations with Gazprom. In the words of Kubilius:

“we made this decision about derogation knowing very well what it meant and what we were planning, namely acknowledging the need to take over the assets of “Lietuvos Dujos” from Gazprom and to have an alternative supply route.”⁶⁸⁹

In broader terms, the change in Lithuania’s position on implementation of the Third Energy Package marked an important turn in its national strategy for energy security. Having earlier stressed its vulnerability and requesting special treatment from Brussels like in the cases of the INPP closure and the Druzhba pipeline, Lithuania switched to a proactive strategy, trying to attract the EC’s support by setting an example of resolutely using European policy instruments in order to change the status quo at the national level that was perceived as a source of danger for the country. Thus Lithuania’s strategy under Kubilius acquired new elements of “pace-setting” in liberalising national electricity and gas markets.

This strategy of the Kubilius-led government was guided by the entrenched perception of the destructive potential of the ongoing Lithuania’s dependence on Russia in the energy field. The best example of this perception was the strategic plan prepared by the HU-LChD in 2007 called „Russia’s Containment Strategy“.⁶⁹⁰ The key element of this strategy that shaped the forthcoming governmental term of the Kubilius-led government was the recognition that Russia’s political influence on Lithuania came through energy, and thus had to be contained through principled energy sector reform.⁶⁹¹ In addition to the dominating focus on Russia as a threat for Lithuania, guidelines for Lithuania’s strategy to counter it were identified in this document. In this respect, it was stated that Lithuania’s primer goal should be changing the Western partners’ prevailing approach towards Russia „[making] sure the Western democracies adopt a *realistic ap-*

⁶⁸⁸ Cf. BNS, „Lithuania cannot use derogation demanded by Gazprom, E.ON - European Commission“, 29.11.2010, Lexis Nexis Database: advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sa20185.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:51KB-0C71-DYX3-P4JP-00000-00&context=1516831 [Accessed 07.10. 2021].

⁶⁸⁹ Author’s Interview #2.

⁶⁹⁰ Cf. Homeland Union — Lithuanian Christian Democrats, „Russia Containment Strategy: Plan for Diminishing Russia’s Influence on Lithuania“, in: Strategy for the Containment of Putin, 2007/ 2014, pp. 35-42 <https://elpnariai.lt/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Containment-strategy-2021.pdf> [Accessed: 08.11.2021].

⁶⁹¹ Author’s Interview #1, #2.

proach to the development and dominance of dangerous trends in Russia.⁶⁹² Among the Western partners the USA received special attention in this strategy, claiming that American leverage was crucial for Lithuania's goal of escaping the Russian sphere of influence:

“[t]he more pro-American Europe is, the less it will be influenced by Russia. This guideline should consistently inform Lithuania's actions.”⁶⁹³

In terms of the European countries, Poland was identified as a strategic partner, whereas Germany and France were seen as increasingly dependent on the rules dictated by Russia, and therefore representing a danger for European solidarity.⁶⁹⁴

All in all, important interload processes between Lithuania and Poland could be observed during negotiations on the Lisbon Treaty and the inclusion of the clause on third party access to the Third Energy Package. The neighbouring countries cooperated in promoting the inclusion of both the solidarity clause and the “reciprocity” clause to the Lisbon Treaty and the Third Energy Package respectively and demonstrated that these clauses were important practical instruments that could be used for defending their common energy security interests at the European level. In addition to that, domestic political developments in Lithuania allowed the HU-LChD strengthening its influence on Lithuania's choices regarding the implementation of the Third Energy Package and led to the switch from the initially planned “fence-sitting” to “pace-setting” strategy.

5.1.7. The NATO Bucharest Summit

There have been multiple events related to Lithuania's energy security initiatives in 2008. Preparation for the upcoming NATO Summit in Bucharest in April was an important phase in this respect. Among other measures the preparatory work included an informal meeting of NATO Defence ministers that was organised in Vilnius in February 2008. During this meeting Lithuanian Defence Minister Olekas indicated energy security as one of the top priorities of both the meeting itself as well as the upcoming

⁶⁹² Homeland Union — Lithuanian Christian Democrats, „Russia Containment Strategy, p. 38, [emphasis in original].

⁶⁹³ Ibid, p. 39.

⁶⁹⁴ Cf. Ibid, pp. 38-39.

summit.⁶⁹⁵ In addition to that, Rasa Juknevičienė, who was a member of Lithuanian Parliament and a delegate to the NATO PA at that time, said in an expert interview that it was during one of NATO PA meetings before the Bucharest Summit that she raised the idea of establishing a NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence in Lithuania and received prevalingly positive reactions.⁶⁹⁶ The motivation behind this idea was “willingness to change prevailing perceptions on energy security.”⁶⁹⁷ According to Juknevičienė, Russia was actively engaged in corrupting politicians through its energy tools. If such politicians would gain access to the inner circles of NATO, they would then represent the interests of Russia on all security matters.⁶⁹⁸ Later that same year following the proposal of Juknevičienė, Special Rapporteur of the NATO PA Lord Jopling argued that establishing a NATO Centre of Excellence for critical energy infrastructure protection following the example of the Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence in Estonia would be of great importance for NATO.⁶⁹⁹

The Bucharest Summit of April 2008 has been considered a major step forward in the process of defining NATO’ role in energy. Although this process was not easy, requiring revision of multiple existing NATO documents⁷⁰⁰, the Summit resulted in identification of the main areas in which the Alliance could effectively add to international efforts for energy security. The report on the activities of the Lithuanian Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 2008 indicated that representatives of the country’s diplomatic service “actively participated in the preparatory work of the Summit declaration accentuating energy security questions of high importance for Lithuania.”⁷⁰¹ The Lithuanian representatives interpreted the energy-related decisions made at the Bucharest Summit

⁶⁹⁵ Cf. North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, „Welcoming remarks by the Lithuanian Minister of Defence, Juozas Olekas at the Informal working lunch“, 11.02.2008, <https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2008/s080207d.html> [Accessed: 07.11.2021].

⁶⁹⁶ Author’s Interview #1.

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁹ Cf. Lord Jopling (United Kingdom), Special Rapporteur, „Energy Security: Co-Operating To Enhance The Protection Of Critical Energy Infrastructures“, Special Report, 157 CDS 08 E rev 1, NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Civil Dimension of Security, pp. 12-13.

⁷⁰⁰ Author’s Interview #7.

⁷⁰¹ Lietuvos Respublikos Užsienio reikalų ministerija, „2008 m. veiklos ataskaitos santrauka“, 27.01.2014/ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Summary of the Activities’ Report for 2008, <https://www.urm.lt/default/lt/2008m-veiklos-ataskaitos-santrauka> [Accessed: 01.11.2021].

as the success of their diplomatic strategy arguing, that Lithuania was a clear initiator within the process of including energy into NATO's agenda.⁷⁰²

With energy security officially being recognised a part of NATO's agenda, practical interest in Lithuania's energy security situation was shown from the side of NATO member states' representatives. In November 2008, the NATO PA delegation visited Vilnius to discuss its most pressing issues and recognised that the crucial topics in Lithuania were energy security, the economic crisis, and relations with Russia.⁷⁰³ It was underlined in the mission report that high ranking Lithuanian officials expressed the view of Lithuania as being "the most vulnerable European country in terms of energy security."⁷⁰⁴ In addition to that, Lithuanian officials expressed their view about Moscow's willingness to use energy as a foreign policy tool.⁷⁰⁵ The NATO PA delegation also met with NATO ambassadors who also stressed the centrality of energy security concerns for Lithuania.⁷⁰⁶

Lithuanian officials used the visit of NATO member states' representatives to discuss its vision of NATO's role in energy. The mission report shows that the Lithuanian side stressed the need for NATO "[to address] the underlying political dimensions of energy security"⁷⁰⁷ and in this context expressed its aim for NATO to perform a threat analysis of the Druzhba pipeline incident. Interestingly, the report thematised Lithuania's expressed scepticism towards the ongoing process of the Strategic Concept's revision, and consequently indicated that the country agreed to not break the consensus on the concept's renewal if provisions on cyber and energy security were included in the new version of the document.⁷⁰⁸ These developments demonstrate that Lithuania tried using both the bilateral dispute with Russia over the Druzhba pipeline as well as NATO's strategic planning process in order to push energy to the top of NATO's agenda.

⁷⁰² Author's Interview #6.

⁷⁰³ Cf. NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Science and Technology Committee and Sub-Committee on EastWest Economic Cooperation and Convergence, Visit to Lithuania, Mission Report, 252 JOINT 08 E, 5-6 November 2008, p. 1.

⁷⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 1.

⁷⁰⁵ Cf. Ibid, p. 1.

⁷⁰⁶ Cf. Ibid, p. 1.

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 4.

⁷⁰⁸ Cf. Ibid, p. 4.

Later Lithuania used the new circumstances created by the inclusion of energy in NATO's agenda for energy security's enforcement strategy. The report on activities of the Lithuanian Foreign Office in 2009 indicated that Lithuania initiated the inclusion of an energy crisis scenario in the Crisis Management Exercise (CMX).⁷⁰⁹ According to the NATO IS representative, during this exercise decision making processes in the case of a supply disruption were analysed by Lithuania's request. The rationale behind this initiative was to find out how energy aspects could potentially complicate the military involvement of NATO. The NATO IS representative argued that since 2010 the energy supply crisis scenario has become an integral part of all CMX exercises, allowing the conclusion to be drawn that Lithuania's initiative of 2010 was successful and has become a commonplace NATO routine.⁷¹⁰

5.1.8. The Russo-Georgian War of 2008

Following the dispute over the Georgian separatist region in South Ossetia, a military conflict between Russia and Georgia broke out on 8 August 2008. It has been recognised that both parties added to tensions that led to the war — Russians and their proxies in South Ossetia by intentionally provoking Georgian authorities, and Georgians by firing the first shots.⁷¹¹ The military conflict signalled changing geopolitical dynamics in the country that had been promised NATO membership during the Bucharest Summit just four months ago. Lithuania and Poland immediately took an active role in the ongoing events, expressing their support for Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili and traveling to Georgia to help broker a ceasefire deal.⁷¹² The Lithuanian and Polish activism notwithstanding, it was French President and EU Council presidency holder

⁷⁰⁹ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2009 Metų Veiklos Ataskaita, pritarta Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2010 m. kovo 31 d. nutarimu Nr. 340/ Governmental Report Concerning its Activities in 2009 (in Lithuanian only), p. 99.

⁷¹⁰ Author's Interview #7.

⁷¹¹ Cf. Dickinson, Peter, „The 2008 Russo-Georgian War: Putin's green light“, UkraineAlert, Atlantic Council, 07.08.2021, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/the-2008-russo-georgian-war-putins-green-light/> [Accessed: 10.11.2021].

⁷¹² Cf. Delfi.lt, „Lietuvos prezidentas išvyksta į Gruziją, vizitą parėmė JAV prezidentas“/ “The President of Lithuania leaves for Georgia, the President of the USA supports the visit“ (in Lithuanian only), 11.08.2008, <https://www.delfi.lt/spausdinti/?id=18059923> [Accessed: 10.11.2021].

Nicolas Sarkozy's leadership that led to the achievement of the six-point ceasefire agreement between Russia and Georgia.⁷¹³

Beside fundamental geopolitical consequences for Georgia and the entire Caucasus region, this conflict had also several implications in the energy field. In terms of the EU's energy infrastructure plans directed at creating new supply routes, the control loss over Georgian separatist regions South Ossetia and Abkhazia had direct negative consequences for the development of the Nabucco pipeline that was planned to run through these territories.⁷¹⁴ In addition to that, critical voices towards the Nord Stream project intensified again with Poland and the Baltic States raising questions about compatibility of this project with the goals of European energy security.⁷¹⁵ The conflict also raised questions about the security of existing pipelines in the Georgian territory, and thus the reliability of Georgia as a transit country under these conflictual circumstances. There were good reasons to doubt the security of the Georgian route, as Russia had allegedly attempted to damage the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline by firing missiles at it during the conflict.⁷¹⁶

Lithuania used the momentum of the ongoing assertive behaviour of Russia and tried to frame its own energy security issues in the light of the Russo-Georgian War. At that time a special negotiators' group led by the former Prime Minister of Lithuania, Aleksandras Abišala, was formed and tasked with persuading the EC to postpone the closure of the second block of the INPP.⁷¹⁷ Chief negotiator Abišala was cited arguing that he was going to raise the topic of the Russo-Georgian War during negotiations with the EC as evidence confirming Lithuania's "old argumentation that Russia is not a relia-

⁷¹³ Cf. Euractiv, „Sarkozy steps up mediation efforts over Georgia“, 28.08.2008 (updated 28.05.2012), <https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/sarkozy-steps-up-mediation-efforts-over-georgia/> [Accessed: 10.11.2021].

⁷¹⁴ Cf. Schraven, David, „Europas eigenes Gaspipeline-Projekt ist in Gefahr; Wie der russisch-georgische Konflikt die Pläne für Europas Energieversorgung durcheinanderbringt“, Die Welt, 21.08.2008, Lexis Nexis Database: <https://advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sfn0854.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4T89-XXV0-TWCN-F0WN-00000-00&context=1516831> [Accessed: 10.11.2021].

⁷¹⁵ Cf. Ibid.

⁷¹⁶ Cf. Fitch Solutions, „European Energy Security: The Caucasus Question“, 18.08.2008, Lexis Nexis Database: <https://advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3s6a0003.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4TB0-MK90-TXWG-30C5-00000-00&context=1516831> [Accessed: 10.11.2021].

⁷¹⁷ Author's Interview #2, #5.

ble partner.”⁷¹⁸ As a result, this case shows that Lithuania tried exploiting the momentum of the increased Europe’s focus on the coercive actions of Russia in its “near abroad” in order to foster its own national energy security interests on the EU level.

5.1.9. The BEMIP High Level Group

As the deadline for the finite closure of the INPP by the end of 2009 was unavoidably nearing, the understanding of the degree of economic and security implications of this step was gaining pace among the Lithuanian ruling elite. As former Prime Minister Kubilius who came to power after the 2008 parliamentary elections, described it:

“At the time when the Kirkilas-led government was still in charge, shutting down the second block of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant by the end of 2009 seemed to be a real catastrophe for Lithuania.”⁷¹⁹

Not only the political elite, but also part of Lithuanian society was alarmed by the impending closure of the country’s main electricity generating power plant. Some protests had been organised, claiming that the closure would have not only serious economic, but also national security implications.⁷²⁰ Later in 2008, the societal protest against the closure of the INPP transformed into the idea to organise a consultative referendum on the prolongation of the power plant’s work. Initially the referendum was organised by a citizens’ initiative, but as it failed to collect the appropriate number of signatures, the Lithuanian Parliament stepped in and agreed to organise the referendum together with the parliamentary elections of 2008.⁷²¹ However, as the turnout of voters was lower than

⁷¹⁸ BNS, „Lithuanian Negotiator to Refer to Georgia-Russia Conflict in EU Talks on N-Plant“, 03.09.2008, Lexis Nexis Database: advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sci00f7.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4TC3-N3J0-TX7D-8106-00000-00&context=1516831 [Accessed: 11.11.2021].

⁷¹⁹ Author’s Interview #2.

⁷²⁰ Cf. Kweder, Kimberly, „Protest calls for Ignalina reprieve“, The Baltic Times, 31.10.2007, <https://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/19162/> [Accessed: 13.11.2021].

⁷²¹ Cf. Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo Nutarimas, Dėl referendumo Dėl Ignalinos atominės elektrinės darbo pratęsimo paskelbimo, 2008 m. liepos 14 d. Nr. X-1693, Vilnius/ Ruling of the Lithuanian Seimas Concerning the Announcement of the Referendum on the Continuation of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant’s Work, <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.324562> [Accessed: 13.11.2021].

the 50 percent margin needed to be considered legitimate, the referendum was declared as having failed.⁷²²

As there were no concrete measures developed by the government that could soften the transition from the nuclear power produced by the INPP to alternate electricity sources, Kirkilas decided once again to try to negotiate the postponement of the finite closure of the INPP with the EC.⁷²³ The main argument of Kirkilas on this issue rested on the idea that Lithuania needed a “different shutdown mode”, as closure by the end of 2009 would be an enormous burden for the country:

“[w]e have a two-year gap where we face a doubling of electricity prices, doubling of carbon emissions and, according to our feasibility studies, a 4.0 percent fall in GDP, with the social consequences that will result”.⁷²⁴

For his part Adamkus also warned that Lithuania would face an “energy bankruptcy”⁷²⁵ after the INPP closure.

In addition to that, the closure of the INPP was framed as a problem that was going to affect not only Lithuania but also the Baltic region and the rest of the EU.⁷²⁶ In this respect, during his meeting with the President of the European Parliament, Hans-Gert Pöttering, Kirkilas framed the issue of the INPP as a national security issue by stating that the closure of the power plant would leave Lithuania overdependent on Russia and that European solidarity was needed in order to ensure the energy security of the country.⁷²⁷

⁷²² Cf. Vyriausioji rinkimų komisija, 2008 m. spalio 12 d. rinkimai į Lietuvos Respublikos Seimą ir Referendumas dėl Ignalinos atominės elektrinės darbo pratęsimo/ The Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Lithuania, Parliamentary Elections of 12.10.2008 and Referendum on the Continuation of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant's Work, https://www.vrk.lt/statiniai/puslapiai/2008_seimo_rinkimai/output_lt/referendumas/referendumas.html [Accessed: 13.11.2021].

⁷²³ Author's Interview #5.

⁷²⁴ The Baltic Times, „Adamkus, Kirkilas take Lithuania's energy case“, 28.05.2008, <https://www.baltic-times.com/news/articles/20560/> [Accessed: 13.11.2021].

⁷²⁵ Deutsche Presse-Agentur, “Lithuanian president warns of "energy bankruptcy““, 16.10.2008, Lexis Nexis Database: [advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sci00f7.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4TPF-2350-TXCX-V0Y3-00000-00&context=1516831](https://www.lexis-1.com-1zf6r3sci00f7.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4TPF-2350-TXCX-V0Y3-00000-00&context=1516831) [Accessed: 13.11.2021].

⁷²⁶ Cf. The Baltic Times, „Appointment of Ignalina negotiator marred by intense political bickering“, cited from: Baltic American Freedom League, 06.03.2008, <https://baf1.com/2008/03/06/appointment-of-ignalina-negotiator-marred-by-intense-political-bickering/> [Accessed: 13.11.2021].

⁷²⁷ Cf. Vaida, Petras, „Hans-Gert Pottering supports Lithuania's discussions with EC on closedown of Ignalina“, The Baltic Course, 28.04.2008, <http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/energy/?doc=1244&output=d> [Accessed: 14.11.2021].

As a last measure Kirkilas formed a group of negotiators led by Abišala and tasked it with finding a solution in Brussels in order to avoid the imminent emergency situation. Despite their efforts, the EC rejected the Lithuanian claim, with Commissioner Piebalgs arguing that Lithuania knew the date of finite closure of the INPP since its accession to the EU in 2004, so it should stop wasting time on discussions.⁷²⁸ Barroso made it clear that the postponement of the closure was not possible, as such a decision would require the agreement of all member states.⁷²⁹ Both Kubilius and Švedas confirmed in the expert interviews that although the initial goal of the Abišala Group could not be achieved, Lithuania's repeated claim for a European solution for the INPP issue led to the creation of the BEMIP high level working group. As Švedas, who himself was appointed a member of this group explained:

“After endless discussions the point was reached when Brussels acknowledged that the “Ignalina issue” had to be solved systematically. Barroso initiated the development of the [BEMIP] plan but everything was organised and prepared by Lithuanian representatives. The memorandum was signed in the Lithuanian embassy in Brussels. The plan itself was developed in only 9 months.”⁷³⁰

Kubilius also confirmed that with the proposed BEMIP plan the EC demonstrated its willingness to address Lithuania's energy security issues systematically: “the European Commission led by Barroso sketched for us the entire future perspective, including interconnections and guidelines for synchronisation.”⁷³¹

Formally, the BEMIP originated from the Second Strategic Energy Review of the EC⁷³² that focused on connecting European “energy islands” with the internal market, the Baltic region being identified as “the first of six major sets of infrastructure projects.”⁷³³ The proposed High Level Group (HLG) was tasked with developing the Baltic energy interconnection plan by 2009. As scheduled, the Memorandum of Understanding

⁷²⁸ Cf. The Baltic Times, „Appointment of Ignalina negotiator marred by intense political bickering“, cited from: Baltic American Freedom League.

⁷²⁹ Cf. Kweder, „Protest calls for Ignalina reprieve“, The Baltic Times.

⁷³⁰ Author's Interview #5.

⁷³¹ Author's Interview #2.

⁷³² Cf. Commission of the European Communities, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Second Strategic Energy Review, An EU Energy Security and Solidarity Action Plan, Brussels, 13.11.2008, p. 4.

⁷³³ Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan, Final report of the HLG, p. 1, https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/2009_11_25_hlg_report_170609_0.pdf [Accessed: 14.11.2021].

