Journal on Baltic Security

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The 2013 crisis in Ukraine that developed into the annexation of Crimea and war in the Eastern part of the country might not have changed the security situation in the three Baltic states *per se*, but definitely changed the perceptions of threats and vulnerabilities. A part of the elites always emphasized actual or potential threats from the big neighbour and seemed to be vindicated in their visions by the events in Ukraine. For others, these events came as unexpected as for the rest of the world, and forced to rethink the existing frameworks of security. Over the next two years, all countries chose to increase their defence budgets and sought to gain more substantial guarantees from the two major security providers: the EU and the NATO. The increased NATO presence was seen as especially important to deter potential aggression and the summits of the organization in Wales and in Warsaw acknowledged these fears and took measures to reassure the countries. While the entire Eastern flank was seen as vulnerable, the three Baltic states, forming a kind of geopolitical island, with only 104 kilometre border between Poland and Lithuania connecting it by land to the rest of Europe were especially so. This border was named the Suwalki gap as an analogy with the Fulda gap that kept military planners awake during the Cold War nights.

Yet, the military dimension is not all that there is to security perceptions. Even the hard-core realists realize that economy is as important for the nation's future as is its military prowess. For the people of the countries, the safety of their homes may not be necessarily linked to the potential military aggression, but rather economic stability and levels of everyday crime. Energy security has been seen as an issue over the past decade. The isolation of the

Baltic states from the energy networks of the rest of Europe made them vulnerable to the economico-political blackmail. Even cyber issues came often on the agenda, especially in Estonia, which prides itself as a digitalized nation.

The purpose of this special issue is thus to look deeper into these and other concerns of the Baltic elites and the populations. It gathers four researchers looking at these issues from their country's perspective and assessing the changes in both elite and public perceptions of security over the current two years. The three book reviews give some theoretical context to this discussion, assessing new contributions to the understanding of security.

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CHANGES IN SECURITY POLICY AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE BALTIC STATES 2014 – 2016

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ABSTRACT The article proposes the analytical review on what and how to think about the security of the Baltic States from 2014 till 2016 by evaluating and reflecting the main changes in their security policy and perceptions. These three years demonstrated that the perceptions about security itself have not changed much while comparing with the previous five years. The changes were mostly in the security measures. The security discourse intensified a lot also, which was significant not only for the internal civic mobilisation, but even more importantly, but even more importantly for the mobilisation of the attention of the partners and their increased commitment. I explain my argument in two steps: first, by using traditional – rationalists – questions to analyse security policy, and second, by discussing security perceptions and discourses and asking these questions: security "for whom", security "from what", and security "how".

Introduction

Events in Ukraine in 2014 with the annexation of Crimea and the war in Eastern Ukraine have without doubt created a sense of insecurity for Central and Eastern European countries. By annexing a part of the territory of a sovereign nation, and stirring up separatism in another part, Russia became the most important

threat and cause for worry in the region, and also the driving force behind a variety of security measures which were taken against it unilaterally, bilaterally, and multilaterally. It is not an exaggeration to say that no other states have felt and still feel more threatened and vulnerable than the three Baltic States - Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania[1].

The foreign policy of the Baltic States since they regained their independence in 1990–1991 evolved in the context of their past: the painful history of being occupied and forcibly included into the USSR. And the USSR in the minds of many was and still is inseparable from Russia - its past and its present. Putin's famous remarks about the collapse of the USSR as "the major geopolitical disaster" (Putin, 2005) of 20th century only strengthened the attitude of Russian policy makers still longing for past "greatness". Thus, the main implicit, and from time to time explicit, foreign policy goal of the Baltic States has been to assure their security which means mostly one thing: being further from Russia, living safely, as was believed, behind the backs of bigger partners in the frameworks of NATO and the EU.

Membership of these two organisations was achieved in 2004, however this has not erased Russia from the security agendas of the Baltic States, contrary to what was believed by some experts and decision makers advocating integrationist policy. As Eiki Berg and Piret Ehin explain, the idea was that the integration "would force Russia to abandon its post-imperial manners and treat the Baltics as 'normal' countries" (2009, p. 3)[2]. Words and actions of

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1   In this article I use Baltic States, or Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania as a shortcut to describe the actions and decisions by the policy makers and officials of the respective countries. This should not imply neither the personification of the countries nor that all people in these countries are of the same opinion.

2   For example, Berg and Ehin cite Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs stating that membership in NATO and the EU would "definitely

Russian policy makers still gave cause for worries and the bilateral relations of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with Russia continued to encounter variety of problems and provocations (Zagorski, 2015). The Bronze soldier events in Estonia in 2007, Lithuania's worries about energy dependence and price manipulations, or Latvia's dependence on Russian business in politics - these were just a few prominent examples of how Russia was part of the political and security agendas of the Baltic States (Jakniūnaitė, 2015; Astrov, 2009; Mužnieks, 2006).