(MOU) among Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Finland, Sweden, and the EC was signed in June 2009.⁷³⁴ The MOU signalled the political will of the signatory countries to seek progress in functioning of the energy market in the electricity and natural gas sectors by developing the necessary infrastructure to support market integration.⁷³⁵ Alongside the MOU, a comprehensive action plan was developed by the HLG to identify infrastructural projects to be implemented in order to solve the existing infrastructural limitations in the Baltic region. Among the foreseen projects were Lit-PolLink, NordBalt, VNPP, and an LNG terminal.⁷³⁶

Among the BEMIP MOU signatory countries, Sweden played an important role as it held the EU Council presidency in the second half of 2009 and declared development of the Baltic Sea region one of its presidency priorities.⁷³⁷ Švedas supported the view about Sweden and other Nordic countries' crucial role in implementing the energy security projects in the Baltic region. He also expressed the view that Poland also played an important role, as it actively supported Lithuania's attempts to break out of energy isolation despite its own strategic interests being rather connected to Germany as opposed to the Baltic States.⁷³⁸

Concerning Lithuania's role in these crucial processes, Energy Commissioner Piebalgs represented the EC's point of view and argued that Lithuania was "polite, but very vocal" about its energy security issues. Piebalgs confirmed that Lithuania framed energy as a critical national issue for it and managed to lead discussions on this topic at the European level. Moreover, Piebalgs expressed the view that Lithuanian activism in the energy security field was beneficial for the EC in terms of creating "good synergy with the EC" in driving discussions on energy at the European level.⁷³⁹

⁷³⁴ Cf. Memorandum of Understanding on the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan, https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/2009_bemip_mou_signed.pdf [Accessed: 13.11.2021].

⁷³⁵ Cf. Ibid.

⁷³⁶ Cf. Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan, Final report of the HLG, pp. 4-23.

⁷³⁷ Cf. Euractiv, „Baltic Energy Market“ takes shape“, 22.06.2009, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/baltic-energy-market-takes-shape/> [Accessed: 13.11.2021].

⁷³⁸ Author's Interview #5.

⁷³⁹ Author's Interview #4.

5.1.10. Subchapter Conclusions

The analysis of the Lithuanian energy security strategy from 2004-2008 allows for systematising the securitisation and Europeanisation impulses as well as the prevailing relations between them. With the privatisation process of Lietuvos Dujos the perception of Russia as an increasingly unreliable supplier was ingrained in Lithuanian political thinking. The advancing development of the Nord Stream pipeline project and the nearing closure of the INPP resulted in the Lithuanian view that not only Russia, but also its Western partners such as Germany could not be trusted. Resulting from these developments, Lithuanian calls for more solidarity against Russia as an external supplier, but also among the EU member states in terms of internal cohesion was expressed. The infrastructural Amber pipeline project that reflected Lithuania and Poland's perception of European solidarity was proposed.

The Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute of 2006 activated the Lithuanian perception of being disposed to the same kind of Russian pressures as Ukraine. The Polish-Lithuanian joint upload attempt followed, with Lithuania being the junior partner and opting to concentrate on the normative dimension of the dispute. On its part the Druzhba pipeline incident represented the first instance of clearly perceived use of energy blackmail against Lithuania. The country reacted decisively by blocking the new EU-Russia PCA but failed to attract European attention to this issue and even suffered reputational damage as a result of its uncompromised stance on this issue. During the preparations for the Riga Summit, Lithuania actively used the argument of "a political Alliance", thus trying to pave the way for the inclusion of energy on its agenda. The outcome of the Riga Summit corresponded with Lithuanian national goals and was understood as a good base for further upload that followed before and during the Bucharest Summit in 2008.

The Vilnius Energy Security Conference signalled Lithuania's willingness to actively add to the European discussions on energy issues. However, as big EU member states (Germany and France) did not attend the event, instead choosing to visit Russia for an event taking place parallel to the Lithuanian one, the argument that Western European countries preferred bilateral over European solutions for their energy issues was expressed. As a result the Conference illustrated the persisting clash between the Eastern and Western European positions on energy cooperation, and demonstrated yet ano-

ther Lithuanian-Polish joint upload attempt. During negotiations on the Lisbon Treaty and the Third Energy Package Lithuania positioned itself as a country that supported European solutions in the energy field. The initially planned use of a derogation for the implementation of the Third Energy Package provisions was rejected and the country switched to the pace-setting strategy for transposition of European liberalisation rules in its natural gas sector.

The Bucharest Summit was seen as the game-changing event for Lithuania’s energy security strategy within NATO. Operational dimension had been included in the discussion on NATO’s evolving role as the energy crisis scenario proposed by Lithuania became a part of the CMX exercises. The subsequent Russo-Georgian War increased the overall threat perception for Lithuania and hardened its position towards Russia even further. The nearing finite closure of the INPP strengthened the argument of the impending “energy bankruptcy” of Lithuania and lead to the concrete proposals from the EC for systematic solutions for the country and its neighbours’ energy security issues through the BEMIP plan. Table 2 below systematises the findings discussed in this sub-chapter.

Table 2: *Prevailing Securitisation and Europeanisation processes, 2004-2008* (continued on the next page)

Event	Prevailing securitisation moves by Lithuanian representatives	Europeanisation processes, in which Lithuania was involved
Privatisation of Lietuvos Dujos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Russia is an unreliable supplier - Lithuania has to pay price for the EU membership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amber pipeline proposal - interload with Poland
Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lithuania as an “energy island” is disposed to Russian blackmail - Russia is an unreliable supplier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - interload with Poland - Lithuania — Poland’s junior partner supporting in uploading the idea of an European Energy Security Treaty
Druzhba pipeline incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Russia uses energy as a foreign policy tool - Russia tries intervening the decision making process of Lithuania 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unsuccessful upload attempt through vetoing the EU-Russia PCA
NATO’s Riga Summit of 2006		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promotion of the argument of a “political Alliance”
The Vilnius Energy Security Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - large EU member states prefer bilateral deals in energy - Russia willing to “thwart” Lithuanian energy security initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - interload with Poland - promotion of European “energy solidarity”

Negotiations on the Lisbon Treaty and the Third Energy Package	- status quo in the energy sector poses threat to Lithuanian national security	- support for the “solidarity” clause - “fence-sitting” is replaced by “pace-setting” regarding the Third Energy Package - ownership unbundling in Lithuania as an European level precedent
NATO’s Bucharest Summit of 2008	- Russia tries influencing NATO member states’ security-related decisions through their dependency on Russian energy sources	- inclusion of an energy crisis scenario in the CMX exercises
Russo-Georgian War	- Russia is a resurgent military threat and an unreliable partner for Europe	- attempt to postpone the closure of the INPP
BEMIP	- closure of the INPP will result in “energy bankruptcy” of Lithuania	- push for systematic solution of Lithuania’s energy infrastructure problems

Source: Author’s own compilation

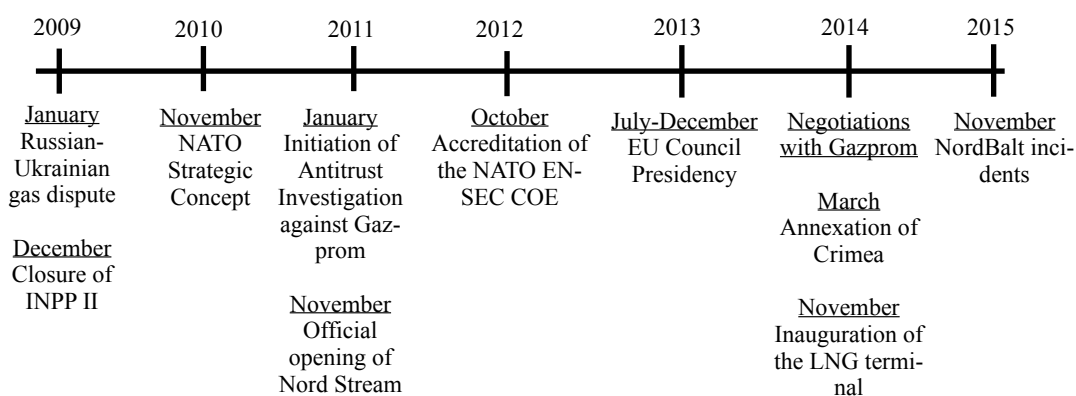
5.2. Lithuania’s Energy Security Strategy in the EU and NATO from 2009-2015

The contextual analysis conducted in the previous chapters showed that the period of time from 2009-2015 was extremely productive in terms of energy-related initiatives at all levels under consideration by this research — Lithuanian national, the EU, and NATO. At the national level the government led by Prime Minister Kubilius identified energy security as an area of national priority and managed to push legal and infrastructural projects to the top of the political agenda. The subsequent Butkevičius-led government finalised the implementation of the strategic energy security projects. The presidential term of Grybauskaitė marked a shift in Lithuanian foreign policy from the normative to practice-oriented approach. At the EU-level energy was given the status of an independent policy for the first time and thus could be dealt with systematically. In terms of NATO’s role in energy, this timespan was used to practically enforce its agenda in this area.

During the period of time under consideration several important events took place. Closure of the second reactor of the INPP and introduction of the Nord Stream pipeline represented indicators from the cluster of “restricting measures”. The cluster

“international measures” included the adoption of the NATO’s Strategic Concept of 2010. The “Lithuanian diplomatic/tactical measures” included the establishment of the NATO ENSEC COE, initiation of the legal proceedings against Gazprom, the Lithuanian EU Council presidency, installation of the LNG terminal, and negotiations with Gazprom. Finally, the cluster “facilitating conditions” included the Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute of 2009, the Ukrainian political crisis and annexation of Crimea in 2014, and the NordBalt cable laying incidents. Figure 11 below shows these events in chronological order.

Figure 11: *Timeline of key events during the timeframe 2009-2012*



Source: Author’s own compilation

5.2.1. Russian-Ukrainian Gas Dispute of 2009

The dispute between Russia and Ukraine at the beginning of 2009 was a result of repeated disagreements on the price of Russian gas supplies to Ukraine and a transit tariff of gas supplies to Europe via Ukraine.⁷⁴⁰ As Naftogaz of Ukraine failed to pay its debts to Gazprom⁷⁴¹, Gazprom cut natural gas supplies to Ukraine on 1 January with supplies via Ukraine to Europe flowing uninterrupted. However, as Ukraine started diverting supplies and using this gas for its own needs, Gazprom reduced and finally completely cut off supplies to Europe as well. All gas supplies to Europe were cut off

⁷⁴⁰ Cf. Pirani, Simon/ Stern, Jonathan/ Yafimava, Katja, *The Russo-Ukrainian Gas Dispute of January 2009: a Comprehensive Assessment*, Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, February 2009, p. 4.

⁷⁴¹ Cf. Pirani, Simon, *Der russisch-ukrainische Gaskonflikt 2009*, in: Heiko Pleines (ed), *Der russisch-ukrainische Erdgaskonflikt vom Januar 2009*, Forschungsstelle Osteuropa an der Universität Bremen, Arbeitspapiere und Materialien, Nr. 101 – Februar 2009, p. 16.

for two weeks between 7 to 20 January.⁷⁴² Sixteen EU member states were affected by the dispute and several countries in the Balkans faced a humanitarian emergency caused by the halt.⁷⁴³ The dispute was resolved on 18 January when Putin and Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Timoshenko managed to reach a political agreement on the basis of which Gazprom and Naftogaz signed new long-term agreements on the gas supply to Ukraine and transit to the EU.⁷⁴⁴

Although Lithuania was not directly affected by this supply cut-off, it voiced strong criticism of Russia for using energy as a foreign policy tool against Ukraine. In an interview with the Financial Times, President Adamkus expressed the view that the dispute was yet another episode in Moscow's strategy of re-establishing itself as a regional superpower and curbing Ukraine's aspirations for Euro-Atlantic integration.⁷⁴⁵ By commenting on the gas dispute between Russia and Ukraine Adamkus situated it in a broader strategic context that affected Ukraine and the West as a whole:

“Russia wants to send a signal to Ukrainians that they are not at liberty to decide their own political future, including the questions of joining the EU, the trans-Atlantic alliance or Nato and show it can interfere in their internal affairs”.⁷⁴⁶

Lithuania's view of this dispute differed fundamentally from the official position of the EU that first and foremost approached it as a commercial dispute.⁷⁴⁷ Whereas the Western European countries headed to Moscow to a Russian-EU crisis summit that the Ukrainian side was boycotting, the Lithuanian, Polish, Slovak, and Moldovan heads of state and governments gathered in Kiev in order to express their support for Ukraine.⁷⁴⁸

⁷⁴² Cf. Commission of the European Communities, Commission Staff Working Document, Accompanying document to the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning measures to safeguard security of gas supply and repealing Directive 2004/67/EC, The January 2009 Gas Supply Disruption to the EU: An Assessment, Brussels, 16.7.2009 SEC(2009) 977 final, p. 4.

⁷⁴³ Cf. Pirani/ Stern/ Yafimava, p. 4.

⁷⁴⁴ Cf. Commission of the European Communities, The January 2009 Gas Supply Disruption to the EU: An Assessment, p. 19.

⁷⁴⁵ Cf. Wagstyl, Stefan/ Gorst, Isabel/ Olearchyk, Roman/ Chaffin, Joshua, „West urged to open its doors to Ukraine“, Financial Times, 15.01.2009, <https://www.ft.com/content/de7be2d6-e333-11dd-a5cf-0000779fd2ac> [Accessed: 19.11.2021].

⁷⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁷ Cf. KyivPost, Reuters, „European Union: Both Ukraine, Russia to blame in gas crisis“, 07.01.2009, <https://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/world/european-union-both-ukraine-russia-to-blame-in-gas-32810.html> [Accessed: 04.12.2021]; Commission of the European Communities, The January 2009 Gas Supply Disruption to the EU: An Assessment, p. 2.

⁷⁴⁸ Cf. Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty, „Leaders Meet In Kyiv For Gas Talks Ahead Of Moscow Summit“, 16.01.2009, https://www.rferl.org/a/Leaders_Meet_In_Kyiv_For_Gas_Talks_Ahead_Of_Moscow_Summit/1370892.html [Accessed: 19.11.2021].

Therefore Lithuania, together with its Eastern European partners, actively supported the side of Ukraine⁷⁴⁹ during this dispute, blaming Russia for not simply turning off the gas flow to Ukraine and Europe, but for using energy as a political tool to blackmail Ukraine.

During a meeting between the Prime Ministers of Lithuania and Poland a clear message was formulated concerning the expected European response towards an energy crisis of this kind. Kaczynski and Kubilius stressed that the EU should show solidarity with both the member and partner states that were affected by the crisis, and thus take concrete measures to ensure their energy security. In this respect both leaders expressed their hope that the Lisbon Treaty would be ratified in the nearest future to include provisions on energy solidarity.⁷⁵⁰ In addition to that, on the sidelines of the meeting on Ukraine Kubilius and Polish Prime Minister Tusk discussed the development of an energy bridge between the countries that would link Lithuania to the Western Europe and would help to avoid potential Russian energy blackmail.⁷⁵¹ This project was included in the BEMIP plan and became one of the most important energy security projects of Lithuania.

Although member states have assessed Russia's motivation behind the gas dispute of 2009 differently, the EU as a whole drew important conclusions from it for its evolving energy policy. Most fundamentally, it acknowledged that, in the words of Barroso: “[w]e have to stop simply talking about energy security in Europe, and start doing something about it.”⁷⁵² The EC also acknowledged the need to focus more strongly on the security of supply and external energy relations of the EU.⁷⁵³ In addition to that, the critical need for infrastructural development was stressed in order to diversify supply

⁷⁴⁹ Cf. Kazakhstan Oil & Gas Weekly, „Russia-Ukraine Dispute“, 26.01.2009., Lexis Nexis Database: [advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sdk035c.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:7V03-JFS1-2P9D-N1TD-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance-lexis-1com-1zf6r3sdk035c.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:7V03-JFS1-2P9D-N1TD-00000-00&context=1516831) [Accessed: 04.12.2021].

⁷⁵⁰ Cf. Ibid.

⁷⁵¹ Cf. Deutsche Presse-Agentur, „ROUNDUP: Poland holds talks with Ukraine, Lithuania amid gas row =“, 14.01.2009, Lexis Nexis Database: [advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sdk035c.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4VCM-K1Y0-TXX-V184-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance-lexis-1com-1zf6r3sdk035c.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4VCM-K1Y0-TXX-V184-00000-00&context=1516831) [Accessed: 04.12.2021].

⁷⁵² European Commission, José Manuel Durão Barroso, President of the European Commission, Statement of President Barroso on the resolution of the Ukraine-Russia Gas Dispute Press point, Brussels, 20 January 2009, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_09_12 [Accessed: 10.11.2021].

⁷⁵³ Cf. Commission of the European Communities, The January 2009 Gas Supply Disruption to the EU: An Assessment, p. 13.

routes, build interconnections between member states, and expand reverse-flow capacities.⁷⁵⁴ All in all, the Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute of 2009 brought European vulnerabilities in the spotlight and motivated the development of effective energy policy instruments in order to curb them.

5.2.2. The Closure of the INPP and Alternative Nuclear Power Plant Projects in the Region

Despite years of Lithuanian attempts to postpone the final closure of the INPP, its last reactors were put offline on the 31 December 2009 as initially scheduled. After the closure Lithuania's power output gap was filled by the electric energy produced in the Elektrėnai fossil fuel plant and through increased electricity imports from Latvia and Estonia. Although closure of the INPP was seen as an "unprecedented case"⁷⁵⁵ because of the amount of power output that needed to be compensated by other sources, Prime Minister Kubilius stressed Lithuania's readiness to meet its obligations of a timely shutdown of the INPP and expressed a positive attitude towards Lithuania's future afterwards:

"Now we can develop a free energy market, one that will function as in Scandinavia. In a few years, joined by other Baltic nations, we will have an energy market like other countries in Europe"⁷⁵⁶.

The Energy Minister Sekmokas also emphasised Lithuania's readiness to keep the promise given to their European partners and to close the second reactor of the INPP by the end of 2009.⁷⁵⁷ As a result, the approach of the Kubilius-led government towards the closure differed substantially from that of the previous Kirkilas-government. On one hand, the Kubilius-led government could distance itself from the mismanagement of this issue by presenting it as a failure of the previous governments to find timely solutions. Also, Vice Minister for Energy Švedas stressed that the country was not prepared at

⁷⁵⁴ Cf. Ibid, pp. 14-15.

⁷⁵⁵ Deutsche Welle, „Lithuania shuts down last reactor“, 31.12.2009, <https://www.dw.com/en/lithuania-shuts-down-last-reactor/a-5074094> [Accessed: 19.11.2021].

⁷⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁷ Cf. BBC, „Lithuania shuts its only nuclear power station“, 31.12.2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8435628.stm> [Accessed: 19.11.2021].

all for the closure and that the underlying problem was the generally low understanding about the consequences of the shutdown.⁷⁵⁸ On the other hand, the Kubilius-led government did not even attempt to negotiate the postponement of the closure, and instead tried to present Lithuania as a responsible member state following its obligations. The main precondition for this move was the already existing BEMIP plan which included concrete measures for strengthening Lithuania's energy security.

According to the general Lithuanian position since 2006, the basis for Lithuania's energy sector after the reform had to remain nuclear power. This goal was to be achieved through the construction of the new VNPP.⁷⁵⁹ After the previously discussed dismantlement of the national champion LEO LT that was formed by the Kirkilas-led government and tasked to develop and finance the VNPP project, the Kubilius-led government started looking for a strategic investor for the construction of the VNPP in December 2009 just before the final closure of the INPP.⁷⁶⁰ Therefore with the support of the EC in the form of the BEMIP plan, Lithuania entered the final stage of the closure of the INPP with the perspective of remaining a nuclear power producing country.⁷⁶¹

However, around the same time intentions of building two more nuclear power plants in the region in Kaliningrad⁷⁶² and in Belarus⁷⁶³ were announced by the Russian and Belorussian authorities. The Lithuanian government questioned the viability of these projects from the very beginning, claiming that the Kaliningrad region already had

⁷⁵⁸ Author's Interview #5.

⁷⁵⁹ Cf. Lapienyte, Jurgita, „Trys premjerai – trys atominiai planai: išleisti milijonai, bet jėgainės statybos net nepradėtos“/ “Three Prime Ministers - three nuclear plans: millions already spent but construction of the power plant has not yet even started“ (in Lithuanian only), 15min.lt, 24.10.2013, <https://www.15min.lt/verslas/naujiena/energetika/trys-premjerai-trys-atominiai-planai-isleisti-milijonai-bet-jegaines-statybos-net-nepradetos-664-379496?copied> [Accessed: 19.11.2021].

⁷⁶⁰ Cf. World Nuclear News, „Investors sought for new Lithuanian plant“, 09.12.2009, https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/NN-Investors_sought_for_new_Lithuanian_plant-0912094.html [Accessed: 19.11.2021].

⁷⁶¹ Cf. ITAR-TASS, „Lithuania to remain nuclear power producing country - Grybauskaitė.“, 08.12.2009, Lexis Nexis Database: <https://advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sc100bc.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6071-JS51-JC8F-84NM-00000-00&context=1516831> [Accessed: 20.11.2021].

⁷⁶² Cf. ITAR-TASS, „Kiriienko orders construction of NPP in Kaliningrad region“, 27.08.2008, Lexis Nexis Database: advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3s3q0861.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:605K-FJS1-JC8F-82CY-00000-00&context=1516831 [Accessed: 19.11.2021].

⁷⁶³ Cf. BBC Monitoring Kiev Unit Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring, „Russia ready to participate in Belarus nuclear power plant tender“, 18.10.2007, Lexis Nexis Database: advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3s3q0861.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4PXM-FPC0-TX34-N1M9-00000-00&context=1516831 [Accessed: 19.11.2021].

sufficient infrastructure for the production of electric power for its own needs. Belarus, on the other hand, was facing serious economic difficulties that, according to the Lithuanian view, made an infrastructural project of that scale hardly possible.⁷⁶⁴ Despite the lacking economic viability of these projects, they were progressing. Lithuanian views shifted accordingly from considering them economically and technically illogical to increasingly stressing their political and security implications.

In this respect, Juknevičienė argued that the main goal of the planned nuclear power plants in Kaliningrad and Belarus was to discredit the Lithuanian VNPP project by spreading uncertainty in Lithuanian society about the need for three nuclear power plants so close to each other.⁷⁶⁵ The Lithuanian member of the European Parliament Zigmantas Balčytis also argued that Russia was building the Kaliningrad nuclear power plant with the aim to stop the Lithuanian VNPP project and to extend Lithuania's dependency on Russian natural gas for the electricity sector.⁷⁶⁶ President Grybauskaitė was officially invited by Putin to build the nuclear power plant in Kaliningrad together, which was perceived by the Lithuanian side as Russian provocation.⁷⁶⁷ Instead of cooperating with Russia, Lithuania sought for more active involvement from the EC in the implementation of the VNPP project, and thus urged the international partners to approach this project not as a commercial, but as a political one.⁷⁶⁸

However, although the EC endorsed the VNPP project as contributing to Lithuanian energy security and thus opened the way for Lithuania to apply for a loan from the

⁷⁶⁴ Cf. Veidas.lt, „Regione regi tik Visagino atominę elektrinę“/ “Only Visaginas nuclear power plant has perspective in the region“ (in Lithuanian only), 10.05.2011, <http://www.veidas.lt/regione-regi-tik-visagino-atomine-elektrine> [Accessed: 20.11.2021].

⁷⁶⁵ Author's Interview #1.

⁷⁶⁶ Cf. BBC Monitoring Europe - Political, Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring, Alfa.lt „Lithuania needs EU help to implement nuclear plant project - website“, 22.05.2013, Lexis Nexis Database: [advan-ce-1lexis-1com-lzf6r3sc100bc erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:58GB-HTP1-DYRV-336V-00000-00&context=1516831](https://www.lexis-com-lzf6r3sc100bc erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:58GB-HTP1-DYRV-336V-00000-00&context=1516831) [Accessed: 25.11.2021].

⁷⁶⁷ Cf. Delfi.lt, BNS, „D.Grybauskaitė: V.Putino siūlymas kartu statyti AE Kaliningrade Lietuvai nepriimtinas“/ “D. Grybauskaitė: the proposal of V. Putin to build nuclear power plant in Kaliningrad together with Lithuania is not acceptable“ (in Lithuanian only), 10.02.2010, <https://www.delfi.lt/verslas/energetika/dgrybauskaitė-vputino-siulymas-kartu-statyti-ae-kaliningrade-lietuvai-nepriimtinas.d?id=28838175> [Accessed: 25.11.2021].

⁷⁶⁸ Cf. BBC Monitoring Europe, „Lithuania needs EU help to implement nuclear plant project - website“.

Euratom Fond⁷⁶⁹, at the same time the EC raised the question of the economic viability of the Lithuanian VNPP project in the context of the two other nuclear power plant projects under development in the Baltic region.⁷⁷⁰ Therefore, Lithuania's fears that the rival projects would have a negative impact on the prospects of the VNPP were materialising. The final blow for the project was the consultative referendum in Lithuania that was organised in October 2012 together with the parliamentary elections that showed that the majority of voters did not support building a new nuclear power plant in Lithuania.⁷⁷¹ After this referendum and the governmental change that followed the parliamentary elections of 2012, the VNPP project was recognised as "dead" by its main initiator, Sekmokas, the Energy Minister in the Kubilius-led government.⁷⁷²

According to Sekmokas, the main reasons that led to the failure of this project stemmed from its regional profile, which led to disagreements among the project partners.⁷⁷³ Juknevičienė and Švedas, on the other hand, stressed the role of Russia in discrediting Lithuanian VNPP project. According to Juknevičienė, the initiation of rival nuclear power plant projects in the region was a "geopolitical battle" that Lithuania lost.⁷⁷⁴ The former Minister of Defence argued that Russia was spreading propaganda that targeted Lithuanian society in order to force it to reject the VNPP project.⁷⁷⁵ Also Švedas supported this view by arguing that:

"The Kaliningrad nuclear power plant can be called one of the most expensive discreditation campaigns. In order to discredit the Visaginas project, Russia indeed started

⁷⁶⁹ Cf. European Commission, „Euratom Loans“, https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/international-economic-relations/euratom-loans_lt [Accessed: 25.11.2021]; Visagino AE verslo planas, Iš LR Vyriausybės ir UAB „Visagino atominė elektrinė“ perspektyvos, 2012 m. gegužė/ Business Plan of the Visaginas NPP, The Perspective of the Lithuanian Government and the “Visaginas Nuclear Power Plant“ GmbH (in Lithuanian only), p. 100.

⁷⁷⁰ Cf. Euractiv, „Lithuanian nuclear power plant OKed, with conditions“, 13.06.2012, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/lithuanian-nuclear-power-plant-oked-with-conditions/> [Accessed: 25.11.2021].

⁷⁷¹ Cf. 15min.lt, „Lietuva taria „Ne!“ naujai atominei elektrinei“/ “Lithuania says “No!“ to the new nuclear power plant, 14.10.2012, updated 15.10.2021, <https://www.15min.lt/naujiena/rinkimai-2012/rinkimai2012-naujienos/lietuva-taria-ne-naujai-atominei-elektrinei-631-264306?copied> [Accessed: 25.11.2021].

⁷⁷² Cf. Delfi.lt, BNS, „A. Sekmokas: Visagino atominės elektrinės projektas - nebegyvas“/ “A. Sekmokas: the project of the Visaginas nuclear power plant is dead“ (in Lithuanian only), 13.04.2016, <https://www.delfi.lt/verslas/energetika/a-sekmokas-visagino-atomines-elektrines-projektas-nebegyvas.d?id=70973696> [Accessed: 25.11.2021].

⁷⁷³ Cf. Ibid.

⁷⁷⁴ Author's Interview #1.

⁷⁷⁵ Cf. Ibid.

building the nuclear power plant in Kaliningrad. After the referendum in Lithuania, the Kaliningrad plant was immediately cancelled. Therefore the infrastructural projects in Lithuania were implemented under the conditions that can be described as a real war.⁷⁷⁶

Although the Kaliningrad nuclear power plant project was cancelled⁷⁷⁷, work on the Ostrovets nuclear power plant in Belarus continued and the plant went online in 2020⁷⁷⁸. Although Lithuania's massive diplomatic efforts to stop the construction of this power plant in its chosen location just 45 kilometres away from Vilnius⁷⁷⁹ failed, the country managed to at least achieve the commercial boycott of the Belorussian electricity.⁷⁸⁰ The physical, and thus complete boycott of the "unsafe" electricity produced in the Ostrovets nuclear power plant can only be achieved after the Baltic States desynchronise from the IPS/UPS and gain access to the synchronous grid of Continental Europe.

5.2.3. NATO's Strategic Concept of 2010

After the Secretary General of NATO was officially tasked with developing a new Strategic Concept of NATO during the Strasbourg/Kehl Summit in April 2009, the drafting process was officially launched in July 2009 during a high-level security conference in Brussels.⁷⁸¹ The Group of Experts that was responsible for developing proposals for the new Concept consulted all NATO member states in advance to make the process as transparent as possible. The goal was to achieve broad political support for

⁷⁷⁶ Author's Interview #5.

⁷⁷⁷ Cf. Menkiszak, Marek, „Russia freezes the construction of the nuclear power plant in Kaliningrad“, OSW Centre for Eastern Studies, 12.06.2013, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analyses/2013-06-12/russia-freezes-construction-nuclear-power-plant-kaliningrad> [Accessed: 27.11.2021].

⁷⁷⁸ Cf. Reuters, „Belarus' Lukashenko inaugurates nuclear power plant amid safety concerns“, 07.11.2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-belarus-nuclearpower-idUSKBN27N0BP> [Accessed: 27.11.2021].

⁷⁷⁹ Cf. Nardelli, Alberto/ Chrysoloras, Nikos/ Seputyte, Milda, „Atomic Plant at EU's Border Spooks Leaders Amid Risk Warning“, Bloomberg, 10.12.2020, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-12-10/nuclear-plant-at-eu-s-border-spooks-leaders-amid-risk-warnings> [Accessed: 27.11.2021].

⁷⁸⁰ Cf. Politico, „Electricity from blocked Belarusian reactor still flowing into the EU“, 11.02.2021, <https://www.politico.eu/article/electricity-from-blocked-belarusian-reactor-still-flowing-into-the-eu/> [Accessed: 27.11.2021].

⁷⁸¹ Cf. NATO, „NATO launches public debate on the Strategic Concept“, 07.07.2009, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_56326.htm? [Accessed: 29.11.2021].

the new Strategic Concept that was dubbed a “consensus document” by Madeleine Albright, the Chair of the Group of Experts.⁷⁸²

The former Minister of Defence Juknevičienė who participated in the joint NAC of Foreign and Defence Ministers aimed to evaluate the proposal for the Strategic Concept⁷⁸³ confirmed that the preparation of this document was an inclusive process, and that all member states were able to identify their most pressing security concerns and have them included in the document.⁷⁸⁴ Although Lithuania identified energy security as one of its priorities and stressed the need for more active engagement from the Alliance in this area, the key message that Lithuania wanted to be declared clearly in the new Strategic Concept was related to NATO’s core collective defence commitment as anchored in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.⁷⁸⁵ This aspect reflected Lithuania’s persisting perception of Russia as the main threat to its national security, the notion that was revived by the Russo-Georgian War of 2008.

Therefore, it is important to stress that despite the fact that Lithuania voiced its interest in broadening the agenda of NATO to encompass new security challenges such as energy and cyber, its main interest within the strategic level process of developing the new Strategic Concept of NATO was to sustain the Alliance’s focus on the core task of collective defence. This was particularly true in the context of the US’s “reset” plan for Russia developed by the newly elected US President Barack Obama, which represented “an attempt to move the bilateral relationship to a more positive and co-operative stage.”⁷⁸⁶ In the light of the American “reset” plan Lithuania demanded reassurance that

⁷⁸² Cf. Federal News Service, “Council on Foreign Relations Meeting; Subject: The Future of NATO; Speaker: Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright Chair, Group Of Experts, NATO's New Strategic Concept; Presider: Richard Haass, President, Council on Foreign Relations; Location: Council on Foreign Relations, New York City, New York“, 27.05.2010, Lexis Nexis Database: <https://advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sb0016c.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:7YM3-VBP1-2PN4-32D1-00000-00&context=1516831> [Accessed: 29.11.2021].

⁷⁸³ Cf. Ministry of National Defence, „Lietuva - už atsinaujinusį ir gyvybingą Aljansą“/ “Lithuania - for a renewed and lively Alliance“ (in Lithuanian only), 14.10.2010, http://kam.lt/lt/naujienos_874/archyvas_930/ziniu_archyvas_2010_metai/ziniu_archyvas_2010_-_10/lietuva_-_uz_atsinaujinusi_ir_gyvybinga_aljansa.html?pbck=20 [Accessed: 29.11.2021].

⁷⁸⁴ Author’s Interview #1.

⁷⁸⁵ Author’s Interview #1; Cf. Irytas.lt, „Ekspertų rekomendacijos dėl naujos NATO strateginės koncepcijos atitinka Lietuvos interesus“/ “Experts’ recommendations for the new NATO Strategic Concept corresponds Lithuania’s interests“ (in Lithuanian only), 17.05.2010, updated on 04.04.2018, <https://www.irytas.lt/lietuvosdiena/aktualijos/2021/12/10/news/gyventojai-pasake-ka-mato-lietuvos-prezidento-poste-2024-aisiais-21688204> [Accessed: 29.11.2010].

⁷⁸⁶ Pifer, Steven, „US-Russia Relations in the Obama Era: From Reset to Refreeze?“, in: IFSH (ed.), OSCE Yearbook 2014, Baden-Baden 2015, p. 112.

the broadening of NATO's agenda would not be done "at the expense of its core principle."⁷⁸⁷ Therefore, according to Linkevičius, Lithuania's main message during the developmental phase of the Strategic Concept was based on the idea that a "reset" should not mean "delete" when it comes to "memory, commitments, obligations."⁷⁸⁸

5.2.4. Initiation of the Antitrust Investigation against Gazprom

In January 2011 the Ministry of Energy of Lithuania issued a request to the EC to start an investigation on "the abuse of dominant position by the Russian gas supplier Gazprom."⁷⁸⁹ With this request Lithuania argued that Gazprom was using economic pressure against Lithuania while supplying it with natural gas under non-transparent and discriminatory conditions that were aimed at hindering Lithuania's ability to complete the liberalisation of the national gas sector according to the provisions of Third Energy Package of the EU.⁷⁹⁰ Reacting to this request the EC conducted dawn-raids in the natural gas companies active in ten Central and Eastern European member states under the suspicion that they were involved in "anticompetitive practices in breach of the EU prohibitions on restrictive agreements and abuse of a dominant position contained in Article 101 and/or Article 102 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union."⁷⁹¹ The information gathered during the raids encouraged the EC to open formal proceedings against Gazprom in September 2012.⁷⁹²

When asked about the motivation behind Lithuania's decision to contact the EC and raise the question about Gazprom's discriminatory practices, Prime Minister Kubi-

⁷⁸⁷ Linkevičius, Linas, „Reset With Russia, but With Reassurance“, The New York Times, 09.09.2010, <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/10/opinion/10iht-edlinkevicius.html> [Accessed: 30.11.2021].

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁹ Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania, „Lithuanian Ministry of Energy launched a complaint to the European Commission regarding abuse of dominant position by the Russian gas supplier Gazprom“, 25.01.2011, <https://enmin.lrv.lt/en/news/lithuanian-ministry-of-energy-launched-a-complaint-to-the-european-commission-regarding-abuse-of-dominant-position-by-the-russian-gas-supplier-gazprom> [Accessed: 30.11.2021].

⁷⁹⁰ Cf. Ibid.

⁷⁹¹ Rab, Suzanne, „European Commission Launches Dawn Raids on Ener! Companies in Eastern Europe“, King & Spalding, 01.11.2011, <https://www.kslaw.com/blog-posts/european-commission-launches-dawn-raids-energy-companies-eastern-europe> [Accessed: 30.11.2021].

⁷⁹² Cf. European Commission, „Antitrust: Commission opens proceedings against Gazprom“.

lius argued that Lithuania did it for the sake of justice, but also as a supportive measure in its overall negotiating strategy with Gazprom on Lithuania's energy sector's reform.⁷⁹³ Energy Minister Sekmokas who, according to Kubilius, was the main initiator of the idea to involve the EC in Lithuania's negotiations with Gazprom⁷⁹⁴, claimed that consequences of Gazprom's discriminatory practices in Lithuania transcended the national level and represented a well-organised attempt to "disturb creation of a single European gas market."⁷⁹⁵ According to the interviewed representative of the EC, it was clear at the EU level that the underlying conflict between Lithuania and Gazprom was Lithuania's principled position on the implementation of European liberalisation rules in its natural gas sector and Gazprom's strong opposition to it.⁷⁹⁶ The representative of the EC argued that during this process Lithuania emerged as an active member state that clearly demonstrated its willingness to finalise the liberalisation process in the form that it had chosen.⁷⁹⁷

In addition to Lithuania's decision to initiate the antimonopoly investigation of the EC, the country also contacted the Stockholm Institute of Arbitration with a claim against Gazprom's pricing policy for Lithuania. According to Sekmokas, this legal suit was, among other reasons, motivated by Gazprom's unwillingness to take "the path of negotiations"⁷⁹⁸. Thus the underlying Lithuanian strategy to force Gazprom to the negotiating table was backed and based on the involvement of international actors in the process. The tools chosen for this strategy were based on presentation of Russia as a discriminatory supplier breaching universal business rules.

⁷⁹³ Author's Interview #2.

⁷⁹⁴ Cf. Ibid.

⁷⁹⁵ Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania, „Lithuanian Ministry of Energy launched a complaint to the European Commission regarding abuse of dominant position by the Russian gas supplier Gazprom“

⁷⁹⁶ Author's Interview #8.

⁷⁹⁷ Cf. Ibid.

⁷⁹⁸ BNS, „Suit against Gazprom is Lithuania's response to its unwillingness to talk - minister“, 03.10.2012, Lexis Nexis Database: <https://advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3snk0648.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:56R2-65P1-JCF2-005J-00000-00&context=1516831> [Accessed: 30.11.2021].

5.2.5. Opening of the Nord Stream Pipeline

The first line of the Nord Stream pipeline was officially inaugurated in November 2011, and the second in October 2012.⁷⁹⁹ The event was attended by political and business leaders including German Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, the Prime Ministers of France François Fillon and the Netherlands Mark Rutte, as well as the EU's Energy Commissioner Oettinger.⁸⁰⁰ After both lines of the pipeline became operational, the volume of natural gas being transported directly from Russia to Germany and bypassing transit countries reached 55 billion cubic metres a year.⁸⁰¹ In addition to the praise expressed for the substantial increase in the amount of Russian gas reaching the EU through the Nord Stream pipeline, the ability to transport gas directly to the consumer was yet another important novelty in the energy relations between Russia and Germany.⁸⁰²

European reactions towards this pipeline were diverse. The recent Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute of 2009 highlighted important cleavages among the supporters and opponents of the pipeline. One group of countries argued that the dispute signalled the pressing need to diversify the EU's gas supply routes⁸⁰³, and at the same time presented Ukraine as the weak link in supplying Europe with natural gas. Based on this argument the Nord Stream project was politically supported not only by Russia and Germany, but also by the EC. Energy Commissioner Piebalgs claimed in 2009 that the EC

⁷⁹⁹ Cf. Gazprom, „Nord Stream“, <https://www.gazprom.de/projects/nord-stream/> [Accessed: 30.11.2021].

⁸⁰⁰ Cf. M2 Press WIRE, “Nord Stream Pipeline Inaugurated -- Major Milestone for European Energy Security; Political and business leaders gather in Lubmin on Germany's Baltic Sea coast to celebrate the arrival of gas in the European gas grid; Nord Stream provides a fixed link between Europe and Russia's massive gas reserves for at least 50 years“, 08.11.2011, Lexis Nexis Database: [advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sb00846.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:546P-PDJ1-F0K1-N250-00000-00&context=1516831](https://www.lexis-1.com-1zf6r3sb00846.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:546P-PDJ1-F0K1-N250-00000-00&context=1516831) [Accessed: 30.11.2021].

⁸⁰¹ Gazprom, „Nord Stream“.

⁸⁰² Baag, Robert, „Eröffnung der Ostsee-Pipeline Nord-Stream in Lubmin: Russisches Gas für Europa“, Deutschlandradio.de, 08.11.2011, https://www.deutschlandradio.de/eroeffnung-der-ostsee-pipeline-nord-stream-in-lubmin.331.de.html?dram:article_id=204584 [30.11.2021].

⁸⁰³ Cf. Spiegel.de, „Merkel Calls on EU to Support Baltic Gas Pipeline“, 29.01.2009, <https://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/europe-split-over-energy-security-merkel-calls-on-eu-to-support-baltic-gas-pipeline-a-604277.html> [Accessed: 30.11.2021].

has been favourable towards the project that together with the planned Nabucco pipeline constituted the EU's "crucial steps towards securing energy supplies for the future."⁸⁰⁴

Lithuania and Poland, on the other hand, expressed an alternative view on the "lessons learned" from the recent gas dispute, arguing that not only gas transport routes but also — and even more so — gas suppliers themselves had to be diversified. According to this view, the Nord Stream pipeline was simply rerouting gas supplies away from Ukraine and thus not solving the actual issue of overdependence on the sole energy supplier Russia. Therefore the Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute of 2009 added to the already existing heavy opposition from Lithuania and Poland towards the Nord Stream pipeline.⁸⁰⁵

As already argued in previous subchapters, during the early planning phase of the Nord Stream pipeline Lithuania prevalingly criticised the project as diminishing both its national and the EU's security of supply. During the later phases Lithuania also added ecologic concerns to its argumentation against the pipeline. In this respect, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the Lithuanian Parliament Ažubalis claimed that the Nord Stream pipeline could possibly have a negative impact on "the ecologic environment of the Baltic Sea, human health and security, fisheries and the tourism sector".⁸⁰⁶ As a result, throughout the planning and construction phase of the pipeline Lithuania tried to adjust its position towards it in order to target as many potentially opposing societal groups of the EU as possible.