There were differences in how intense the Russian threat was perceived: Lithuania most of the time has been the most active critic, while the position of the Estonian and Latvian governments varied a little bit more, the latter being the softest. In one of the reports reviewing relations between Russia and EU member states written in 2007, Lithuania together with Poland was called a "New Cold Warrior" with overtly hostile relationship with Russia while Latvia and Estonia were included into "Frosty Pragmatist" group which focuses "on business interests but are less afraid than others to speak out against Russian behaviour on human rights or other issues" (Leonard and Popescu, 2007, p. 2). Differences notwithstanding it is fair to state that Russia never left the security agendas of the Baltic States. However, till 2014 though constantly being an important, and dominant part of foreign and security thinking, Russia's threat was perceived more as a constant feature of these policies and constructed mostly in geopolitically deterministic way. That is Russia was a constant, fixture with which you had to work, and find the ways around, but it was never securitised absolutely on the state level, as an existentialist threat. This situation has changed in 2014, and the main reason was the situation Ukraine (more about the events see: Sakwa, 2016; Menon

contribute to strengthening co-operation with Russia while creating more stability in Estonian-Russian Relations" (2009, p. 4, statement was made on December 20, 2007).

and Rumer, 2015; Wilson, 2014) as hardly anyone questioned Russia's meddling into the military conflict and its obvious disinclination to contribute anyhow towards pacifying the situation.

Ample analysis and reports about the changed security environment in the region with the policy recommendations and evaluations have been already written, and I will not repeat the story (see for example, Clark et al., 2016; Pugsley and Wesslau, 2016; Lucas, 2015; Darczewska, 2014). Here I want to propose the analytical review on what and how to think about the security of the Baltic States from 2014 till 2016 by evaluating and reflecting the main changes in their security policy and perceptions. Focusing on change of course is not a straightforward task: there are different layers and dimensions of change, varying both in kind and in degree: from change as a new thing, change as addition or subtraction to change as transformation or reversion (Holsti, 2004, pp. 12–17). These three years demonstrated that the perceptions about security itself have not changed much while comparing with the previous three or five years. The changes were mostly in the security measures. The security discourse intensified a lot also, which was significant not only for the internal civic mobilisation, but even more importantly, but even more importantly for the mobilisation of the attention of the partners and their increased commitment. I explain my argument in two steps: first, by using traditional – rationalists – questions to analyse security policy, and second, by discussing security perceptions and discourses.

Changes in Policy?

To understand policy changes means, first, to answer what is the policy, and then to compare the situation before and after. Having some defining external or internal event which gets indicated as a marker for "before and after" makes it easier to talk about the possible change. The change becomes part of the security

discourse and allows identification of what is considered new, different, other ways of doing security policy.

On the other hand, at the end of twentieth century it became fashionable and even obligatory to define the security of a sovereign state as broadly as possible. The Baltic States were no exception. The National Security Strategy of Lithuania besides the vital interests (like sovereignty and territorial integrity) lists ten primary security interests of the country (starting from tEuro-Atlantic security and finishing with national and ethnic distinctiveness) (Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, 2012). The National Security Concept of the Republic of Latvia similarly enumerates threats and priorities starting with international security, radicalisation and societal unity, military threats and ending with protection of information space and economy (Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, 2015). The National Security Concept of Estonia spells out a multitude of threats in four domains (foreign policy, defence, internal security and societal cohesion) (Riigikogu, 2010).

The multiple official security issues not only make the prioritisation of security policies difficult, it also means that security definitions and descriptions hardly change in a substantial way. When the policy makers try to encompass all possibilities of what can go wrong with the country and in the country, there is a huge chance that they have already covered that one threat we endeavour to analyse. Very often then the analysis becomes a matter of catching the changes in nuances, emphasis, and prioritisation. But security policy involves not only the definitions of security, it also involves actions - policy measures taken, and the quality and effectiveness of these measures. So, next, I will review what kind of changes took place in the realm of security definitions and security measures for the Baltic States.

David Baldwin promoting "rational policy analysis by facilitating comparison of one type of security policy with another" (Baldwin, 1997, p. 6) proposed to analyse security as an analytical concept. This meant not to start discussing the advantages and disadvantages of one security policy over the over but to build analytical framework for a more systematic empirical analysis. What this meant, actually, was simply the set of questions which should be asked by anyone envisioning or evaluating any security policy. The advantage of such an endeavour is the structured thinking which starts from understanding how the problem is defined, then asks what the reasons are for their existence, what types of solutions are proposed, and how effective they are.