5.2.6. Accreditation of the NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence

The decision to support Lithuania's proposal of establishing the NATO ENSEC COE in Vilnius was officially announced during the Chicago Summit in May 2012 and

⁸⁰⁴ PR Newswire Europe, "Nord Stream and EU Energy Commissioner Reaffirm Importance of New Gas Supply Routes; - Nord Stream Will Provide Supply Route Diversification and Additional Gas From 2011", 16.07.2009, Lexis Nexis Database: <https://advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sb00846.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:7W5N-5WX1-2R2G-X1G2-00000-00&context=1516831> [Accessed: 30.11.2021].

⁸⁰⁵ Cf. Euractiv.com, „Lithuania gives cold shoulder to Nord Stream“, 27.08.2009, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/med-south/news/lithuania-gives-cold-shoulder-to-nord-stream/> [30.11.2021].

⁸⁰⁶ Cf. BNS, "Lithuanian MP Asks MEPs to Raise Nord Stream Threats When Considering Commissioner Candidates", 08.01.2010, Lexis Nexis Database: <https://advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sb00881.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:7XH2-7741-2R98-V4YG-00000-00&context=1516831> [Accessed: 30.11.2021].

included in the Summit Declaration.⁸⁰⁷ According to Juknevičienė, who was the author of the idea to establish such a Centre in Lithuania, the whole process lasted for four years since her initial proposal in 2008, and the end result included significant changes to the initial idea.⁸⁰⁸ When asked about the motivation behind Lithuania's proposal to institutionalise the discussion on energy in the form of a COE⁸⁰⁹, Juknevičienė mentioned Lithuania's willingness to raise awareness about the ways that Russia could try to increase its political influence on NATO through its tightening grip on the member states' energy sectors.⁸¹⁰ Therefore, the initial focus of Lithuania's proposal rested on intelligence sharing, creation of an early-warning system, as well as utilisation of military capabilities in order to warrant energy supply.⁸¹¹ This view corresponded to the prevailing attitude of the leaders of the HU-LChD, as expressed in their „Russia's Containment Strategy“.

However, back in 2009 Lithuanian representatives had to admit that the Lithuanian initiative was lacking the “critical mass” of support from other member states of the Alliance.⁸¹² When looking from today's perspective, Juknevičienė also called this early-stage initiative “naive”, as it was based on counteracting malicious Russian behaviour in the energy area — a role that NATO could not undertake.⁸¹³ The interviewed representative of the NATO IS commented on the situation by stating that it was up to Lithuania to decide whether it wanted to proceed with a push for the establishment of a Centre based on the idea of energy supply protection that had no perspective within NATO. Another option was to offer a concept for a Centre that could solve problems

⁸⁰⁷ Cf. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, „Chicago Summit Declaration, Paragraph 52.

⁸⁰⁸ Author's Interview #1.

⁸⁰⁹ NATO's Centres of Excellence are regarded being subject-matter experts in a particular functional area that support NATO member states with in-depth knowledge on a specific issue. They do not belong to the NATO Command Structure, are nationally or multi-nationally funded and are coordinated by Allied Command Transformation (ACT) and the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR). Cf. NATO, „Centres of Excellence“, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_68372.htm [Accessed: 01.12.2021].

⁸¹⁰ Author's Interview #1.

⁸¹¹ Cf. BNS, “Lithuania's Idea To Launch Nato Energy Security Center Fails To Secure Popularity“, 13.11.2009, Lexis Nexis Database: <https://advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3ski0382.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:7X33-W371-2R98-V36W-00000-00&context=1516831> [Accessed: 01.12.2021].

⁸¹² Cf. Ibid.

⁸¹³ Author's Interview #1.

that NATO as a whole was confronted with.⁸¹⁴ Lithuania agreed to consider alternative options.⁸¹⁵

During the final stage of the concept development process the “Innovative Energy Solutions for Military Applications” (IESMA) workshop was organised for the first time in Vilnius in 2011. The workshop was organised by what was then known as the national Energy Security Centre, and this was mentioned by the representative of NATO IS as an important achievement that had a positive effect on the decision to accredit this Centre as a NATO Centre of Excellence.⁸¹⁶ This workshop was devoted to operational energy security, and attracted broad attention from the US, the UK, as well as Germany, thus uniting the pro and contra camps that existed within NATO in relation to the more active engagement of the Alliance in energy security matters.⁸¹⁷ Although the shift from security of supply to operational energy security constituted a substantial modification of Lithuania’s initial proposal for the Centre, the result was still beneficial for the country: it demonstrated its ability to adapt to the needs of the Alliance and strengthened its expert role in the area of energy. According to Linkevičius, the added value for Lithuania in creating additional instruments for energy security within NATO stemmed from the “transatlantic nature” of the organisation⁸¹⁸, and thus provided additional leverages with which to deal with energy-related national security issues.

5.2.7. Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU

Lithuania’s first ever EU Council Presidency term lasted from 1 July to 31 December 2013. The country organised its Presidency under the motto of “Credible, Growing and Open Europe”.⁸¹⁹ Among other topics Lithuania focused strongly on the Eas-

⁸¹⁴ Author’s Interview #7.

⁸¹⁵ Author’s Interview #1.

⁸¹⁶ Author’s Interview #7.

⁸¹⁷ Cf. Ibid.

⁸¹⁸ Cf. eurodialogue.org „Linas Linkevicius: Europe Begins at Home“, Exclusive interview of the Lithuania’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Linas Linkevičius, 10.07.2012, <http://eurodialogue.org/europe-east/LINAS-LINKEVICIUS-EUROPE-BEGINS-AT-HOME> [Accessed: 01.12.2021].

⁸¹⁹ Cf. Programme of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, 1 July to 31 December 2013, For a Credible, Growing and Open Europe, pp. 1-50.

tern Partnership Summit that was set to take place in Vilnius.⁸²⁰ This Summit represented the culmination of Lithuania's Presidency term reflecting its long-lasting strive for the spread of democratisation processes further to the East, first and foremost to Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova. Initiation of the Association Agreements with Georgia and Moldova as well as signing of the Association Agreement with Ukraine were included on the agenda of this Summit.⁸²¹ However, as Ukrainian President Yanukovich refused to sign the Agreement, allegedly as a result of pressure from Russia, the ultimate goal of the Summit in Vilnius could not be achieved.

Beside the Eastern Partnership, energy also occupied a central role within Lithuania's Presidency programme. The country put two main energy-related aspects on its Presidency agenda. The first aspect concerned the finalisation of the internal energy market by 2014 that aimed to eliminate the energy isolation of infrastructurally vulnerable member states, including Lithuania itself, by 2015.⁸²² The second aspect was related to Lithuania's goal of strengthening the external dimension of the EU's energy policy by increasing the EU's ability to respond to new energy-related security challenges.⁸²³ Thus Lithuania's priorities in this area stretched from market to defence issues and reflected the general Lithuanian approach towards energy as a multi-faceted issue.

Although strengthening the EU's Eastern Partnership and external energy policy reflected the long-term Lithuanian foreign policy priorities within the EU, they were adjusted to reflect the EU, not Lithuanian national, interests. In this vein, Lithuania added to the agreement on the Connecting Europe Facility as a crucial mechanism for fostering infrastructural interconnections among the member states⁸²⁴ and initiated inclusion of the military energy efficiency element in the activities of the EDA⁸²⁵. According

⁸²⁰ Cf. Gotev, Georgi, „Tiny Lithuania prepares to wrestle with heavy EU dossiers“, Euractiv.com, 25.04.2013 updated: 20.06.2013, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/banking-union/news/tiny-lithuania-prepares-to-wrestle-with-heavy-eu-dossiers/> [Accessed: 05.12.2021].

⁸²¹ Cf. European Commission, „FACTSHEET Eastern Partnership summit Vilnius, 28-29 November 2013“, 26.11.2013, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO_13_1057 [Accessed: 05.12.2021].

⁸²² Cf. Programme of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, p. 8.

⁸²³ Cf. Ibid, p. 11.

⁸²⁴ Cf. REGULATION (EU) No 1316/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, amending Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 680/2007 and (EC) No 67/2010, Official Journal of the European Union, L348/129, 20.12.2013.

⁸²⁵ Cf. LR Krašto apsaugos ministerija, „Pirmininkavimas ES Tarybai“.

to Linkevičius, Lithuania's main goal was to continue the tradition of being a neutral representative of the whole EU during the Presidency term, which meant that Lithuania was aware of the need to not misuse its position to promote its national agenda.⁸²⁶ Other Lithuanian diplomats also confirmed this view, stating that the EU Council Presidency was an ongoing process with a long-term agenda being continued by each succeeding Presidency holder.⁸²⁷ This has been especially true as a result of the Trio-Presidency approach as introduced by the Lisbon Treaty.⁸²⁸

Despite existing limitations for exerting influence on thematic aspects of the EU agenda, the Presidency had positive implications for the overall visibility of Lithuania in terms of its administrative competence and strengthening its image as a reliable European partner.⁸²⁹ Therefore, the Lithuanian Presidency term can be regarded as having positively influenced representation of Lithuania's national interests at the EU level in indirect ways: by building trust with the European partners, and thus their increasing readiness to consult Lithuania on strategically important issues, including the energy field.

5.2.8. Negotiations with Gazprom over Ownership Unbundling

As argued in the previous subchapters, the point of departure for the process of liberalising Lithuania's natural gas sector was the country's principled decision to implement the Third Energy Package in the form of ownership unbundling without asking the EC for a derogation. Kubilius stated in the interview that the negative reaction from Gazprom towards this decision was foreseeable.⁸³⁰ Indeed after Lithuania's decision to implement ownership unbundling was announced, Gazprom, together with E.ON Ruhr-

⁸²⁶ Author's Interview #3.

⁸²⁷ Cf. Lietuvos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai poveikio vertinimas, Galutinė ataskaita, Parengta: UAB „BGI Consulting“, skirta: Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerijai/ Evaluation of the Impact of Lithuanian EU Council Presidency, Final Report for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (in Lithuanian only), p. 46.

⁸²⁸ Cf. Consilium, „The Presidency of the Council of the EU“, 21.09.2016, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/documents-publications/library/library-blog/posts/the-presidency-of-the-council-of-the-eu/> [Accessed: 05.12.2021].

⁸²⁹ Cf. Lietuvos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai poveikio vertinimas, Galutinė ataskaita, pp. 55-56.

⁸³⁰ Author's Interview #2.

gas as the main shareholders of Lietuvos Dujos issued a statement arguing that the Lithuanian government's with its decision to unbundle the company violated their commercial interests. Therefore, Gazprom and E.ON Ruhrgas demanded that the Lithuanian government choose a less interferential option for liberalising the natural gas sector.⁸³¹ As motivation for rethinking the decision, Gazprom offered discounts for those countries that asked for derogations for implementation of the Third Energy Package — among them Latvia and Estonia — but excluded Lithuania.⁸³²

The Lithuanian government reacted to Gazprom's complaints about their violated commercial interests by arguing that Lithuania was simply implementing European directives and thus positioned itself as fully dependent on the EC's decisions.⁸³³ As it became clear from the expert interviews, the Energy Minister Sekmokas was the main initiator of the idea to involve the EC in the ongoing negotiations with Gazprom.⁸³⁴ As a part of this "involvement strategy" Lithuania consulted the EC for their opinion on the possibility of implementing ownership unbundling under the constraints of the existing contracts with Gazprom and E.ON Ruhrgas⁸³⁵, and having received a positive response that supported their chosen model⁸³⁶, proceeded with its implementation. Later, trilateral meetings amongst the representatives of the Lithuanian government, Gazprom, and DG Energy took place.⁸³⁷

⁸³¹ Cf. Gazprom, „Statement from AB Lietuvos dujos shareholders: Gazprom and E.ON Ruhrgas“, Press Release, 11.06.2010, <https://www.gazprom.com/press/news/2010/june/article99714/> [Accessed: 05.12.2021].

⁸³² Cf. Grainge, Zoe, “Divide and Rule: Gazprom Offers Discount to Only Two Baltic States“, IHS Global Insight, 29.12.2010, Lexis Nexis Database: advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sa20185.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:51TR-6291-DYTG-912B-00000-00&context=1516831 [Accessed: 15.12.2021].

⁸³³ Cf. Ibid.

⁸³⁴ Author's Interview #2.

⁸³⁵ Cf. Kauno.diena.lt, BNS, „A.Sekmokas: EK ketina derėtis su Rusija dėl „Lietuvos dujų“ ateities“/ “A. Sekmokas: EC is going to negotiate with Russia over the future of “Lietuvos Dujos“ (in Lithuanian only), 10.12.2010, <https://kauno.diena.lt/naujienos/ekonomika/asekmokas-ek-ketina-deretis-su-rusija-del-lietuvos-duju-ateities-179321> [Accessed: 05.12.2021].

⁸³⁶ Cf. Weingärtner, Tom, “EU unterstützt Litauen“, Energie & Management, 23.05.2011, Lexis Nexis Database: advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sci00f7.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:52XN-PF81-DY25-C42T-00000-00&context=1516831 [Accessed: 05.12.2021].

⁸³⁷ Cf. Esmerk Estonia News, BNS, "Lithuania: PM Kubilius meets Gazprom, European Commission reps“, 27.02.2012, Lexis Nexis Database: advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3sci00f7.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:552J-VJC1-F111-G33N-00000-00&context=1516831 [Accessed: 05.12.2021].

At this point Kubilius expressed the view that the personal characteristics of Sekmokas played an important role in the complex process of negotiations with Gazprom, as he was extremely goal-oriented, tough person.⁸³⁸ Švedas also stressed the personality of the Energy Minister as an important factor for Lithuania's success in dealing with Gazprom. Sekmokas was a businessmen, so he approached Lithuania's energy sector's reform from the business perspective — trying to work quickly, efficiently, and without delays.⁸³⁹ In general, Švedas expressed the opinion that Lithuania's achievements in reforming its energy sector were a result of the devotion of a handful of ambitious people who wanted to bring real change to this policy field.⁸⁴⁰ However, as negotiations with Gazprom were playing out to potentially last longer than the political terms of those in charge of the energy sector's reform, there was a danger that the reform plans would stagnate after the governmental change of 2012.

In this respect Grybauskaitė's ongoing presidential term was an important factor for assuring the continuity of Lithuanian reform course under the new Butkevičius-led government. This was especially true in the context of Gazprom's attempts to achieve changes in Lithuania's reform plan by offering discounts for imported gas.⁸⁴¹ Grybauskaitė reacted to these proposals by stating that prospects of cheaper Gazprom gas should not lead to re-negotiations of the timelines and scope of Lithuania's long-term energy security projects.⁸⁴² According to an interviewed advisor to Grybauskaitė, the Butkevičius-led government was cooperative and willing to hear the arguments of the President, and managed to implement the strategically important energy security projects in the way they had been planned by the previous government.⁸⁴³

In June 2014 Gazprom followed suit of E.ON Ruhrgas and announced that they were selling their assets of Lietuvos Dujos and the Amber Grid that had been already

⁸³⁸ Author's Interview #2.

⁸³⁹ Author's Interview #5.

⁸⁴⁰ Cf, Ibid.

⁸⁴¹ Cf. 15min.lt, BNS, „Algirdas Butkevičius: Lietuva nedarys jokių nuolaidų „Gazprom“/ “Algirdas Butkevičius: Lithuania will not make any concessions to “Gazprom“ (in Lithuanian only), 30.08.2013, <https://www.15min.lt/verslas/naujiena/energetika/algirdas-butkevicius-lietuva-nedarys-jokiu-nuolaidu-gazprom-664-365118?copied> [Accessed: 05.12.2021].

⁸⁴² Cf. BNS, „Lithuania's energy security projects should not be negotiated with Gazprom - president“, 19.04.2013, Lexis Nexis Database: <https://advance-1lexis-1com-1zf6r3snk0648.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5879-J501-JCF2-01Y9-00000-00&context=1516831> [Accessed: 05.12.2021].

⁸⁴³ Author's Interview #6.

separated from Lietuvos Dujos during the process of ownership unbundling.⁸⁴⁴ Sekmokas commented on these developments, arguing that after Gazprom's withdrawal from the shareholder structure of these Lithuanian energy companies, relations with this supplier might become commercial, as was the case in other European countries.⁸⁴⁵

This argument stemmed from the viewpoint also expressed by Kubilius, who argued that Gazprom was a company that adapted its *modus operandi* on a case-by-case basis depending on the circumstances prevailing in certain customer countries: Germany's market was the one that brought in the most revenue for it, so Gazprom was interested in sustaining good business relations with this country. On the contrary, the Lithuanian market was small, economically unviable, and thus well-suited to be exploited for political ends.⁸⁴⁶ In a similar vein it has been argued that Lithuania's aim in reforming its energy sector was not directed against Gazprom or Russia — the goal was to create generally fair conditions for gas supply to Lithuania.⁸⁴⁷

5.2.9. The Ukraine Crisis and Annexation of Crimea

The refusal of the Ukrainian President Yanukovich to sign the Association Agreement with the EU during the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius in November 2013 provoked mass protests in Kiev. The political crisis culminated in the annexation of the Ukrainian peninsula Crimea by Russia in March 2014. Drawing on its foreign policy tradition of supporting democratic movements in the Eastern neighbourhood, Lithuania was an outspoken supporter of the Ukrainian pro-Western forces during the Maidan protests. During the subsequent armed conflict between Ukraine and the Russian-backed separatists, Lithuania had been demanding that EU leadership provide Ukrai-

⁸⁴⁴ Cf. Sytas, Andrius, „Gazprom sells Lithuania assets after antitrust fine“, Reuters, 12.06.2014, <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-lithuania-gazprom-idUKKBN0EN1IF20140612> [Accessed: 05.12.2021].

⁸⁴⁵ Cf. kauno.diena.lt, BNS, „A.Sekmokas: „Gazprom“ pasitraukus iš Lietuvos, santykiai su juo taps komerciniai“/ “A. Sekmokas: when “Gazprom“ leaves Lithuania, relations with it will become commercial“ (in Lithuanian only), 13.06.2014, <https://kauno.diena.lt/naujienos/verslas/ekonomika/asekmokas-gazprom-pasitraukus-lietuvos-santykiai-su-juo-taps-komerciniai-634582> [Accessed: 05.12.2021].

⁸⁴⁶ Author's Interview #2.

⁸⁴⁷ Author's Interview #6.

ne with membership guarantees.⁸⁴⁸ In addition to that, Lithuania was sending ammunition⁸⁴⁹, army instructors⁸⁵⁰, financial aid, and medical support⁸⁵¹ to Ukraine in order to help them defend their territorial integrity amidst Russian aggression.

However, it was not only its willingness to assist Ukraine during the ongoing crisis, but also concerns over its own national security that motivated Lithuanian diplomatic activism. Grybauskaitė argued that if not stopped in Ukraine, the conflict could spread further.⁸⁵² Warnings about further military goals of Russia were already expressed in 2010 after the Russo-Georgian War by Adamkus, who claimed that Crimea was the next Russian target, and that aggression over the Baltic States would be the next logical step.⁸⁵³ Lithuania was clearly concerned about the possible repetition of the “Ukrainian scenario” in the Baltics and had been stressing possible Russian involvement in the Baltic region through “hybrid warfare” that encompassed energy, information, and cyber-attacks.⁸⁵⁴ Within this context the possible disruption of the new LNG terminal in Klaipėda was also mentioned among the potential Russian measures against Lithuania.⁸⁵⁵ Commenting on Russian hybrid warfare tactics, Linkevičius used the “smokescreen” argument that Russia used against the West. According to the Foreign Minister, Russia created an illusion of cooperation but in reality, proceeded with destructive actions in areas where its involvement was difficult to verify.⁸⁵⁶

⁸⁴⁸ Cf. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, „L. Linkevičius: It’s time for the EU to show that Ukrainians fought not in vain“, 02.12.2015, <https://www.urm.lt/in/en/news/l-linkevicius-its-time-for-the-eu-to-show-that-ukrainians-fought-not-in-vain> [Accessed: 06.12.2021].

⁸⁴⁹ Cf. Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, „Lithuania Sends Ammunition To Ukraine To Fight Russia-Backed Separatists“, 03.09.2016, <https://www.rferl.org/a/lithuania-sends-ammunition-ukraine/27965377.html> [Accessed: 06.12.2021].

⁸⁵⁰ Cf. lithuaniantribune.com, „Lithuania sends army instructors to train Ukrainian troops“, 08.07.2015, <https://lithuaniantribune.com/lithuania-sends-army-instructors-to-train-ukrainian-troops/> [Accessed: 06.12.2021].

⁸⁵¹ Cf. Sabet-Parry, Rayyan, „Lithuania President calls Russia ‘terrorist state’“.