Any theoretical understanding starts from the definitions, and debates about definitions of security involve a variety of sophisticated theoretical discussions (Buzan et al., 1998; Waever, 1995; Booth, 1991; Walt, 1991). Simplifying somewhat, we might talk about three definitions of security: absolute, relative and discursive. When we talk about security as the presence or absence of threats we talk about it in absolute terms. Baldwin's definition of security as "a low probability of damage to acquired values" (Baldwin, 1997, p. 13) is the relative one. And Weaver's idea about security as "a speech act" is the discursive understanding of security which does not ask if we have reached some level of security, but is interested in the role debates about security in state's policy and their justifications (Waever, 1995).

It is worth mentioning that it is impossible to achieve the absolute state of security in social life, but the absolutist definition nevertheless is worth keeping in mind as the national security policies implicitly very often assume this to be the end goal - eradication of all threats. Therefore, the enumeration of security threats is usually the basis of talking security. The relative definition though focuses on policies, forcing one to answer two sets of questions: security for what ("values") and with what

measures ("lowering probabilities"). This division guides further discussion on the changes in the security policies of the Baltic States using these questions: security "for whom", security "from what" (including security "how").

Security for What?

The question "security for what" encompasses two questions: the first is about the referent object, the second is about the values. The Baltic States in this regard are typical nation states considering their referent objects to be the state, its people, and its institutions. The typical formulation is: "[t]he goal of the Estonian security policy is to safeguard Estonia's independence and sovereignty, territorial integrity, constitutional order and public safety" (Riigikogu, 2010, p. 4). Usually, when security in general becomes the centre of the political life, questions about the referent object are not raised. They become more important when security policy is competing with other areas of state policy and the choice of the referent object becomes more controversial (e.g. making some group inside the state more safe).

It is worth mentioning that before 2014 we could see more divergence between public and elite perceptions about security and its referent object. The public cared much less about military, territorial aspects of security and considered their own wellbeing a matter of security as well. So, one of the important transformations throughout 2014-2016 is a convergence between public and elite attitudes towards the idea about which and whose security is a priority: without doubt it was territorial defence. It seems, though the tendency is far from obvious, that currently, as the situation in Ukraine gets more enduring and stable, the divergence in question whose security should be a priority started to reappear again (e.g. parliamentary elections in Lithuania in the autumn of 2016 demonstrated the importance of social and economic security for the majority of electorate).

The value aspect of discussing security definitions is less straightforward and allows a deeper look into state "thinking"[3]. Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Linas Linkevičius stated that "[t]he confidence with which Russia is acting now comes partly from our inability to stand by our values and principles" (Linkevičius, 2014). Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs Edgars Rinkēvičs called the annexation of the Crimea, "the breach of the international order and principles as challenges to Latvia, Europe and the world" (quoted in Bruge, 2016, p. 72). The President of the Republic of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaite also explained: "[We, Baltic States] knew that freedom is not a given, as we took responsibility for our nations and walked resolutely along the European road. Today, as Europe faces new challenges, it is especially important not to forget the values which encouraged [us] to come together forming the Baltic Way. [...] Only together, looking for what unites us rather than divides, can we maintain peace in our continent" (President of the Republic of Lithuania, 2014). This selection of quotation is a representative sample of the rhetoric used to explain the situation.

As the referent point and context was the situation in Ukraine and Russia's action there, the security situation had to be justified in broader terms than a direct threat to territorial integrity or safety to the nation's own citizens. Thus, international order, peace and security were the focus, combined with the solidarity rhetoric. In this sense, it was "pure" value discourse: it was about securing "our way of life" and "our freedoms". Another part of this rhetoric worth mentioning is emphasis on "we" which did not mean only "we Estonians", "we Latvians", or "we Lithuanians", it usually meant a much broader community: either "we Europeans",

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3   Referent objects, of course, are also value statements, the difference here is more heuristic. In the first case, it is more direct answer to "what", and the values dimensions explains "why", or what the substance of the object entails.

or "we Westerners". And this was an effort to mobilise not only the national communities, but also their partners. That is, the appeal to solidarity was not only to support Ukrainians, these appeals were also towards other countries which still needed to be persuaded or reminded (see, e.g., Jakniūnaitė, 2017).

Thus, though Baldwin using his rational approach treats the question about values mostly as a necessary routine and straightforward step towards the calculated policy measures, in this case, the value rhetoric actually does much more. It is used as a mobilisation and persuasion device by employing the identity categories and connecting all further actions about "us" and "them" with the effort to limit vocabulary centred on interests which is more adjustable to the lenient policy measures than the rigid identity distinctions. The reasoning becomes more obvious analysing the next question – security from what?

Security from What: Sources and Threats

The question of "security from what" again encompasses two further questions: one is about the source, the second is about the threats. As we are talking about the security policy and perceptions in the context of the Ukrainian events during the first three years of the crisis, the source of insecurity is easy to identify: we are talking about Russia as the greatest security issue from which the majority of significant security threats arise or have a close connection to.

As mentioned in the introduction, Russia never left the security thinking of the Baltic States. For example as Edward Lucas notices, already from the beginning "Russian withdrawal of the occupation forces from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania after the restoration of independence in 1991 was marked by economic pressure, political intrigue, provocations, the use of organised crime, phony terrorist outrages, propaganda and stay-behind

operations" (Lucas, 2015, p. 6). Russia was always on the agenda, just the degree of accommodativeness varied a little bit. Currently, there is hardly any difference among the Baltic States in their assessments of Russia, and using the words of the Estonian Information Board they can be summed up: "[t]he policies adopted by the current Russian government will remain the greatest factor threatening the military security of the Baltic Sea region in the near future" (Estonian Information Board, 2016, p. 9), or in the words of President of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaite,"Threats to NATO's security are most clearly seen in the Baltic states. Russia continues to demonstrate its military power and unpredictable behavior in the Alliance's neighborhood" (President of the Republic of Lithuania, 2016).

Latvia was the most "pragmatic" in their relations with Russia until 2014. It had the most accommodating tone, and according to Anna Beitane was trying to build "relations on a pragmatic and rational basis without emphasising the contested historical discourses and narratives" (Beitane, 2015, p. 59). However, with the escalation of the Ukrainian crisis, Latvian policy makers also have been very outspoken. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia Edgars Rinkevičs' rhetoric was "clear and straightforward showing undivided solidarity to Ukraine" (Bruge, 2016, p. 71), President Andris Berzinš in one of his speeches named Russia as "a threat to global peace and security", and the new President of Latvia Raimonds Vējonis described the country as "an aggressor and accused it of obstruction of justice" (both quotes from Bruge, 2016, p. 72). It is not customary in national security assessments to have one clear source for the majority of threats, and one should not get the impression that the Baltic States put other security sources and threats totally aside (e.g. the European refugee crises evoked other fears – they will be discussed a little bit later), but it is not an exaggeration to say that everything else for a long time was

overshadowed by the threats from Russia, and without doubt this was a distinguished feature of Baltic security in 2014-2016.

Naming the security threats is the main task of the security policy of the state. One of the main goals of the security strategies and concepts of the states is to identify the threats, to rank them and evaluate them. Richard Ulman defines a threat to national security as "an action or sequence of events that threatens drastically and over a relatively brief span of time to degrade the quality of life for the inhabitants of a state, or threatens significantly to narrow the range of policy choices available to the government of a state or to private, nongovernmental entities (persons, groups, corporations) within the state" (Ulman, 1983). The threat identification logic requires that we need to name the threat, to classify it, and to estimate its intensity. The classification of threats is usually done using the sectoral approach. Sectors are defined as "distinctive patterns of interaction" (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 8), they differ in the way they are functioning, so it makes sense to differentiate threats according to the sectors as well. Barry Buzan's contribution to sectoral analysis is the most commonly used: he talked about military, political, economic, societal, and ecological sectors of security (Buzan, 1991). In order to demonstrate the changes that took place I will review three types of threats - military, informational and societal[4]. Buzan does not talk about information security, but other researchers have expanded his typology to include the communication/information sector as it becomes a significant part of that state's security policy as well (e.g., see Janeliūnas, 2007). The analysis of these three sectors will also demonstrate what changes did and did not take place.

Military Threats

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4   As the goal of this article is not to cover all security policy of Baltic States, but to highlight those features which took prominence in 2014-2016 and were the most salient in the context of Ukraine crisis.

Military threats from Russia coming into the fore of the security agendas of the Baltic States is the greatest change. Through taking control of Crimea, instigating unrest in Eastern Ukraine and facilitating the creation of quasi states, though never getting openly involved in direct actions, Russia expanded the limits of imagined possibilities. The idea that Russia might somehow invade one of the Baltic States became an accepted and normal part of discussions – a thought which was very rarely discussed seriously before 2014. Still, security experts do not believe such an event is highly probable: "although unlikely", writes the Estonian Information Board, but also adds: "the use of military power against the Baltic States cannot be entirely ruled out since conflicts that occur farther away may spill over into the Baltics" (Estonian Information Board, 2016, p. 9). This is a huge systemic change in political thinking: it appeared that in 21st century Europe, forcible territorial changes are possible and they can happen almost without resistance by the powerful and influential European states. This is also the reason why the Baltic States approach the military threats from two sides: highlighting Russian actions and keeping a close eye on the moods and decisions of their partners.