⁸⁵² Cf. Ibid.

⁸⁵³ Cf. Kahlweit, Cathrin, „Litauens Präsident im Interview "Streben nach dem Imperium“, Süddeutsche Zeitung, 11.05.2010, <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/litauens-praesident-im-interview-streben-nach-dem-imperium-1.704929?print=true> [Accessed: 06.12.2021].

⁸⁵⁴ Cf. Krutaine, Aija/ Sytas, Andrius, "We told you so" - Baltic jitters grow over former ruler Russia“, Reuters, 01.09.2014, <https://www.reuters.com/article/ukraine-crisis-baltics-idINKBN0GW2JB20140901> [Accessed: 06.12.2021].

⁸⁵⁵ Cf. Ibid.

⁸⁵⁶ Author’s Interview #3.

Reacting to the emergence of the new kind of hybrid security threats, President Grybauskaitė initiated an update of Lithuania's national strategic guidelines for security policy in March 2014. These guidelines included an agreement to increase the defence spending to reach the goal of 2 percent of GDP by 2020 and accentuated energy dependency as one of the greatest challenges to the national security of Lithuania.⁸⁵⁷ In addition to that, Lithuania together with Poland and other countries from the NATO's Eastern flank pushed for creation of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force that would be prepared to act in a swiftly changing security environment.⁸⁵⁸ Lithuania established an analogue national Rapid Response Force consisting of 2500 troops already in November 2014.⁸⁵⁹ Finally, Lithuania reintroduced the compulsory military service in 2015.

According to an interviewed expert, 2014 could be considered a breakthrough for the international representation of Lithuania's national position towards Russia due to the emergence of the "Ukraine facet" in the discussion on energy security. The Ukraine crisis demonstrated that energy constituted an important part in Russian hybrid warfare. Therefore, Lithuanian warnings that were often met with a certain amount of scepticism at the international level prior to the Ukraine crisis gained practical ground. According to the expert, since 2014 Lithuania's position towards Russia is now accepted without additional justifications.⁸⁶⁰

5.2.10. Construction of the LNG Terminal

The absence of alternative gas supply routes to the Baltic States led to plans to build a regional LNG terminal. The idea was supported by the EC and was included as

⁸⁵⁷ Cf. President Dalia Grybauskaitė, "Ensuring national security is a commitment to the Lithuanian people", 29.03.2014, <https://grybauskaitė.lrp.lt/en/press-centre/press-releases/ensuring-national-security-is-a-commitment-to-the-lithuanian-people/19031> [Accessed: 06.12.2021].

⁸⁵⁸ Cf. Lyman, Rick, "Ukraine Crisis in Mind, Lithuania Establishes a Rapid Reaction Force", New York Times, 19.12.2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/20/world/europe/lithuania-assembles-a-force-as-it-readies-for-whatever-russia-may-bring.html> [Accessed: 06.12.2021].

⁸⁵⁹ lrytas.lt, BNS, "Lietuvą saugos greitojo reagavimo pajėgos", 01.11.2014, updated: 23.01.2018/ "Lithuania will be protected by rapid response force" (in Lithuanian only), <https://www.lrytas.lt/lietuvsdienai/aktualijos/2014/11/01/news/lietuva-saugos-greitojo-reagavimo-pajegos-4375223> [Accessed: 06.12.2021].

⁸⁶⁰ Author's Interview #6.

an option in the BEMIP plan.⁸⁶¹ However, a prolonged row among Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia about the location of the terminal represented a serious challenge for the project. Because of the small market size and high costs of such an infrastructural unit it was initially agreed that only one LNG terminal would be economically viable in the Baltic region. The EC also argued that it would co-finance the construction of only one regional terminal with all three Baltic States involved in the project.⁸⁶² Despite these conditions Lithuania stepped out of the trilateral negotiations with Latvia and Estonia and announced the construction of a national LNG terminal financed on its own.⁸⁶³

When asked about the reasons for the inability to find a compromise on the regional terminal, Kubilius argued that Lithuania had a principled position that the terminal had to be fully independent from any commercial ties with gas suppliers. The options proposed by Latvia and Estonia involved private companies that were in one way or another linked to Gazprom.⁸⁶⁴ Švedas argued that the main reason for Lithuania's unwillingness to cooperate with neighbouring Latvia and Estonia was the lagging liberalisation process of the gas market in these countries. As long as there was no unified legal base for the operation of a regional LNG terminal, Gazprom's influence on it could not be excluded.⁸⁶⁵ Juknevičienė also emphasised this danger, focusing on Latvia as a country where Gazprom had an even bigger influence on national business structures than in Lithuania.⁸⁶⁶

The interviewed representative of the DG Competition emphasised that the EC's explicit position on the need to install a regional LNG terminal in the Baltics was backed by economic and security arguments. Therefore, the unilateral move by Lithuania was met with a certain scepticism by the EC.⁸⁶⁷ Therefore by choosing the option of a national terminal, Lithuania discredited its image as an outspoken supporter for Eu-

⁸⁶¹ Cf. Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan, Final report of the HLG, p. 20.

⁸⁶² Cf. The Baltic Times, „EU to fund LNG terminal only if all Baltic States participate“, 23.07.2012, <https://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/31577/> [Accessed: 07.12.2021].

⁸⁶³ Cf. Socor, Vladimir, „Lithuania Contracts for LNG Terminal“, Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 9 Issue: 45, Jamestown Foundation, 05.03.2012, <https://jamestown.org/program/lithuania-contracts-for-lng-terminal/> [Accessed: 07.12.2021].

⁸⁶⁴ Author's Interview #2.

⁸⁶⁵ Author's Interview #5.

⁸⁶⁶ Author's Interview #1.

⁸⁶⁷ Author's Interview #8.

ropean solutions in energy to some extent and demonstrated a “foot-dragging” tendency within its energy security strategy within the EU.

Having abandoned the EU-level initiative of building a regional LNG terminal, Lithuania seemed to then concentrate on gaining backing from the US for its national terminal. The option of importing LNG from the US was actively debated in Lithuania, expressing the hope to become the first European country to receive American gas.⁸⁶⁸ Before this goal could be achieved, Lithuania put forth active political⁸⁶⁹ and diplomatic efforts in lobbying for a lift on the ban of American oil and gas exports⁸⁷⁰. It has been argued that by lifting the ban on exports to NATO allies, the US could provide a geopolitical lever against Russia’s dominating position over the gas markets in Europe.⁸⁷¹ The US Congress made a favourable decision in December 2015⁸⁷² and the first load of American LNG reached Lithuania in August 2017.⁸⁷³

5.2.11. NordBalt Cable-laying Incidents

The NordBalt electric power bridge between Lithuania and Sweden that interconnects the grids of the Baltic States with those of the Nordic countries through an undersea cable system was developed as a joint project of the Lithuanian transmission sys-

⁸⁶⁸ Cf. [kauno.diena.lt](https://kauno.diena.lt/naujienos/verslas/ekonomika/lietuva-pirmoji-europoje-gaus-jav-suskystintas-dujas-720495), „Lietuva norėtų būti pirmoji JAV suskystintų dujų pirkėja“/ “Lithuania would like to become the first buyer of the LNG from the USA“ (in Lithuanian only), 18.11.2015, <https://kauno.diena.lt/naujienos/verslas/ekonomika/lietuva-pirmoji-europoje-gaus-jav-suskystintas-dujas-720495> [Accessed: 07.12.2021].

⁸⁶⁹ Cf. United States Senate, Statement of Jaroslav Neverovič, Minister of Energy, The Republic of Lithuania, Before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources United States Senate, Importing Energy, Exporting Jobs. Can it be Reversed?, March 25, 2014, <https://www.energy.senate.gov/services/files/4f3fc2f2-167c-4ee0-b686-b1b87231bb96> [Accessed: 07.12.2021].

⁸⁷⁰ Cf. [lrytas.lt](https://www.lrytas.lt), BNS, „D. Grybauskaitė: „JAV padės Lietuvai užsitikrinti energetinį saugumą“ (papildyta)“/ “D. Grybauskaitė: the USA will help Lithuania in assuring energy security (updated)“ (in Lithuanian only), 17.05.2013, updated: 06.03.2018, <https://www.lrytas.lt/lietuvosdiena/aktualijos/2013/05/17/news/d-grybauskaite-jav-pades-lietuvai-uzsitikrinti-energetini-sauguma-papildyta--5011409> [Accessed: 07.12.2021].

⁸⁷¹ Cf. Gardner, Timothy/ Volcovici, Valerie, „Exclusive: U.S. considering options if oil export ban challenged“, Reuters, 17.09.2014, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-oil-exports-trade-exclusive-idUKKBN0HC10O20140917> [Accessed: 07.12.2021].

⁸⁷² Cf. Wingfield, Brian, „U.S. Crude Oil Export Ban“, Bloomberg, 18.12.2015, <https://www.bloomberg.com/quicktake/u-s-crude-oil-export-ban> [Accessed: 07.12.2021].

⁸⁷³ Cf. Zubrute, Liucija/ Navakas, Naglis, „Lietuvą pasiekė pirmasis SkGD krovinys iš JAV“, Verslo žini-os, <https://www.vz.lt/energetika/2017/08/21/lietuva-pasieke-pirmasis-skgd-kroviny-is-jav> [Accessed: 07.12.2021].

tem operator Litgrid AB and its Swedish counterpart Svenska kraftnät.⁸⁷⁴ The project was a part of the BEMIP plan⁸⁷⁵ and therefore of great regional importance. However, as in the case of the LNG terminal, there were inconsistencies in the positions of Lithuania and Latvia in regards to the question of which country should become the entry point of the interconnector to Sweden. According to Švedas, the Latvian proposal to choose it as the entry point was unfounded from the energy systems' perspective, as no transmission lines existed in the proposed location.⁸⁷⁶ The agreement among Lithuania, Latvia, and Sweden on the interconnection was reached in July 2009 by identifying that the project encompassed two stages: building the interconnection between Lithuania and Sweden, and second, strengthening the Latvian transmission network.⁸⁷⁷

Due to the interconnector needing to physically cross the Baltic Sea, yet another agreement was needed for its construction, namely with the operators of the Nord Stream pipeline.⁸⁷⁸ It was agreed that the NordBalt cable would cross the Nord Stream pipeline 70 km off of Sweden's coast.⁸⁷⁹ However, the agreement did not prevent incidents from taking place in the Baltic Sea during the works of the NordBalt cable laying. In spring of 2015 Lithuania and Sweden reported four incidents with Russian warships that demanded the Swedish cable laying vessel to stop the works and change course, arguing that the location had already been chosen for military exercises.⁸⁸⁰ The Lithuanian Ministry for Foreign Affairs summoned the Russian ambassador and informed its NATO allies of the incidents.⁸⁸¹ According to Linkevičius, this was a typical situation of Russia trying to exploit the momentum for assertive actions against Lithuania: the

⁸⁷⁴ Cf. nkt.com, „NordBalt, The Baltic Sea“, <https://www.nkt.com/references/nordbalt-the-baltic-sea> [Accessed: 07.12.2021].

⁸⁷⁵ Cf. Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan, Final report of the HLG, p. 10.

⁸⁷⁶ Author's Interview #5.

⁸⁷⁷ Cf. verslosavaite.lt, „Lietuva, Latvija ir Švedija susitarė dėl „NordBalt“ elektros jungties“/ “Lithuania, Latvia, and Sweden agreed on the “NordBalt“ electricity interconnection“ (in Lithuanian only), 10.07.2009, <http://www.verslosavaite.lt/index.php/Transportas-ir-energetika/Lietuva-Latvija-ir-Svedija-susitare-del-NordBalt-elektros-jungties.html> [Accessed: 07.12.2021].

⁸⁷⁸ Cf. Esmerk Estonia News, "Lithuania/Sweden: Nord Stream agrees on intersection with NordBalt". Esmerk Estonia News, 10.10.2011, Lexis Nexis Database: <https://advance-lexis-1com-1zf6r3sb00881.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:540P-S941-F111-G241-00000-00&context=1516831> [Accessed: 07.12.2021].

⁸⁷⁹ Cf. Ibid.

⁸⁸⁰ Cf. Crouch, David, „Lithuania accuses Russia of disrupting work on Baltic power cable“.

⁸⁸¹ Cf. Ibid.

members of the warship crew gave exclusively oral orders so that no evidence about the interference could be collected.⁸⁸² Both Linkevičius and his Swedish counterpart Carl Bildt argued that the goal of these interferences was to delay the finalisation of the NordBalt project and thus negatively impact the Lithuanian energy security strategy.⁸⁸³

In addition to the immediate negative impact on Lithuania, these incidents also had broader longterm implications on NATO. According to the interviewed representative of the NATO IS, the Alliance had no instruments to respond to this kind of situation. Therefore, the NordBalt incidents helped to raise awareness about the so-called “grey scenarios” that NATO had to prepare for. According to these scenarios, NATO had to be prepared to react to actions taking place in international waters that were legal under the international law, but at the same time could be indirectly used for destructive ends that encompassed such crucial aspects as hindering NATO forces’ military deployment through the sea, and assurance of NATO’s military presence in a certain region.⁸⁸⁴

5.2.12. Subchapter Conclusions

Within the analysed time frame an important novel trend emerged that was especially typical for the events that took place during the Kubilius-led government. Although this government considered Russia’s influence on the Lithuanian energy sector as the main tool for exerting political pressure on Lithuania more than any previous one, with this idea being anchored in the “Russia’s Containment Strategy”, the government gradually adapted its official position on national energy issues to a Western argumentation while approaching the EU and NATO. The analysis of Lithuania’s position towards the final decommissioning of the INPP, its arguments against the Nord Stream pipeline, the final concept of the ENSEC COE, as well as the antimonopoly complaint that the government filed against Gazprom demonstrated that the Kubilius-led government tried to distance itself from the traditional Lithuanian normative and geopolitical arguments.

⁸⁸² Author’s Interview #3.

⁸⁸³ Cf. Crouch, „Lithuania accuses Russia of disrupting work on Baltic power cable“.

⁸⁸⁴ Author’s Interview #7.

Instead, Lithuania positioned itself as a defender of common Euro-Atlantic interests while at the same time distancing from Russia as unreliable, self-interested, and wily neighbour. Being led by a clear geopolitical perception of its national energy security issues, Lithuanian representatives chose to upload the national position towards Russia and energy security to the Euro-Atlantic level by using arguments and proposals that were rather pragmatic, and therefore could be accepted more easily by the Western audience than the typical Eastern European securitised stance towards Russia.

In this respect, the antitrust investigation against Gazprom that was initiated by Lithuania aimed to demonstrate that the company not only treated Lithuania unfairly, but also through its discriminatory practices tried to disturb the creation of a single European gas market. Similarly, negotiations with Gazprom over the implementation of the ownership unbundling in Lithuania's natural gas sector was presented as a matter that concerned the EC at least as much as it concerned Lithuania: being the first EU member state to implement ownership unbundling in a natural gas sector dominated by Gazprom, the Lithuanian case represented an important litmus test for the effectiveness of this regulatory regime.

The profile of the NATO ENSEC COE was also adapted to hold the Western European political line. The turn from the initial Lithuanian goal of involving NATO in securitised energy policy towards Russia to the rather neutral focus on operational energy security correlating to environmental and budgetary arguments entrenched in Western societies represented a move that managed to attract attention of even those NATO countries that were generally sceptical towards NATO's involvement in this area.

The Ukraine crisis of 2014 and the following annexation of Crimea changed the Western European views on Russia. The Lithuanian government also returned to threat-based rhetoric and emphasised Russia's growing assertiveness against its neighbours. The Ukraine crisis also strengthened the understanding of the "hybrid warfare" that Russia was using against its opponents in Eastern Europe. The "hybrid warfare" concept encompassed the majority of arguments that had been previously used by Lithuania against Russia: propaganda and discreditation tactics (VNPP and alternative nuclear power plant projects in the Baltic region), the "smokescreen" argument (NordBalt cable-laying incidents), and the general use of such areas as such energy, cyber, and strategic communication to achieve foreign policy goals. Table 3 below systematises the findings discussed in this subchapter.

Table 3: *Prevailing Securitisation and Europeanisation Processes, 2009-2015*

Event	Prevailing securitisation moves by Lithuanian representatives	Europeanisation processes, in which Lithuania was involved
Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Russia is an unreliable supplier - Russia attempts re-establishing its regional superpower status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - upload attempts focused on strengthening the EU's role in external energy policy - interload with Poland
Closure of the INPP and alternative nuclear power plant projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Russia is using discreditation tactics against Lithuania's VNPP project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strive for EU's support
NATO's Strategic Concept 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - key aspect — collective defence commitment - energy — additional role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support for the inclusion of energy-related security aspects
Antitrust investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gazprom's discriminatory practices are aimed at disturbing the creation of a single European gas market - Gazprom as unreliable partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - raising awareness about the need for European level supervision of the member states' supply contracts with suppliers from third countries
Inauguration of the Nord Stream pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no positive effects on European security of supply as the pipeline merely re-routes supplies by Russia - ecological concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - call for diversification of suppliers, not merely the existing supply routes
NATO ENSEC COE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - energy as an area allowing Russia to spread influence in NATO through vulnerable member states (2008-2009) - operational energy security (2011) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - initiation of IESMA
Lithuanian EU Council Presidency		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strengthening its role as reliable partner - supporting European agenda - inclusion of energy aspects in the activities of EDA
Implementation of ownership unbundling in gas sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gazprom is pushing Lithuania to change its unbundling strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - involving the EC in negotiations with Gazprom through the EU-level unbundling precedent - cooperation with the EC
Ukraine crisis of 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Russia's resurging military threat - energy is a part of Russian "hybrid warfare" - "smokescreen" argument: Russia's tactics of indirect destructive involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - convergence of Lithuanian and European threat perceptions - push for the development of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force
Construction of the LNG terminal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gazprom may try to exert influence on the operation of the terminal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "foot-dragging" regarding the regional LNG project - campaigning for the lift of American LNG export ban
NordBalt cable laying incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Russia tries to delay the finalisation of the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promoting the discussion on "grey scenarios" that NATO has to be prepared for

Source: Author's own compilation

6. Conclusion

This dissertation was based on the main assumption stating that in the timeframe from 2004-2015 Lithuania's energy policy has evolved within a complex "*dependence-reliance-pattern*". On one hand, despite its accession to the EU and NATO in 2004, Lithuania remained highly dependent on Russia in terms of energy supplies, infrastructure, and involvement in a shareholder structure of its national energy companies. On the other hand, as a small state Lithuania relied on the EU and NATO to guarantee prosperity and security, both aspects that are closely intertwined in the field of energy. Evaluation of Lithuania's state-of-the-art energy security situation in 2015 demonstrated that despite pressures from the monopolist Russian energy supplier, Lithuania managed to achieve considerable improvement in this area since 2004.

This dissertation has therefore been guided by the main research question: *How has Lithuania managed to increase its national energy security in the timeframe between 2004 and 2015 in the context of its conflicting dependence (Russia) — reliance (EU, NATO) relationship to Russia, the EU and NATO?* Four hypotheses were formulated and tested by conducting process-tracing analysis of the "securitisation-induced Europeanisation" causal mechanism. This concluding chapter discusses the main results of the research, evaluates the validity of the hypotheses, and assesses the outlook for academic contributions to the research field of small states' uploading activities in strategic policies.

6.1. The Main Results

6.1.1. Securitisation

With this research the deeply entrenched securitisation of Russia in Lithuania can be confirmed. Throughout the analysed timeframe the Russian threat was perceived as an objective condition by Lithuanian representatives. Lithuanian foreign and security policy choices were therefore understood as logical reactions to this threat. The underlying feature of the Russian threat remained stable throughout the timeframe: Russia was

perceived as an “unavoidable neighbour” and a regional power whose geopolitical projections into Europe were extremely unfavourable for Lithuania.

However, the understanding of Russia’s methods in pursuing its foreign policy goals evolved throughout the timeframe and in relation to broader international developments. As a result, the Lithuanian representatives gradually switched from emphasising Russia’s military might as the main source of threat for Lithuania and shifted focus onto its energy blackmail, propaganda, and discreditation tactics. The analysis of primary sources showed that by 2004 Lithuanian decision makers still interpreted the ongoing energy dependence on Russia as an economic issue as opposed to a political one and therefore pledged for the inclusion of Gazprom into the shareholder structure of Lietuvos Dujos. Among other incentives such as modernisation of the company, assurance of stable natural gas supplies for the country was an important goal of the privatisation process. Crude oil supply disruptions in the recent past to yet another Lithuanian energy company, Mažeikių Nafta, controlled solely by the American company Williams International, which had no direct access to oil reserves of its own, served as a precedent that the Lithuanian government sought to avoid repeating. Therefore the decision was made to include the natural gas supplier Gazprom in the shareholder structure of Lietuvos Dujos.