Already the Georgian–Russian conflict in 2008 was a worrying signal of the extent of Russian actions. It definitely made the life of Georgia much more difficult and the prospects of territorial unification very distant. But the war also "demonstrated inadequate troop training, communications systems, weapons, and other shortcomings of the Russian military" (Lucas, 2015, p. 6). Since 2014 the situation is qualitatively different. There are four big areas in the military sector which have increased the intensification of this threat (apart from the Russian actions in Ukraine mentioned above).

First, Russia's military reform which had been announced for many years finally began to show it effects, its comprehensive modernisation has intensified, and defence spending had increased.

It started hugely investing in new anti-access/area denial capabilities, new surveillance and reconnaissance systems, advanced missiles, and the Iskander tactical ballistic missiles (Smith and Hendrix, 2016, p. 7). In the context of the constant underfunding of defence in Europe these developments urge at least to keep a watchful eye on Russia, and at most – prepare to counterbalance.

Second, several extensive and elaborate military exercises were organised in the region, close to the borders of Baltic States. Russia held two large military exercises simulating the occupation of the Baltic States in 2009 (Zapad–09 and Ladoga) and also in 2013. In 2009 exercises envisaged the deployment and use of nuclear weapons, and one of the targets was Warsaw (Lucas, 2015, p. 9). The 2013 exercises demonstrated the ability to move large numbers of troops and equipment over long distances.

Third, there were various provocations which involved violations of sovereign territory. Russian war planes regularly intrude into or come close to the airspace of the Baltic States, maritime borders violations also take place pretty often. An important provocation happened on the Estonian land border, when in September of 2014 an Estonian security officer was seized on the Estonian side of the border while doing an investigation (two days after President Obama visited Tallinn, where he talked about US security guarantees).

Fourth, there is a problem of Kaliningrad – its ongoing militarisation (it has the Baltic fleet, a large military garrison, air defence system, and recently– Iskander ballistic missiles (Reuters, 2016)) and the fact that Russian transit goes through Lithuanian territory. Kaliningrad depends on gas, electricity and rail across Lithuania - on the one hand, the region itself is vulnerable against various disruptions of services, on the other hand, because of the

transit the territory of Lithuania becomes vulnerable as well and provides possibilities for a variety of provocations.

Taken separately all these threats are not very new: military transit through Kaliningrad is a vulnerability since the agreement was reached in 1995, violations of airspace are so customary that they even do not get reported in the media (on one more visible incident, see (Jurgelevičiūtė, 2006a)), and now we see the effects of Russian military modernisation rather than its inception. Thus, what makes the Russian military threat truly actual is the changed context. And this changed context did not need to persuade the Baltic States more, though they of course became more categorical and more internally united. The changed context served a much bigger goal: to make the commitment of their partners towards the security of Baltic States much stronger and more durable.

So, it was not surprising that as much attention was paid towards the attitudes and actions of the partners in the EU and NATO. As Estonian Foreign Minister at that time Marina Kaljurand explained, "Europe forgave Russia for the war in Georgia in less than a year. It is our duty to see to it that the same didn't happen with the occupation of Crimea and fighting in Eastern Ukraine. Behaviour like this mustn't become usual practice" (BNS, 2016). Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaite as usual was categorical and at some point talked about the "naiveté" and "unwillingness to take the threat seriously" (CNN Video, 2015) of the West/Europe. Thus, in the context of security policy the questions were being raised: Would NATO Article 5 be activated in case of an attack on Baltic States? Would it be activated if something similar to that in Ukraine happened? How quickly would NATO forces reach the countries? Would the decision by NATO be collective or would it be up to individual states to decide what to do? These questions indicated not just mistrust towards partners, but also uncertainty about the decision process in NATO and the level of readiness in the organisation.

During these two years of increased tension between the West and Russia, worries that the partners would become lenient towards Russia were never realised. Still, the need to observe the partners did not vanish and is part of the (military) security agenda. In 2009, Ehin and Berg wrote that "the Baltic States present themselves as more Western than the West, reproaching the West for its failure to understand the 'true' nature of Russia" (2009, p. p.12). In 2016 we could state the same: the Baltic States still perceive themselves as the best and acute decoders of Russia's intentions and because of that, the role of watchdog is taken very seriously. Sometimes, even too seriously, as for example, Grybauskaite did when she called Russia "a terrorist state" (BNS, 2015). Who if not us, the thinking goes. Thus, there is also a constant worry, as indicated in the quotation by Kaljurand above, that European partners would revert to normal relations with Russia.