Securitisation of Russia as an energy supplier moved to the top of the Lithuanian political agenda in 2006. Russia’s pressure on Ukraine during their gas dispute in the same year, as well as the Druzhba pipeline incident that resulted in the halt of crude oil supplies to Lithuania revealed the links between energy and foreign policies. Since that time both President Adamkus and Prime Minister Kirkilas have referred to Russia as an unreliable supplier that has been exploiting the vulnerabilities of its energy dependent neighbours to achieve foreign policy goals. Lithuania’s strategic documents such as the National Energy Strategy of 2007 were adapted to include the classification of energy as an integral part of the national security. Lithuanian political leaders tried to push their views on energy security to the European level by using the “energy solidarity” argument that could be ascribed to the strategy of norm advocacy often employed by small states. Lithuania linked the “energy solidarity” argument with the impending closure of the INPP when they demanded its postponement.

Lithuanian “normative securitisation” towards Russia that dominated during the timeframe from 2004-2008 failed to achieve considerable results at the European level

due to the prevailing incompatible understanding of energy security between Lithuania as a securitising actor and the Western European countries as a target audience. The Western partners perceived both the Russian-Ukrainian gas disputes of 2006, and even of 2009, and the Druzhba pipeline incident as commercial in their very essence and therefore were not willing to take political measures to resolve them.

Instances of “normative securitisation” by Lithuania were also present at the NATO level. During the early discussion stage on NATO’s role in energy Lithuania used the argument of “political alliance”, stressing its potential to deal with a broad spectrum of issues of strategic importance for member states. Lithuania based its interest in including energy in NATO’s agenda on its actual threat perception that involved energy as a constitutive part. Lithuania’s proposal to establish NATO’s Energy Security Centre of Excellence was aimed at creating practical instruments that would consolidate NATO’s role in this area. However, up until 2011 Lithuania stuck with its concept of a centre primarily dealing with the issues of security of supply, which inevitably focused on countering the “Russian threat”. Although the “critical mass” to support Lithuania’s proposal for the ENSEC COE at that time was still lacking, the country achieved the inclusion of an energy scenario into the CMX exercises of NATO in 2009.

A shift in Lithuania’s securitisation strategy could be observed during the governmental term of the conservative Prime Minister Kubilius (2008-2012). The conservative party officially acknowledged Russia’s energy policy as the main tool for exerting political influence over Lithuania. As a reaction to Russia’s strengthening grip on Lithuania through energy, Kubilius and Juknevičienė together with other high-ranking conservative politicians, formulated the “Russia Containment Strategy”. This strategy identified the main goal of taking immediate and decisive political action in order to initiate and implement the energy sector’s reform, and in this way contain Russia’s influence over Lithuania. Therefore, the underlying notion of Russia as a direct threat to Lithuania remained, and was even strengthened through the clear conceptualisation of energy as the main channel for the spread of its malign strategy in their neighbouring country.

However, the Kubilius-led government approached this deeply entrenched Russian threat in a novel way, especially when addressing both the EU and NATO partners that represented the main audiences for Lithuanian securitisation attempts. During the timeframe from 2009 onwards Russia was increasingly framed as an unreliable, discri-

minatory, and wily supplier, indicating a pragmatic turn in Lithuania's securitisation strategy, as opposed to the norm advocacy that prevailed prior to 2009. Practical instruments such as the ownership unbundling, the rejection of proposed derogations for its implementation, and the initiation of the antitrust investigation of Gazprom's business practices in Eastern and Central Europe were employed in order to confute Russia's claim of being a reliable supplier for Europe. At the same time Lithuania constructed its own profile of being a European pioneer in transposing the EU's liberalisation rules as required by the Third Energy Package. Securitisation of Russia based on the idea of it breaching universal business principles of high importance for the EU as a whole resulted in compatibility between the Lithuanian government as the securitising actor and the EU as the target audience and resulted in the EC's active support during negotiations between Lithuania and Gazprom.

In terms of NATO, in 2011 Lithuania also switched its negotiating tactics regarding the ENSEC COE. Instead of focusing on the divisive topic of security of supply, it turned to de-securitisation by emphasising inclusive operational energy security, and promoted the new concept of the ENSEC COE through organisation of IESMA conferences. As a result, Lithuania successfully adjusted its concept for the ENSEC COE to align with the prevailing views on energy among their Western partners and could therefore achieve accreditation of its National Energy Security Centre as a NATO Centre of Excellence. Even though Lithuania had to give up its initial goal of strengthening NATO's focus on security of supply, its new role as a host country for the NATO ENSEC COE strengthened its international visibility and its profile as an energy security expert country, and therefore was an important foreign policy achievement for a small state.

The shift from the "normative" to "pragmatic" securitisation or, in the case of NATO, de-securitisation, was interrupted by the instances of Russian military activism in the Caucasus region and Eastern Europe. Most notably the Ukraine crisis and the illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 revived the fear of a direct Russian military threat and had important implications on both Lithuania's own securitisation practices and the prevailing views of Russia in Western Europe. The emergence of the "hybrid warfare" concept that included propaganda, energy, and cyber as crucial aspects supplementing Russia's military operations lifted energy's profile from a commercial to a national security issue in the eyes of most Western countries as well. Lithuania's "normative" secu-

ritisation attempts were more successful than ever as they now corresponded to the views of the target audience. The NordBalt cable laying incidents in 2015 served as an example thereof as they added to a raising awareness for the need to increase NATO's preparedness for the so-called "grey scenarios".

6.1.2. Europeanisation

Due to the persisting feeling of insecurity stemming from its proximity to Russia, Lithuania was interested in Europeanising those policy areas that it saw as being most susceptible to negative Russian influence. Energy constituted such a policy area. With energy being an integral part of Lithuania's national security since 2007, Europeanisation of its energy security goals became a topic not only at the EU, but also at NATO level. The historically grounded perception of the US's strategic importance in assuring Lithuania's national security was the main reason thereof.

As both the EU's energy policy and NATO's role in energy security were only formulated in 2008 and 2009, Lithuania was predominantly involved in uploading activities aimed at creating European level energy policy instruments. Within Lithuania's uploading strategy in the EU, "pace-setting", "fence-sitting", and "foot-dragging" trends were present. During the pre-communitarisation phase of the EU's energy policy, Lithuania was actively advocating for deeper European integration in the energy policy field. President Adamkus used the "pace-setting" strategy in order to urge other European leaders to make practical steps towards advancing the creation of a common European energy policy based on solidarity. Adamkus used the format of international conferences such as the Vilnius Energy Security Conference of 2007 for his "pace-setting" strategy. In addition to that, Adamkus repeatedly merged his dispute resolution activities in Ukraine in 2006 and 2009, and in Georgia in 2008, with upload attempts regarding a common European energy policy that included a strong external dimension. However, in these cases limitations associated with Lithuania's status as a small state became obvious as the initiatives of Adamkus often only attracted the attention of other small states from Central and Eastern Europe.

With the inception of the energy market's liberalisation rules in the form of the Third Energy Package, a short switch to the "fence-sitting" tendency of Lithuania could

be observed: as the other Baltic States had done, the Kirkilas-led government had initially planned to ask the EC for derogation for the implementation of the gas market's liberalisation rules that Lithuania was eligible for. The use of the derogation would have meant a more flexible schedule for implementation of the provisions of the Third Energy Package. However, Lithuania's position was eventually changed by the opposition leader Kubilius, who after winning the subsequent parliamentary elections headed the resurgent "pace-setting" strategy for Lithuania. This time this strategy was characterised by Lithuania's choice to step out as a Europe-wide forerunner in implementing the strict ownership unbundling model in its natural gas sector dominated by Gazprom. This tendency was kept after the parliamentary elections of 2012 that brought in a new government led by Butkevičius.

The cases of the INPP closure and implementation of the LNG terminal project could be assigned to the "foot-dragging" strategy of the Lithuanian government. This strategy had different outcomes at both the Lithuanian national and the EU level. Until 2009 Lithuania made repeated attempts to convince the EC for the need to postpone the closure of the INPP that was set for the end of 2009 in Protocol No 4 of Lithuania's Accession Treaty. In 2008 a special negotiators' group led by Abišala was formed and tasked with convincing the European partners that the closure would have far-reaching socio-economic consequences not only in Lithuania, but also in the whole Baltic region. Interview partners confirmed that although the group failed to achieve the postponement of the INPP's closure, its activities led to the establishment of the BEMIP HLG and the subsequent development of the BEMIP plan that constituted the first EU-level systematic attempt to solve Lithuania and other Baltic States' energy infrastructure issues.

Development and implementation of the LNG terminal in Lithuania was yet another example of its "foot-dragging" strategy. Although the LNG terminal project was initially designed as a regional one encompassing Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, and was supported by the EC in this form, Lithuania stepped out of the negotiations with the other two Baltic States and announced the plan to construct an LNG terminal on a national basis. As a result of Lithuania's withdrawal, the regional LNG terminal project could not be implemented and thus the initially sought after "European" solution for Lithuania's energy infrastructure issues in the gas sector was abandoned by Lithuania itself. The country justified its drift to unilateralism by accentuating the danger of Gaz-

prom's involvement in the regional LNG terminal project through the Latvian and Estonian energy companies that were still not fully unbundled at that time.

The analysis allowed for the identifying of the main interload partners of Lithuania. During the presidential term of Adamkus Poland emerged as Lithuania's closest ally in pursuing energy security interests at the EU level. Both countries had a similar understanding of Russia's use of energy as a foreign policy tool and were jointly supporting Ukraine during the gas disputes with Russia in 2006 and 2009. With the emergence of the EU-level energy policy instruments, first and foremost, the Third Energy Package, Lithuania was interested in strengthening its partnership with the EC. In addition to that Lithuania relied on the support of the US for the promotion of its energy security vision within the Alliance, and also put forth the effort to include it in the LNG terminal project. Lithuania actively promoted the idea of supplying itself with American LNG and stood behind the decision of the US Congress to lift the natural gas export ban to NATO Allies.

6.1.3. Small States

Lithuania's experience as a small state within the EU and NATO included several important aspects. Immediately after its accession to these organisations in 2004, Lithuania was still constrained by its inexperience in policy-making at the international level. Because of its continuous accentuation of the "Russian topic" not only in energy, but also in other policy areas, Lithuania was labelled a "one-issue" country. This label hampered the establishment of useful partnerships with other member states in both the EU and NATO, and thus limited Lithuania's success in pursuing "package deals" with other countries. In addition to that, Lithuania's inexperience in the use of established European bargaining practices resulted in a reputational damage after it vetoed the EU-Russia PCA in 2008 until the EU agreed to include the topics on energy security and "frozen conflicts" in the negotiating mandate.

Lacking institutionalisation of the European energy policy area until 2009 was an unfavourable condition for Lithuania's as a small state's uploading ambitions. As the Vilnius Energy Security Conference and the dispute resolution activities of Adamkus in Ukraine and Georgia showed, Lithuania's norm advocacy activities often attracted the

attention of other countries from Central and Eastern Europe, but not of the large Western European countries that were the most sought-after partners at the stage of initiating European energy policy. On the other hand, as the energy solidarity clause was finally included in Article 194 of the Lisbon Treaty, the idea that Lithuania's repeated pledge for more energy solidarity added to this result cannot be rejected.

Lithuania's small state strategy within NATO was based on the accentuation of its loyalty to the US. The best examples thereof included Lithuania's support for the US's military intervention in Iraq, as well as its decision to lead a PRT in Afghanistan. Lithuania's main goal within this strategy was to construct an image of not only being a security consumer, but also a security provider, and therefore a useful ally for the US. Fostering the US's support for Lithuania's goals in the energy field was an important, but not the sole interest of Lithuania's NATO policy. In the broader sense, the country was preoccupied with preserving and strengthening the US's focus on Europe's Eastern Flank and reassuring its collective defence commitments.

Based on the findings of the research as presented, the main research question can be answered as follows. Lithuania managed increasing its national energy security in the timeframe between 2004 and 2015 through exploiting securitisation and Europeanisation processes within EU and NATO in a productive way. Lithuanian securitisation attempts triggered Europeanisation impulses in those cases, when Lithuania's way of framing the Russian threat for energy corresponded the prevailing threat perceptions at the EU and NATO levels. By contrast to the rather unsuccessful normative securitisation, Lithuania's switch to the pragmatic way of presenting the Russian threat as breaching universal business principles led to the crucial political support of the EC in the negotiation process with Gazprom over the ownership unbundling. In addition to that, the adjustment of the concept for the ENSEC COE to accommodate the views of sceptical NATO member states had positive implications on Lithuania's visibility as a small state and eventually added to the competitiveness of its LNG terminal. On the other hand, Lithuania's entanglement in the "dependence-reliance-pattern" was responsible for its distrust even in some EU-level proposals, like in the case of regional LNG terminal. In this specific case Lithuanian unilateralism proved to be successful, however only

due to the achieved liberalisation of Lithuanian natural gas sector according to the provisions of the Third Energy Package.

6.2. The Validity of Hypotheses

The first hypothesis (H:1) that was formulated in this dissertation stated that: *Lithuania's energy policy between 2004 and 2015 was based on a dual strategy of instrumentalising the Russian threat and externalising its national energy security issues in order to seek assistance from the EU and NATO in solving them.* The results of the research as presented above show that both elements — instrumentalisation of the Russian threat and externalisation attempts — were typical for Lithuania's energy policy during the timeframe of 2004-2015. Although instrumentalisation of the Russian threat in the form of securitisation could be split into two phases — normative (Adamkus, Kirkilas) and practice-oriented (Kubilius, Grybauskaitė), the targeted audiences in both cases were the EU and NATO. The hypothesis H:1 can therefore be confirmed.

The second hypothesis (H:2) that was formulated in this dissertation stated that: *repeating instances of Russian power politics in its "near abroad" can be understood as facilitating conditions for Lithuania's strategy in the EU and NATO, allowing the country to instrumentalise the Russian threat in order to legitimise unpopular decisions related to energy sector reform at the domestic level and to promote its "energy security vision" on the international level thus increasing the support from the EU and NATO for its national energy security issues.* Under the "facilitating conditions" the Russian-Ukrainian gas disputes of 2006 and 2009, the Russo-Georgian War of 2008, and the Ukraine crisis of 2014 with the subsequent annexation of Crimea by Russia were all analysed. The analysis showed that despite being important driving-forces for the speeding-up of European integration into the energy field, the Russian-Ukrainian gas disputes of 2006 and 2009 were prevalingly seen by the EU as commercial disputes. Therefore, Lithuanian arguments about energy blackmail used by Russia against Ukraine did not seem to have reached their target European audience. The Russo-Georgian War of 2008 raised general awareness about the re-emerging Russian threat but did not involve

a credible link to energy security. The Ukraine crisis of 2014 brought energy as an integral part of “hybrid warfare” to the fore. International partners took into account Lithuanian arguments on tactics used by Russia in Eastern Europe and thus were sensitised about the prevailing links between energy and national security. The hypothesis H:2 can be considered as partially confirmed.

The third hypothesis (H:3) that was formulated in this dissertation stated that: *resulting from the prevailing Atlanticist political orientation and NATO-centric national security vision Lithuania was seeking to actively involve the Alliance in the debate on its energy security. Lithuania’s strategy in NATO was based on the consolidation of its status as an energy-expert country.* Lithuania’s activism, as well as its readiness to compromise during the process of developing the concept of the ENSEC COE, showed that it was extremely interested in achieving the NATO accreditation for this Centre. Moreover, Lithuania was actively looking for additional possibilities to practically involve NATO in the energy security field. In this respect the successful Lithuanian proposal to include an energy security scenario in the CMX exercises and the initiation of IESMA conferences were important achievements that added to Lithuania’s reputation and expertise in the energy field. The hypothesis H:3 was confirmed.

The fourth hypothesis (H:4) that was formulated in this dissertation stated that: *although being a small state in the EU and NATO, Lithuania managed to exert influence on the agenda-setting processes of these organisations, which led to decisions favourable for Lithuania’s national energy security. In this respect, Lithuania managed to influence the development of the EU’s energy policy and NATO’s energy dimension to some extent.* Throughout the analysed timeframe Lithuania has been an outspoken supporter of closer involvement from the EU and NATO in the energy field. Lithuania’s permanent accentuation of the need for a common Euro-Atlantic stance on energy might have added to the emergence of the pro-integration “critical mass” within these organisations. However, Lithuania achieved the biggest amount of visibility and success when it decided to use the existing European energy policy tools to their full extent (Third Energy Package) in combination with other European-level levers (antimonopoly investigation against Gazprom). Therefore, Lithuania’s role within the developmental phase of the EU’s energy policy can be best described as that of active agenda-supporter and user rather than agenda-setter. In terms of NATO Lithuania was as initiator of the Alliance’s practical involvement in the energy area through the inclusion of energy security scena-

rio in its crisis management exercises and the emphasis on operational energy security. The hypotheses H:4 can be considered as partially confirmed.

6.3. Outlook

Based on the findings of this research the future academic contributions on the topic of small states' uploading strategies in strategic policies could focus on the following aspects. First, the relationship between the securitisation and Europeanisation processes could be further analysed. The research conducted in this dissertation showed that under specific circumstances securitisation impulses could lead to the increased willingness to Europeanise a specific policy area being presented as endangered by internal and/or external factors. The validity of this thesis not only in energy, but also in cases of other strategic policies could be analysed. In addition to that, a comparative analysis between the positions of small and large states in light of this thesis could be investigated.

Second, the relationship between the de-securitisation and Europeanisation processes could be examined. In the case of Lithuania this would mean observing the formation and implementation of its national energy policy after 2015 (marking the end of Russia's domination over the natural gas sector) and even more so after 2025 (marking the estimated date of desynchronisation from the Russian-administered electricity system IPS/UPS). In this manner, with Russian influences in Lithuanian energy field being effectively limited, the willingness of Lithuania to deepen its integration into the EU in this area would constitute an intriguing research question. This is especially true in the context of EU's ongoing decarbonisation attempts bringing far-reaching regulatory changes and financial implications for the member states.

Third, Lithuania's relationship with Germany in the context of the paradoxical mismatch between their deepening cooperation on security and defence (since 2017 Germany has led a Battle Group in Lithuania as a framework nation of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence Battalion⁸⁸⁵) and persisting differences in their views on energy

⁸⁸⁵ Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania, „Lithuania and Germany further steps up cooperation in military training“, 16.10.2020, https://kam.lt/en/news_1098/current_issues/lithuania_and_germany_further_steps_up_cooperation_in_military_training.html [10.12.2021].

security (the best example thereof being Germany's support for and Lithuania's far-reaching criticism towards the Nord Stream 2 pipeline) could be investigated. In this case, future research could focus on possible "spill-over" effects within the Lithuanian-German bilateral relations from security and defence to energy policy. Germany's leading role within the transition to carbon neutrality could be seen as a "facilitating condition" for Lithuania's willingness to cooperate.

All in all, the combination of securitisation and Europeanisation theoretical perspectives represents an intriguing viewpoint that can potentially lead to new academic insights regarding the interaction among the member states, the EU, and NATO on both theoretical and practical levels. Therefore, finding ways of establishing valid links between these theoretical perspectives represents a challenging, yet innovative task that future research could further concentrate on. As representation of national security agendas at the European level is going to remain one of the most important tasks of the member states' governments, the focus on securitisation-induced Europeanisation processes will preserve its actuality into the future.

Zusammenfassung

Das „Abhängigkeit-Angewiesensein-Muster“ und die Energiepolitik Litauens: auf der Spur des „Securitisation-induced Europeanisation“ kausalen Mechanismus

Durch den Beitritt zu EU und NATO im Jahre 2004 hatte Litauen sein wichtigstes außenpolitisches Ziel nach Wiedererlangung seiner staatlichen Unabhängigkeit erreicht. Für das Land war der Beitritt von entscheidender Bedeutung: er versinnbildlichte nach jahrzehntelanger Zugehörigkeit zur Sowjetunion die Rückkehr zur westlichen Staatenfamilie und wurde gleichgesetzt mit dem Beginn einer neuen, von Wohlstand und Sicherheit geprägten Ära in der litauischen Geschichte. Für die litauische Außenpolitik bedeutete der Beitritt einen Wandel der Rollen von EU und NATO: war der Beitritt zu diesen Organisationen bisher wichtigstes außenpolitisches Ziel des Landes gewesen, konnte Litauen nunmehr als Mitglied seinen außenpolitischen Instrumentenkasten deutlich erweitern.⁸⁸⁶ Im Ergebnis erreichte Litauen durch seine Mitgliedschaft in diesen Organisationen wichtige neue politische Hebel zur beschleunigten Umsetzung innerstaatlicher struktureller Reformen und zur Steigerung seines Einflusses auf internationaler Bühne.

Trotz dieser grundsätzlichen erfolgreichen euro-atlantischen Ausrichtung, blieb jedoch Litauens Integration in wichtigen Politikfeldern unzureichend, und gerade der Bereich Energie ist diesbezüglich von besonderem Interesse. In diesem Politikfeld von strategischer Bedeutung für das reibungslose Funktionieren eines jeden Staates blieb für Litauen die umfassende Abhängigkeit von Russland auch nach seinem EU- und NATO Beitritt fortbestehen. Hierbei stellte sich der russische Einfluss auf das baltische Land in drei Dimensionen dar: Erstens manifestierte er sich durch die hohe Abhängigkeit des Landes von Energieimporten aus Russland. Zweitens blieb Litauen technisch an die alte Energie-Infrastruktur der Sowjetunion mit Russland als einzigen Energie-Lieferanten gebunden. Drittens schränkten die Aktivitäten russischer Interessengruppen im litauischen Energiesektor den Handlungsspielraum litauischer Regierungen für umfassende Reformen deutlich ein.

⁸⁸⁶ Vgl. Vilpišauskas, Ramūnas, The Dilemmas of Transatlantic Relations after EU Enlargement and the Implications for Lithuania, in: Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review, 11/12, 2003, S. 90.

Die oben genannte paradoxe Situation bestand parallel zu Litauens EU- und NATO-Mitgliedschaft für mehr als zehn Jahre bis zum Erreichen der energiepolitischen Unabhängigkeit im Jahre 2015 fort und brachte das Land in eine energiepolitische Zwangslage zwischen Ost und West. Auf der einen Seite war Litauen bereits ein pro-europäisches Land, deren politische Elite und Bevölkerung den EU-Betritt von Beginn an mehrheitlich unterstützt haben.⁸⁸⁷ Ausgehend von den besonderen Beziehungen zu den USA wurde Litauens NATO-Mitgliedschaft als entscheidende Garantie für seine Sicherheit angesehen. Litauen hatte aber auch hohe Erwartungen an beide Organisationen, gerade in jenen Politikbereichen im Land Reformen herbeizuführen, die als am anfälligsten für die Einflussnahme seitens Russlands angesehen wurden. Hierbei wurden die Reform des Energie-Sektors und die Gewährleistung nationaler Energiesicherheit als Hauptprioritäten von Litauens EU- und NATO Politiken als prioritär angesehen.

Andererseits waren den litauischen Bestrebungen nach einer Europäisierung der Energiepolitik zunächst hohe Hürden gesetzt. Erstens verfügten zum Zeitpunkt des litauischen Beitritts im Jahr 2004 weder EU noch NATO über formale Zuständigkeiten im Energie-Bereich oder über bestehende Instrumente zur Reform des Energie-Sektors. Zweitens standen einige der größeren und einflussreicheren Mitgliedstaaten der Verlagerung Zuständigkeiten im Energie-Bereich auf EU und NATO zurückhaltend gegenüber. Drittens führte der EU-Beitritt für Litauen durch die zur Auflage gemachte Schließung des Kernkraftwerks (KKW) Ignalina im Jahr 2009⁸⁸⁸ zunächst zu einer drastischen Erhöhung seiner Verwundbarkeit im Energie-Bereich und zur Notwendigkeit für das Land, noch mehr russisches Erdgas zur Stromerzeugung zu importieren. Russland hat seinerseits im Moment des litauischen EU-Beitritts seine Preispolitik für Erdgas gegenüber Litauen nach oben auf „europäisches Niveau“ angepasst. Dies führte für Litauen zu

⁸⁸⁷ Vgl. Matonytė, Irmina/ Šumskas, Gintaras/ Morkevičius, Vaidas, Europeanness of Lithuanian Political Elite: Europhilia, Russophobia and Neoliberalism, in: Historical Social Research, 41(4), 2016, SS.152-154.

⁸⁸⁸ Vgl. Protocol No 4 (12003T/PRO/04), 23.9.2003 „Act concerning the conditions of accession of the Czech Republic, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Cyprus, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Malta, the Republic of Poland, the Republic of Slovenia and the Slovak Republic and the adjustments to the Treaties on which the European Union is founded - Protocol No 4 on the Ignalina nuclear power plant in Lithuania“, in: Official Journal L 236, 23/09/2003, pp. 0944 - 945.

den höchsten Preisen in Europa für den Import von russischem Erdgas, was eine erhebliche finanzielle Belastung für den litauischen Staatshaushalt darstellte.⁸⁸⁹

Alle diese Faktoren führten zu einer Situation, in der Litauens Energie-Sektor ab Litauens EU- und NATO-Beitritt 2004 ein sensibler Politikbereich blieb, bei steigendem russischen Druck, fehlenden Lösungen seitens des Westens und ungewissen Aussichten für die Reform des litauischen Energiesektors. Dennoch gelang es dem Land innerhalb von zehn Jahren, diese Zwänge zu überwinden und substantielle Fortschritte bei der Reform des Energiesektors zu erzielen⁸⁹⁰ – durch Liberalisierung der Strom- und Gasmärkte gemäß den Vorgaben des Dritten Energiepakets der EU sowie durch Diversifizierung der Gasversorgung mithilfe der Errichtung eines Flüssiggasterminals, Bau von Strombrücken nach Schweden und Polen und Eröffnung eines NATO-Kompetenzzentrums für Energiesicherheit in Vilnius.

Forschungsfragen und Hypothesen

Litauens langfristige Abhängigkeit von Russland bei Energielieferungen und Energie-Infrastruktur in Verbindung mit seinem Angewiesensein auf EU und NATO als internationale Schlüsselpartner wird in vorliegender Arbeit als „Abhängigkeit-Angewiesensein-Muster“ (engl. “dependence-reliance-pattern”) bezeichnet. Während Abhängigkeit von Russland als Litauens historisch bedingte und ungewollte Bindung an Russland im Energie-Bereich verstanden wird, bildet „Angewiesensein auf EU und NATO“ Litauens vorherrschende Sicht auf die Euro-atlantischen Strukturen als ultimative Garanten seiner sozio-ökonomischen Stabilität und nationalen Sicherheit ab. Im Ergebnis verbindet das „Abhängigkeit-Angewiesensein-Muster“ gleichzeitig Politik-Impulse sowohl aus dem Osten als auch aus dem Westen und stellt die bedeutendste kontextuelle Grundlage für die Formulierung und Umsetzung der Litauischen Energiepolitik in den Jahren 2004 bis 2015 dar.

⁸⁸⁹ Vgl. Rapoza, Kenneth, „How Lithuania Is Kicking Russia To The Curb“, Forbes, 18.10.2015, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrapoza/2015/10/18/how-lithuania-is-kicking-russia-to-the-curb/?sh=561f5d-d22006> [Accessed: 10.12.2020].

⁸⁹⁰ Vgl. Johnson, Keith, „Lithuania Cheers ‚Independence‘“, Foreign Policy, 27.10.2014, <https://foreign-policy.com/2014/10/27/lithuania-cheers-independence/> [Accessed: 10.12.2020]; Kanter, James, „Lithuania Offers Example of How to Break Russia’s Grip on Energy“, The New York Times, 27.10.2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/28/business/energy-environment/lithuania-offers-example-of-how-to-break-russias-grip-on-energy.html> [Accessed: 10.12.2020].

Ausgehend von dem „Abhängigkeit-Angewiesensein-Muster“ als bedeutendste kontextuelle Grundlage für die Litauische Energiepolitik, soll die vorliegende Arbeit von der folgenden zentralen Forschungsfrage geleitet werden: Wie hat Litauen es erreicht, seine nationale Energiesicherheit zu erhöhen, und dies im Kontext der Abhängigkeit von Russland als Energieversorger einerseits und dem Angewiesensein auf EU und NATO als wichtigste Reformtreiber für die nationale Ebene andererseits?

Ausgehend von dieser Forschungsfrage werden die Hauptkomponenten der Forschungsarbeit wie folgt definiert:

- Das „Abhängigkeit (Russland) — Angewiesensein (EU, NATO) Muster“ wird als die Ursache definiert, die Litauens Energiepolitik im Zeitraum 2004 bis 2015 prägt.
- Die Reform von Litauens Energiesektor wird als das Ergebnis von der litauischen Energiepolitik im genannten Zeitraum definiert.
- Die Strategie, die es Litauen ermöglichte, seinen Energiesektor unter den Bedingungen des „Abhängigkeit (Russland) — Angewiesensein (EU, NATO) Musters“ zu reformieren wird als „Black Box“ definiert. Einblick in die „Black Box“ stellt das Hauptziel der vorliegenden Forschungsarbeit dar. Bei diesem Hauptziel wird der Schwerpunkt auf der Identifizierung relevanter Beziehungen zwischen Politikimpulsen aus dem Osten (Russland) und dem Westen (EU, NATO) liegen, die zur Reform von Litauens Energiesektor führten.

Als vollwertiges Mitglied von EU und NATO hatte Litauen die Möglichkeit, an der Gestaltung und Umsetzung der jeweiligen Energiepolitiken dieser Organisationen mitzuwirken. Folglich wird angenommen, dass Litauen mit dem Ziel der Reformierung seines nationalen Energiesektors zu der Entwicklung der Energiepolitiken von EU und NATO beigetragen hat. Diese Annahme weiterer Effekte lädt zu zusätzlichen Forschungsfragen ein:

1. Wie und in welchem Umfang hat Litauen zur Entwicklung der Energiepolitik der EU beigetragen?
2. Wie und in welchem Umfang hat Litauen zur Entwicklung der Energiepolitik der NATO beigetragen?

Mit Bezug zur zentralen Forschungsfrage sowie zu den zusätzlichen Forschungsfragen werden die folgenden Hypothesen aufgestellt:

- H1: Litauens Energiepolitik zwischen den Jahren 2004 und 2015 basierte auf einer Doppelstrategie aus Instrumentalisierung der russischen Bedrohung und Externalisie-

lung von Herausforderungen für seine nationale Energiesicherheit, um für deren Lösung Unterstützung von EU und NATO anzustreben.

- H2: Wiederholte machtpolitische Aktionen seitens Russlands in dessen „nahem Ausland“ waren fördernde Bedingungen für die litauische Strategie, da sie die innenpolitische Legitimierung der Reformen auf der nationalen Ebene und die internationale Anerkennung des Mangels an Energiesicherheit auf EU- und NATO Ebene positiv beeinflussten.
- H3: Als Folge seiner atlantizistischen politischen Ausrichtung und NATO-zentrierter Vision von nationaler Sicherheit war Litauen bestrebt, die Allianz aktiv in die Debatten über seine Energiesicherheit einzubeziehen. Litauens Strategie innerhalb der NATO basierte auf dem Ausbau seines Experten-Status in Energiefragen.
- H4: Obwohl nur ein kleines Land, konnte Litauen erreichen, die Entwicklung der Energiepolitiken der EU und NATO durch Einfluss auf die Agenda-setting Prozesse beider Organisationen zugunsten seiner nationalen Präferenzen mitzugestalten.

Theoretischer Hintergrund

Um die divergierenden Politikimpulse aus dem „Abhängigkeit-Angewiesensein-Muster“ zu akkommodieren, war Litauen gezwungen, durch zahlreiche innere und äußere Drucksituationen zu navigieren. Zum einen, wurde von dem Land als neues EU- und NATO-Mitglied erwartet, sich gemäß den allgemein akzeptierten Regeln der westlichen Gemeinschaft zu verhalten („logic of appropriateness“⁸⁹¹). Zum anderen musste Litauen die Gelegenheit sich intensivierender Diskussionen zur Fragen der Energiesicherheit ergreifen, um die Aufmerksamkeit anderer eher skeptischer EU Mitgliedstaaten auf Fragen seiner nationalen Energiepolitik zu lenken („logic of consequentialism“⁸⁹²).

Diese unterschiedlichen Logiken des politischen Handelns, die den Kern des jeweils konstruktivistischen und rationalistischen Ansatzes bilden, können mit Hilfe des „strategischen“ oder „akteurszentrierten“ Konstruktivismus zusammengeführt werden. Dieser besagt, dass Staaten als zielgerichtete Akteure zu verstehen sind, die die ideellen

⁸⁹¹ Vgl. March, James G./ Olsen, Johan P., ‘The logic of appropriateness’, Arena Working Papers, WP 04/09, 2004, S. 2. https://www.sv.uio.no/arena/english/research/publications/arena-working-papers/2001-2010/2004/wp04_9.pdf [Accessed: 30.10.2020].

⁸⁹² Vgl. Checkel, Jeffrey T., Review: The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory, in: World Politics, Vol. 50, No. 2, 1998, S. 327.

Strukturen, in die sie eingebettet sind, zur Erreichung ihrer Ziele nutzen.⁸⁹³ Die Erweiterung des konstruktivistischen Ansatzes durch zielgerichtete Rationalität der politischen Akteure ermöglicht es, Ideen mit politischen Ergebnissen zu verknüpfen⁸⁹⁴, und führt dadurch das Element der „Kausalität“ in konstruktivistisches Denken ein.

Ausgehend von der Argumentation des „strategischen“ Konstruktivismus wird in dieser Forschungsarbeit argumentiert, dass die Gestaltung und Umsetzung von Litauens Energiepolitik zwischen den Jahren 2004 und 2015 durch eine bestimmte kausale Interaktion zwischen zwei sozialen Phänomenen erklärt werden kann: Versicherunglichung und Europäisierung. Diese theoretischen Ansätze werden unter Mitberücksichtigung der strukturellen Besonderheiten von Litauens Profil als kleines Land angewandt.

Da die Energiepolitik der Gruppe von strategischen Politiken, die durch ihre tragende Rolle für das Funktionieren von Nationalstaaten definiert sind, zugeordnet werden kann⁸⁹⁵, wird vermutet, dass die Mechanismen, die zur Europäisierung in diesem Politikfeld führen, sich grundsätzlich von denjenigen unterscheiden, die in anderen Politikfeldern zu beobachten sind (z. B. Sozialisierung, Adaptierung, politisches Lernen). Anreize für die Europäisierung eines strategisch wichtigen Politikbereiches können durch Versicherunglichung ausgelöst werden, die von der Wahrnehmung eines individuellen Mitgliedstaates ausgehen, dass nationale Interessen in einem strategisch wichtigen Politikbereich nicht unilateral, sondern besser durch Einbinden der internationalen Organisationen gewährleistet werden können. Dies ist besonders für kleine Staaten, die selbst über relativ geringe politische Druckmittel verfügen, der Fall.

Durch Versicherunglichung eines Sachproblems schaffen die Entscheidungsträger einen Dringlichkeitsstatus, der ihre Möglichkeiten, effektiver einem Problem zu begegnen, oft deutlich erhöht.⁸⁹⁶ Daher kommt Versicherunglichung besonders in strategisch wichtigen Politikfeldern zur Anwendung, wenn angestrebt wird, die dort vorherrschenden Bedingungen zu verändern (z. B. durch weitreichende, aber umstrittene Reformen). Aus diesem Grund kann Versicherunglichung als ein tragfähiges und nützlich-

⁸⁹³ Vgl. Saurugger, Sabine, *Constructivism and Agenda Setting*, in: Nikolaos Zahariadis (ed.), „*Handbook of Public Policy Agenda Setting*“, Cheltenham, Northampton, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2016, S. 135.

⁸⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, SS. 144-145.

⁸⁹⁵ Vgl. Thaler, Philipp, *The European Commission and the European Council: Coordinated Agenda Setting in European Energy Policy*, in: *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 38, No. 5, 2016, S. 571.

⁸⁹⁶ Vgl. Buzan, Barry/ Weaver, Ole/ de Wilde, Jaap, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc., London, 1998, S. 21.

ches Politikinstrument genutzt werden. Zum einen können unpopuläre politische Entscheidungen auf der nationalen Ebene durch Versicherheitlichung legitimiert werden. Andererseits können durch Uploading-Strategien internationale Partner als relevantes „Publikum“ (audience) für Versicherheitlichung angesprochen werden, wenn angestrebt wird, Diskussionen zu einem bestimmten Sachproblem auf der internationalen Ebene zu strukturieren, und auf diese Weise Unterstützung für den nationalen Reformprozess zu gewinnen.

Das Verständnis der oben skizzierten Versicherheitlichungs-Prozesse basiert auf den Standpunkten des soziologischen Strangs der Versicherheitlichungs-Theorie, vertreten von Balzacq und Guzzini⁸⁹⁷. Da dieser Strang das Konzept der Versicherheitlichung eher als ein politisches Instrument und weniger als einen statischen Akt von „gesprochener Sicherheit“⁸⁹⁸ definiert, wird es möglich, Kausalitäten nachzuvollziehen, und anzunehmen, dass es sowohl Prozesse, die zu Versicherheitlichung führen, als auch Prozesse, die ein Ergebnis von Versicherheitlichung darstellen, gibt⁸⁹⁹. Andererseits weist der Europäisierungs-Ansatz von Radaelli darauf hin, dass Europäisierung als ein breiterer Prozess als nur von Brüssel übernommene europäischen Verordnungen und Richtlinien zu verstehen ist. Durch „creative usages of Europe“⁹⁰⁰ können vielmehr auch die Mitgliedstaaten die EU als ein kreatives Instrument zur Legitimierung unpopulärer oder stark umstrittener innenpolitischer Politikentscheidungen sowie zur Verstärkung politischer Hebel zur Reform nutzen.⁹⁰¹

Als Ergebnis dieser Argumentation erscheinen Versicherheitlichung und Europäisierung als an kausale Beziehungen gebundene gesellschaftliche Prozesse. In dieser Dissertation werden die kausalen Beziehungen zwischen Versicherheitlichung und Europäisierung durch einen kausalen Mechanismus — genannt „securitisation-induced

⁸⁹⁷ Vgl. Balzacq, Thierry/ Guzzini, Stefano, „Introduction: What Kind of Theory - If Any - Is Securitization?“, in: Balzacq, Thierry/ Guzzini, Stefano/ Williams, Michael C./ Wæver, Ole/ Patomäki, Heikki, „Forum: What kind of theory – if any – is securitization?“, in: *International Relations*, Vol 29 (1), 2014, SS. 2-6.

⁸⁹⁸ Vgl. Weaver, Ole, „Securitization and desecuritization“, in: Lipschutz, Ronnie D. (ed.), *On Security*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1995, S. 55.

⁸⁹⁹ Vgl. Guzzini, Stefano, *Securitization As a Causal Mechanism*, Special Issue on The Politics of Securitization, in: *Security Dialogue*, 42 (4-5), 2011, S. 337.

⁹⁰⁰ Radaelli, Claudio M., *Europeanisation: Solution or problem?*, *European Integration online Papers (EIoP)*, Vol. 8, No. 16, 2004, SS. 12-13.

⁹⁰¹ Vgl. Kallestrup, Morten, *Europeanisation As a Discourse: Domestic Policy Legitimation Through the Articulation of a “Need for Adaptation“*, in: *Public Policy and Administration*, 17(2), 2002, SS. 110-124.

Europeanisation“ — konzeptualisiert. Dieser Mechanismus kann als Vermittler zwischen dem als Ursache definierten „Abhängigkeit-Angewiesensein-Muster“ und der als Ergebnis definierten Reform von Litauens Energiesektor beschrieben werden. Es wird hier angenommen, dass dieser Mechanismus in zwei Richtungen und gegenüber zwei Arten vom „Publikum“ funktioniert: intern und extern. Im Fall der internen Richtung wirkt der Mechanismus für das innerstaatliche „Publikum“ und hat zum Ziel, die Akzeptanz einer top-down Drucksituation der EU im Bereich der versicherheitlichten Energiepolitik zu erhöhen. Im Falle der externen Richtung wirkt der Mechanismus gegenüber der EU-NATO-Ebene durch Uploading-Strategien der litauischen Entscheidungsträger und erlaubt das Werben für die nationale „Energie-Vision“ bei den Partnerstaaten und der Europäischen Kommission. Beide Richtungen (intern und extern) führen zu einem Zuwachs an Macht durch den versicherheitlichenden Akteur (politische Entscheidungsträger), der nationale und internationale Unterstützung für die Reform des angefochtenen nationalen Energiesektors generiert.

Generell wird mit Blick auf die vorherrschende Beziehung zwischen den Prozessen der Versicherheitlichung und Europäisierung argumentiert, dass versicherheitlichte Politikbereiche üblicherweise weniger europäisiert sind. Die vorliegende Arbeit möchte diese nicht das ganze Bild aufzeigende Annahme hinterfragen, die unseres Erachtens durch die traditionelle Perspektive großer Staaten geprägt ist, und die besondere Perspektive kleiner Staaten außer Acht lässt. Große Mitgliedstaaten tendieren in der Tat dazu, Zuständigkeiten für Politikbereiche von strategischer Bedeutung auf nationalstaatlicher Ebene zu halten. Gut ausgerüstet, um Einfluss auf internationaler Ebene auszuüben, blockieren sie erfolgreich Versuche, supranationale Kontrolle über diese Politikbereiche zu erhöhen. Dies bedeutet jedoch nicht, dass kleinere und weniger einflussreiche Mitgliedstaaten dieselbe Politikstrategie verfolgen und nicht versuchen, ihre nationalen Prioritäten mit Blick auf die supranationale Einbindung in strategischen Politikbereichen zu fördern.

Methodologie

Um das Wirken des kausalen Mechanismus der “securitisation-induced Europeanisation“ zu analysieren und zu bewerten, wird die Theorie-testende Variante der Prozessanalyse (engl. process-tracing) verwendet. Die Analyse besteht aus zwei Haupt-

teilen: 1) Bewertung der kontextuellen Bedingungen, die zwischen 2004 und 2015 vorherrschend waren und das Auftreten des kausalen Mechanismus der „securitisation-induced Europeanisation“ ermöglicht haben; und 2) Analyse des Wirkens dieses Mechanismus aufgrund von Indikatoren, die die wichtigsten Höhepunkte der Energie-Politik Litauens im Zeitraum zwischen 2004 und 2015 darstellen.