The measures against these main threats were taken also in two directions. The first one was to demonstrate the willingness by the Baltic States themselves to take responsibility for military defence of their countries, partly also not to receive criticism for not doing enough, as was the case in the past. For example, because of the economic crisis, defence budget cuts of between 21% and 36% were made in 2012. For example, in 2014, defence spending of Latvia reached 0.94% of its GDP, Lithuania had just 0.88%, and only Estonia demonstrated a good example with 1.94% of its GDP for defence. In 2016 though still only Estonia fulfils the requirement of spending a minimum of 2% of GDP on defence (for 2016, the estimate was 2.16%), but the other two countries visibly increased their spending: Lithuania dedicates 1.49 % of GDP and Latvia 1.45 % of GDP (NATO, 2016a, p. 5). So, it was necessary to prove that the Baltic States are prepared to take obligations. Both countries – Latvia and Lithuania – declared that by 2020 they will gradually reach the required amount of defence spending. All three Baltic Defence ministers announced the

participation of the Baltic Battalion in NATO's Response Force in 2016, and the development of cooperation in planning and command operations (Beitane, 2015, p. 62), and Lithuania brought back conscription service.

A variety of measures inside allowed for pressuring and lobbying NATO to ensure its more visible presence in the region. And the last two NATO summits – in Wales in 2014, and in Warsaw in 2016 – made important steps towards assuring the Baltic States about their security. In Wales NATO agreed to a number of short-term measures to bolster the alliance's conventional deterrent (called the Readiness Action Plan), which for example included doubling the size of the NATO Response Force and holding them at a much higher state of readiness (NATO, 2014). In Warsaw NATO presence in the eastern part of the Alliance was declared and each country was promised to receive a battalion of 1000 soldiers on a rotating basis (NATO Force Integration Units), while cyberspace was recognised as a new operational domain (NATO, 2016b). A pledge for permanence of the NATO basis was not achieved. Despite suspending all the NATO-Russia Council activities, the organisation still tries not to be accused of breaking any prior agreements. On the other hand, it also seems that the Baltic States try not to overplay their cards and accept the term "on a rotational basis" as a question of semantics than of the sign of avoiding the commitment. Thus, one might conclude that the Baltic States have reached their goals against military threats and got the necessary commitments.

During these three years the military dimension of security was emphasised to the extent that it almost overshadowed all other aspects of security (the militarised concept of security was also noticed by Mickus, 2016). Strictly militarised security rhetoric also created the context for reformulating the threats in other sectors in more militarised terms. This was especially noticeable in the discussions about information security and societal cohesion.

Information and Society

For the analysis and goal-setting of security policy, military threats are the easiest: they are the most tangible, often measurable, and therefore (more or less) straightforwardly explainable. The biggest challenge with them is that the states can hardly use them without escalating tensions and getting into the downward spiral of insecurity. Therefore, we get to turn to more ambiguous "soft" threats which are still threats but are less clearly defined and subsequently more difficult to resist. Besides, military threats are "easy" as they usually come from the outside – and the external enemy is the best in terms of mobilisation and explanatory heuristics. Soft threats though are more complex and interact with the internal, domestic processes, and are multi-causal. Thus, their formulation and apportioning of guilt is more controversial. The cases of information security and societal security manifest these challenges.

The fight against threats in the information space of the Baltic States became an important security topic. Sometimes, and more frankly, the strategy is defined as the fight against Russian propaganda. Again, resisting the unfavourable portrayal of the Baltic States inside and outside of Russia, and also competing with Russian narratives of the past and present events were on the security agenda of all three countries already. Such tropes as calling the Baltics "fascists", denying their occupation in 1940, criticising the treatment of national minorities, labelling them "rusophobic", single-issue states, and the "puppets" of the West or the United States have been prevalent in Russian media with differing intensity already for many years (e.g., Jurgelevičiūtė, 2006b; Laurinavičius, 2006).

During the last few years, and especially since 2014, the informational activity of Russia intensified and the domains where it is enacted multiplied: more finances were directed towards

popularising Russia Today, supporting pro-Russian NGOs abroad (connections with Russkyi Mir Foundation, the Gorchakov Foundation, Rossotrudnichestvo and the Historical Memory Foundation - the Russian organisations dedicated to working with Russian "compatriots"), paying PR firms for promoting the Russian point of view, and making the Russian point of view visible on social media (and the famous "Russian trolls") (Kojala and Žukauskas, 2015; Veebel, 2015; Wake, 2015). The hostile rhetoric might not have changed substantially, but rather the volume and intensity have intensified. And also the changed context (Ukraine, again) made the hearing more acute.

Apart from the vast rhetoric about information security some concrete and sometimes controversial measures have been taken. For example, in 2014 Latvia and Lithuania temporarily suspended some Russian television channels broadcasted to local viewers. Broadcasting in Russian language was also increased: for example, in Estonia, in 2015 the local public broadcasting opened a new, Russian-language TV-channel called ETV+, Russian TV broadcasting became more supported in Latvia as well. Latvia got support from NATO countries to establish the NATO Centre of Excellence on Strategic Communication. On the EU level, a variety of measures have been supported as well (e.g. https://euvsdisinfo.eu/ and www.stopfake.org).