Die Analyse der kontextuellen Bedingungen beginnt auf nationaler Ebene und diskutiert sowohl ideelle als auch materielle Faktoren, die den Umfang und die wichtigsten Stoßrichtungen der litauischen Energiepolitik im besagten Zeitraum geprägt haben. Die kontextuelle Analyse schreitet zur EU- und NATO Ebene fort und untersucht die wichtigsten schrittweisen Entwicklungen der Energiepolitiken dieser Organisationen, die wichtigsten Einflusskanäle für Mitgliedstaaten, sowie Chancen und Grenzen von Upload-Strategien kleiner Staaten.

Die Indikatoren-Analyse besteht aus der Untersuchung von 20 Ereignissen, die für die Litauische Energiepolitik von entscheidender Bedeutung waren und sowohl die nationale als auch von die EU und NATO Ebenen miteinschließen. Diese Ereignisse umfassen den Verkauf der Anteile des Nationalen Gasversorgungsunternehmens Lietuvos Dujos an Gazprom (2004), den Zwischenfall in Zusammenhang mit der Druzhba Pipeline (2006), die endgültige Schließung des KKW Ignalina (2009) sowie die Inbetriebnahme der Nord Stream Pipeline (2011) und können als „einschränkende Umstände“ für die litauische Energiepolitik eingestuft werden. Die zweite Gruppe der Ereignisse umfasst internationale Ereignisse wie den NATO Gipfel von Riga (2006), Verhandlungen auf EU-Ebene zum Vertrag von Lissabon und zum Dritten Energiepaket (2007/2009), den NATO Gipfel von Bukarest (2008), die Gründung der hochrangigen Gruppe für einen Verbundplan für den baltischen Energiemarkt (Baltic Energy Interconnection Plan, BEMIP, 2008) sowie die Verabschiedung des strategischen Konzept der NATO (2010). Die dritte Gruppe umfasst die Maßnahmen die Litauen (mit)initiiert hatte: die Organisation der Konferenz für Energiesicherheit in Vilnius (2007), die Einrichtung des NATO-Kompetenzzentrums für Energiesicherheit in Vilnius (2008-2012), Verhandlungen mit Gazprom über Eigentums-Entflechtung im litauischen Gassektor (2010-2012), die Einleitung des Kartellverfahrens gegen Gazprom durch die Europäische Kommission (2012) sowie die EU-Präsidentschaft Litauens (2013). Die vierte Gruppe umfasst „fördernde Bedingungen“ durch Machtdemonstrationen seitens Russlands in dessen „nahem Ausland“: die russisch-ukrainischen Gaskonflikte (2006 und 2009), den

russisch-georgischen Krieg (2008), die politische Krise in der Ukraine und Annexion der Krim (2014), die Zwischenfälle in Zusammenhang mit der Verlegung des NordBalt Kabels (2015).

Triangulation von Quellen – Experteninterviews, Primär- (öffentliche Reden, offizielle Dokumente) und Sekundärmaterial (Medienberichte, wissenschaftliche Beiträge) findet für die Prozessanalyse Anwendung. Neun halbstrukturierte Experteninterviews wurden durchgeführt mit Vertreter/innen aus litauischer politischer Elite und diplomatischem Personal, Vertreter/innen internationaler Belegschaft von EU und NATO sowie mit Vertreter/innen des diplomatischen Corps aus EU- und NATO Mitgliedstaaten. Zahlreiche offizielle Dokumente von nationaler, EU- und NATO-Ebenen wurden analysiert. Des Weiteren wurden Reden und Kommentare von Vertreter/innen Litauens, der EU und der NATO als Reaktion auf Ereignisse mit Relevanz für die litauische Energiepolitik zwischen 2004 und 2015 ausgewertet. Sekundärquellen wie Medienberichte, Analysen und relevante wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen wurden ebenfalls ausgewertet, um Informationslücken zu den relevanten Ereignissen zu überbrücken.

Die wichtigsten Ergebnisse

Versicherheitslichung

Mit der vorliegenden Forschungsarbeit konnte die tief verwurzelte Versicherheitslichung von Russland in Litauen bestätigt werden. Im ausgewerteten Zeitraum wurden die russische Bedrohung von litauischen Entscheidungsträgern als objektive Bedingung wahrgenommen. Litauens außen- und sicherheitspolitische Ausrichtung wurde daher als logische Reaktion auf diese Bedrohung verstanden. Das der russischen Bedrohung zugrundeliegende Element blieb während des Zeitraums unverändert: Russland wurde als Regionalmacht wahrgenommen, deren geopolitische Ambitionen in Europa mit großen negativen Konsequenzen für Litauen verbunden waren.

Andererseits entwickelte sich im untersuchten Zeitraum das Verständnis für Russlands Methoden bei der Durchsetzung seiner außenpolitischen Ziele im Lichte weiterer internationalen Entwicklungen kontinuierlich weiter. Im Ergebnis verlagerten die litauischen Entscheidungsträger zunächst ihren Fokus von einer rein militärischen russischen Bedrohung hin zu Russland's Erpressungen im Energiebereich, Propaganda und Desinformation. In diesem Zusammenhang hat die Analyse gezeigt, dass obwohl in

2004 die Entscheidungsträger Litauens die fortlaufende Abhängigkeit von Russland im Bereich Energie für ein wirtschaftliches Problem gehalten haben und vorwiegend damit beschäftigt waren, stabilen Energiezufuhr für das Land zu sichern, wurde Energiesicherheit ab 2006 zu einem Bestandteil der nationalen Sicherheit. Der russisch-ukrainische Gaskonflikt von 2006 und die Unterbrechung der Ölzufuhr nach Litauen über die Druzhba Pipeline haben zu einer engen Verbindung zwischen Energie- und Außenpolitik geführt. Als Reaktion auf diese Ereignisse haben die litauischen Entscheidungsträger wiederholt versucht, die Idee der "Energiesolidarität" auf EU-Ebene voranzubringen. Auch die bevorstehende Schließung des KKW in Ignalina wurde als Argument für eine aktivere Unterstützung der bedürftigen Mitgliedstaaten durch die EU in Energiefragen genutzt.

Diese wiederholte "normative Versicherunglichung" der Lage im litauischen Energiesektor, die zwischen 2004-2008 stattfand, hat keine wesentlichen positiven Ergebnisse für Litauen gebracht. Dies lag unter anderem auch an dem in dieser Zeit unterschiedlichen und inkompatiblen Verständnis von Energiesicherheit in Litauen und einem Großteil der EU-Mitgliedstaaten. Die Westlichen Partner nahmen sowohl die Gaskonflikte zwischen Russland und Ukraine, als auch den Zwischenfall im Zusammenhang mit der Druzhba Pipeline als kommerzielle Auseinandersetzungen wahr und waren nicht bereit politische Instrumente für deren Lösung einzusetzen.

Aspekte der "normativen Versicherunglichung" gab es auch auf der NATO-Ebene. Litauen nutzte das Argument des "politischen Allianzen", um Diskussion zur Energiesicherheit in NATO zu begründen und voranzutreiben. Auch die Debatte über die Gründung eines Kompetenzzentrums für Energiesicherheit in Vilnius wurde bis 2011 von normativen Argumenten geprägt, die eng mit der Forderung nach aktiver Unterstützung des Bündnisses im Falle einer Störung der Energiezufuhr durch Russland verbunden waren. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt konnte allerdings die kritische Masse der Unterstützung für das Konzept Litauens nicht erreicht werden. Das Land konnte aber erreichen, das Energieszenario in die CMX (Crisis Management Exercise) Übungen der NATO einzuschließen.

Eine deutlicher Wandel von einer "normativen" zu einer "pragmatischen" Versicherunglichung konnte während der Zeit der Regierung von Andrius Kubilius (2008-2012) beobachtet werden. Obwohl Kubilius und seine konservative Partei noch vor den Wahlen in 2008 Energie als den primären politischen Einflusskanal für Russ-

land in Litauen identifiziert hatten und dadurch einen stark versicherheitlichten Standpunkt zu Russland vertraten, haben sie eine neuartige Gegen-Strategie angewandt, die mit wirtschaftlichen Argumenten darauf basierte, Russland als unzuverlässiges und diskriminierendes Lieferland darzustellen. Praktische Instrumente wie die eigentumsrechtliche Entflechtung, Verzicht auf vorhandenen Ausnahmen für deren Umsetzung, Initiierung des Kartellverfahrens gegen Gazprom kamen zur Anwendung, um das Argument Russlands, es sei ein vertrauensvoller Energielieferant zu widerlegen. Gleichzeitig hat Litauen sein eigenes Profil als europäischer Vorreiter in der Umsetzung der Regeln des Dritten Energiepakets geschärft. Versicherheitlichung Russlands auf der Basis des Verstoßes gegen universelle Geschäftsprinzipien führte zu einer grundlegenden Übereinstimmung zwischen Litauen als dem versicherheitlichenden Akteur und der EU als "Publikum" und führte zur politischen Unterstützung der Europäischen Kommission während der Verhandlungen zwischen Litauen und Gazprom.

Auf der NATO-Ebene konnte die Tendenz zur Entsicherheitlichung (de-securitisation) des Energiebereichs durch Litauen beobachtet werden. Litauen hat das Konzept für das NATO-Kompetenzzentrum neu konzipiert indem der Schwerpunkt auf die inklusive "operationelle Energiesicherheit" verlagert wurde. Die Initiierung der IESMA-Konferenzen (Innovative Energy Solutions for Military Applications) durch Litauen hat positiv zum Einbinden von eher skeptischen Mitgliedstaaten beigetragen. Obwohl Litauen sein ursprüngliches Ziel einer praktischen NATO-Einbindung ins konkrete Management von energetischen Versorgungskrisen aufgeben musste, hat das kleine Land dennoch die Erhöhung von internationaler Sichtbarkeit durch die Akkreditierung des NATO-Kompetenzzentrums auf seinem Staatsgebiet erreicht.

Der Paradigmenwechsel von der "normativen" zur "pragmatischen" Versicherheitlichung, oder gar Entsicherheitlichung, wurde durch die militärischen Aktivitäten Russlands im Kaukasus und Osteuropa zunächst unterbrochen. Besonders die Krise in der Ukraine im Jahr 2014 führte zu einer Wiederbelebung der Besorgnis vor einer direkten militärischen Bedrohung durch Russland und hatte Auswirkungen sowohl auf die Versicherheitlichungsstrategie Litauens als auch auf den Perspektivenwechsel hinsichtlich Russland in den meisten westeuropäischen Ländern. Das im Zusammenhang mit der Ukraine-Krise entstandene Konzept der "hybriden Kriegsführung", das Propaganda, Energie und Cyber als wichtige ergänzende Bereiche einer militärischen Vorgehensweise von Russland einbezieht, führte dazu, dass Energie auch unter den westlichen EU

und NATO Partnern Litauens an strategisch-politischer Bedeutung gewann. Die litauische “normative“ Versicherunglichung konnte deshalb Erfolge erzielen, was die Zwischenfälle im Zusammenhang mit der Verlegung des NordBalt Kabels praktisch gezeigt hatten.

Europäisierung

Innerhalb des Zeitraums der Untersuchung hat Litauen großes Interesse an der Europäisierung seiner nationalen Energiepolitik demonstriert. Da Energie seit 2007 ein Bestandteil des litauischen nationalen Sicherheitsverständnisses war, wurde das Interesse an Europäisierung nicht nur durch die EU, sondern auch durch die NATO geäußert. Da Energie sich innerhalb der EU und NATO erst in den Jahren 2008-2009 zu eigenständigen Politikfeldern entwickelt hat, wurde Litauen überwiegend in Upload-Aktivitäten involviert mit dem Ziel, internationale Instrumente im Bereich Energie zu schaffen. Die litauische Uploading-Strategie umfasste sowohl “Pace-Setting”, als auch “Fence-Sitting” und “Foot-Dragging” Tendenzen.

Vor 2009 wurde die “Pace-Setting” Strategie angewandt, die durch das Organisieren von internationalen Konferenzen zur Energiesicherheit die litauische Stimme für mehr Energiesolidarität hörbarer machen sollte. Auch die Übernahme einer litauischen Vermittlungsrolle während des russisch-ukrainischen Gaskonflikts in 2006 und dem russisch-georgischen Kriegs wurde aktiv mit Forderungen nach einer gemeinsamen Europäischen Energiepolitik verbunden. Allerdings war die “Pace-Setting“ Strategie Litauens nicht erfolgreich, da das Land kein breites Auditorium für seine Energiepolitische Vision gewinnen konnte und sich schwer tat, aus der Reihe anderen Kleinstaaten Osteuropas auszubrechen.

Mit dem Inkrafttreten des Dritten Energiepakets der EU ist ein Wechsel zur “Fence-Sitting” Strategie zu beobachten. Die Regierung hatte geplant, die für Litauen zulässige Ausnahmeregelung für die Umsetzung der Liberalisierungsregeln im nationalen Gassektor anzufordern und dadurch die Möglichkeit einer schrittweisen und eher moderaten Liberalisierung zu verschaffen. Allerdings haben innenpolitische Faktoren dazu geführt, dass der konservative Oppositionsführer Kubilius die litauische Linie veränderte und auf eine vollumfängliche Liberalisierung und Eigentumsentflechtung setzte. Dadurch kehrte Litauen zu der “Pace-Setting” Strategie zurück und förderte sein Image

als europäischer Vorreiter in Liberalisierung eines von Gazprom dominierten Energiesektors. Diese Strategie wurde auch nach dem Regierungswechsel in 2012 fortgesetzt.

Die Schließung der KKW Ignalina und der Bau des Flüssiggasterminals können der litauischen “Foot-Drugging” Strategie auf der EU Ebene zugeordnet werden. Bis 2009 hat Litauen wiederholt versucht, den Termin der Abschaltung des KKW und damit der Umsetzung der entsprechenden europäischen Vereinbarung (Protokoll 4 des litauischen EU-Beitrittsvertrags) zu verschieben. Im Jahre 2008 wurde hierfür eine spezielle Verhandler-Gruppe eingesetzt. Es konnte festgestellt werden, dass obwohl die Europäische Kommission die Forderungen Litauens abgelehnt hat, die litauischen diplomatischen Bemühungen einen direkten Einfluss auf die Gründung der hochrangigen Gruppe für die Entwicklung des BEMIP-Plans gehabt haben, der ein erster systematische Versuch auf EU-Ebene war, die Probleme der Energieinfrastruktur Litauens und der anderen zwei Baltischen Staaten anzugehen.

Der Bau des Flüssiggasterminals ist ein weiteres Beispiel der litauischen “Foot-Drugging” Strategie. Ursprünglich wurde ein regionaler Terminal, unter Einbindung Litauens, Lettlands und Estlands geplant und durch die Europäische Kommission unterstützt. Allerdings hat Litauen wegen der Bedenken über eine mögliche Einmischung Gazprom’s durch die estnischen und lettischen Partner aus die regionalen Verhandlungen verlassen und hat sich nationalen Alleingang für den Bau eines Flüssiggasterminals entschieden. Dieser litauische Alleingang stand im Widerspruch zum erklärten Interesse an Europäischen Lösungen für die Probleme der Energiesicherheit.

Litauen als Kleinstaat

Als kleiner Staat wurde Litauen bei der Durchsetzung seiner Interessen in EU und NATO mit unterschiedlichen Hürden konfrontiert. Erstens, hat sich für Litauen als Neumitglied der Mangel an Erfahrung mit den Entscheidungsprozessen der beiden Organisationen bemerkbar gemacht. Nach seinem EU und NATO Beitritt wurde Litauen sehr bald zu einem “one issue“ Land, das seine Interesse stark fokussierte und sich nur auf Russland konzentrierte. Die Debatte um den Zwischenfall im Zusammenhang mit der Druzhba Pipeline, die letztendlich zu einem Reputationsschaden für Litauen geführt hat, ist hierfür ein gutes Beispiel. Die übermäßige Betonung der Russland-Frage konnte nicht als Profilierung eines Kleinstaates gesehen werden, da Litauen die Debatte zu

Russland ausschließlich mit seinen nationalen Angelegenheiten verband und nicht versucht hat, der Frage eine inklusive europäische Dimension zu verschaffen. Dies gelang erst mit dem Übergang zur “pragmatischen“ Versicherunglichung der russischen Energiepolitik, wenn Litauen sich als Verteidiger der europäischen, nicht nur nationalen Interessen profiliert hat.

Zweitens, die fehlende Institutionalisierung des Energiebereichs war zumindest bis 2008-2009 ein einschränkender Faktor für Litauen als Kleinstaat. Ohne eigenen starken politischen Hebel und fehlender Unterstützung durch supranationale europäische Institutionen in Bereich Energie, war Litauen nicht fähig seine Vision der europäischen Energiesicherheit zu vertreten und fungierte deswegen lediglich innerhalb der anderen Kleinstaaten der Ost- und Mitteleuropas. Von der anderen Seite, wurde die Klausel der Energiesolidarität, für die Litauen ständig plädiert hat, in dem Vertrag von Lissabon in 2009 verankert. Man kann deswegen die Möglichkeit nicht ganz ausschließen, dass auch Litauen zu der Formulierung dieser Klausel beigetragen hat.

Die Kleinstaat-Strategie Litauens in der NATO wurde auf die strategische Partnerschaft zu den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika basiert. Litauen hat sich bemüht, sich als Sicherheitsbringer und nicht nur als Sicherheitsnehmer zu profilieren und hat die Vereinigten Staaten sowohl während der militärischen Intervention in Irak als auch während der von NATO geführten ISAF-Mission in Afghanistan diplomatisch und praktisch unterstützt. Durch sein Engagement bezüglich den internationalen “Brennpunkten“ hat Litauen versucht, die Aufmerksamkeit Amerika’s auf die eigenen Sicherheitsproblemen im Bereich Energie zu lenken. So unterstützten die Vereinigten Staaten nicht nur die Gründung des NATO-Kompetenzzentrums für Energiesicherheit in Litauen, aber auch den litauischen Flüssiggasterminal. Unter anderen Faktoren stand auch Litauen hinter der Entscheidung des Kongresses, das Exportverbot von dem amerikanischen Gas für die NATO Verbündeten abzuschaffen.

Insgesamt, basierend auf den vorliegenden Ergebnissen kann die zentrale Forschungsfrage wie folgt beantwortet werden. Litauen gelang es, seine nationale Energiesicherheit zu erhöhen, indem es Prozesse der Versicherunglichung und Europäisierung produktiv instrumentalisiert hat. Litauische Versuche der Versicherunglichung lösten erfolgreiche Europäisierungsimpulse in denjenigen Fällen aus, die von überwiegender Übereinstimmung der Perzeptionen bezüglich der russischen Bedrohung für Energiesicherheit auf der litauischen nationalen Ebene einerseits und der EU- und NATO-Ebenen

andererseits geprägt waren. Litauens Einbindung in die „Abhängigkeit-Angewiesensein“ Beziehung hat auch dazu geführt, dass Litauen — wie das Beispiel der gescheiterten Planungen eines regionalen Flüssiggasterminals zeigt — Misstrauen gegenüber europäischen Projekten der Energiesicherheit gezeigt hat. In diesem konkreten Fall war der nationale Alleingang Litauens nur deshalb erfolgreich, weil die Liberalisierung des nationalen Erdgassektors nach den europäischen Liberalisierungsregeln hierfür die Voraussetzungen geschaffen hat.

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Author's Interviews:

Code	Name	Occupation within the timeframe of research	Date
#1	Juknevičienė, Rasa	Member of NATO PA, Rapporteur of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships (2007-2008), Vice-President of NATO PA (2008), Lithuanian Minister of National Defence (2008-2012)	05.07.2021
#2	Kubilius, Andrius	Opposition Leader and Chair of the Special Parliamentary Group on Development of Strategic Energy Projects (2006-2008), Lithuanian Prime Minister (2008-2012)	09.07.2021
#3	Linkevičius, Linas	Permanent Representative of Lithuania to NATO (2005-2011) Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs (2012-2020)	08.07.2021
#4	Piebalgs, Andris	EU Energy Commissioner (2004-2009)	04.10.2021

#5	Švedas, Romas	Deputy Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the EU (2003-2007), Head of the Economic Security Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania (2007-2009), Energy Vice-Minister and member of the BEMIP HLG (2009-2011)	12.10.2021
#6	Anonymous	Foreign Policy Advisor to President Dalia Grybauskaitė (2013-2019)	20.05.2021
#7	Anonymous	Staff Officer, Hybrid Challenges and Energy Security Section, Emerging Security Challenges Division of NATO (2009 onwards)	01.10.2021
#8	Anonymous	DG Comp, European Commission (2007-2012)	14.10.2021
#9	Anonymous	Diplomat of an EU and NATO partner state (2008-2011)	13.08.2021