In light of these activities counterbalancing Russian activities became a part of the security agenda. The task is multiple as there are multiple audiences that have to be persuaded: domestic, Russian, and international. Domestically worries about information security are inseparable from the societal cohesion and trust of Baltic States policy makers in their citizens. Concentrating on the information channels in Russian language is considered essential because of the Russian speaking people in the Baltic States. Keeping in mind that "protecting the rights of Russians" or "Russian speakers" was the dominant rhetoric while occupying

Crimea, the Russian comments about the situation of Russian speakers in the Baltic States was also seen almost like an act of aggression. On the other hand, it also demonstrated how insecure all three Baltic States are about their own population. Not surprisingly, the biggest mistrust was directed at Russian speakers in Latvia and Estonia. Estonia has the city of Narva and in Latvia there is Daugavpils, which both have Russian speaking majorities. Though capital cities, Tallinn and Riga are also considered to be vulnerable in this regard. Although there are little data supporting the idea that Russian speakers would somehow be supportive of Russian intervention in any of the Baltic States (there is some data that they are more pro-Russian than the general population, e.g. (Saldžiūnas, 2016)), they are still considered "the weakest link". But keeping in mind the level of economic development and other advantages of living in an EU country and also the political socialisation process which took place during the last twenty years, the Ukraine scenario where a substantial part of the local population in its East supported separatism, seems very unlikely (for similar arguments see, e.g., Kasekamp, 2015).

Approaching information and societal security from a strictly rationalistic point of view, the problems might seem to be of a technical nature: how to create the system of counter-propaganda activities, how to frame messages and to create more interesting narratives, how to close channels of unwanted information legally, how to neutralise vulnerabilities with ethnic minorities by persuading them etc. However, such measures leave their discursive and social effects aside. In the tradition of the securitisation school (Buzan et al., 1998), we could say that it matters who is defined as unreliable, not loyal, and therefore dangerous. Identifying one group as a "vulnerability" in the context of militarised (i.e. existential) security discourse makes that group dangerous by definition, therefore in some sense alien to the state and its goals. In the same vein, the fight against the

adversary's propaganda always borders on censorship, discussions about which always raise the question how much is enough. The usual explanation is the argument about the exceptional situation, like the quotation of the "undeclared war" earlier, which justify some not so ordinary measures. Thus, the biggest change which was taken in the domains of information and security was the measures: apart from the rhetoric, more actions were taken, some with more opportunities (like alternative sources of information and educational activities), and some creating restrictions and estrangement.

Living with the Danger: Concluding Remarks

The still developing situation in Ukraine was a watershed moment in European security and mobilised all the EU members states to take action in the form of sanctions, and some even to take more drastic and resolute measures in order to demonstrate to Russia – the main instigator of the anxiety and insecurity situation – the discontent, irritation and even preparedness to resist. In the article I argued that for the Baltic States, the changes in security policy were a matter of degree and the emphasis and bulk of efforts were directed towards partners: convincing them about the realness of the threats and the need to take some measures. One of the main consequences of the changed security perception for the Baltic States was the militarisaton of security policy and its discourse. On one hand, military security came into the fore, on the other hand, other sectors of security began to be treated through the military lens as well.

Concluding, I would like to make three final points about Baltic States security. One of the biggest consequences of the military security discourse is the famous security dilemma which can be restated in two questions: when is there enough security and how to persuade the opponent/adversary that the measures taken are defensive, not offensive. "In a world in which scarce resources

must be allocated among competing objectives, none of which is completely attainable, one cannot escape from the question 'How much is enough?' and one should not try" (Baldwin, 1997, p. 15) – this question, however, was rarely raised. The quarter of a century since gaining independence demonstrated that structural conditions in the region are the limiting factor to gain absolute security, nor should it be the goal. However, the question about the level of uncertainty tolerance still seems to be under-discussed and this creates internal societal tensions which no external mobilisation politics would be able to untangle.

Russia's actions illustrate the second dimension of security dilemma: in response to NATO's military exercises in the region, the country increased its military activities in the Baltic Sea area even more. Besides, NATO activity in the Baltic region provides Russia with the plenty of opportunities to say that NATO is preparing for offence, or supports the Russian perception that it is perceived as an enemy and encircled by antagonistic states. So, now the situation in the Baltic Sea becomes the classical security dilemma situation with the possibility of a self-fulfilling prophesy of conflict escalation. This description of the situation does not imply the conclusion that Baltic States and NATO should have done nothing. Nevertheless, the structural consequences of the security dilemma in this region should be kept in mind as the military rhetoric and actions contribute to this situation as well.

Second, the issue of solidarity and responsibility for European values was emphasised by all Baltic leaders on many occasions. It is a value-laden, usually passionate and principled position which if not taken consistently can turn against those who speak in these terms. The refugee crisis which hit Europe in 2015 – a year after the Ukraine crisis intensified – was an important test for the Baltic States. The discussions about the response created friction both among the EU member states and inside the states as well. In all three states there was huge enough resistance, from the policy

makers as well as from the populations against the obligatory quotas to refugees and it was clear that in this case it was an effort to downplay the solidarity discourse.

Finally, at the end of 2016 the situation in Ukraine has stabilised (though it is not solved or even calmed), Russia's attention has turned towards Syria, and international attention is on Brexit and the incoming Trump presidency. However, the implication of security policy of the last three years will stay with the Baltic States for some time to come. Russia, as the dominant insecurity source will not go away, and there will be a need to find "softer" solutions to security challenges and the ability to find balance and compromise with the security needs of partners.

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ESTONIAN PERCEPTIONS OF SECURITY: NOT ONLY ABOUT RUSSIA AND THE REFUGEES

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ABSTRACT. The current study focuses on the Estonian perceptions of security and on the defence situation both globally and locally. The dynamic results of the public opinion surveys on security risks conducted in Estonia over the last 10 years (2006-2016) will be presented. In addition, to understand whether some of the security risks could be over- or underestimated in Estonia, these results will be compared with the views expressed recently by the World Economic Forum, particularly the Global Risks Report 2016. Also, the arguments why some topics have played or are currently playing key role in the Estonian security perception will be presented and discussed.

Introduction

Several recent crises such as Brexit, the victory of Donald Trump in US presidential elections, the European refugee crisis, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and the global financial crisis illustrate unambiguously what could happen when "black swans" or "black elephants" suddenly appear. The term "black swan" was taken to the spotlight of the International relation´s debates by Taleb Nassim (Nassim 2007), referring to unpredictable events with enormous consequences about which we "don't know that we don't know". In most cases we are willing to explain and predict these developments (the "black swans") only after their occurrence

(Aven 2013). Following this very logic, the term "black elephant" was introduced by an environmentalist and investor Adam Sweidan and Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Thomas L. Friedman in the 2010s (Friedman 2014), describing developments and problems with enormous consequences that are clearly visible but still ignored by everyone (the "black elephant"). They refer to phenomena like global warming, deforestation, massive freshwater pollution and other developments of global scale to illustrate the environmental "black elephant blindness", and stress the need to "prepare oneself" as much as possible and to focus on the economic and national security value of ecosystems (Daase and Kessler 2007). Especially for small states located in civilization fault lines (Huntington 1993) consequences of black swans or black elephants can be complicated to cope with.

Keeping the same logic in mind, also recent political and economic developments in Europe and threats caused by Russian imperial ambitions could conditionally be classified as either "black swans" or "black elephants". The signs of impending crises and conflicts were clear, even if only partially revealed. For instance, for quite some years already public support for EU membership in the UK has been one of the lowest among EU countries (see, e.g. Standard Eurobarometer 83/2015; 99), the migratory pressure on the EU as a whole has steadily increased already from 2013 onwards (Eurostat 2016; Asylum Statistics); Russia's attempts in restoring its authority over the former Soviet territories have now lasted for almost 10 years, and the Greek debt level was high already from the 1990s onwards. In practice, these signs were in many respects ignored or not treated deservedly. Eventually, all the "unpredictable" events with enormous consequences – Brexit, the European refugee crisis, violation of the territorial integrity of a sovereign state in Europe, and the recent Great Recession – materialised and caused serious turbulences in Europe and beyond. In this light, it is of high importance to understand what are the

"known knowns" and "known unknowns", but also what could be "unknown unknowns" and "what we don't want to know" among the things and events that could cause serious turbulences. As far as security is concerned, on the one hand, this would contribute to the increase of its perception in a society. On the other hand, it would also help to make rational choices in addressing the actual defence situation and countering potential security threats (Rasmussen 2004). Additionally, security and threat perceptions both globally and in Estonia, have been and will be impacted by the constructivist aspect. The meaning of the same threat markers is differently understood by social groups and the meaning of markers may change during communication (Albert and Buzan 2011).

The current study focuses on the Estonian perceptions of security and the defence situation both globally and locally. The dynamic results of the public opinion surveys on security risks conducted in Estonia over the last 10 years will be presented. In addition, to understand whether some of the security risks could be over- or underestimated in Estonia, these results will be compared with the views expressed recently by the World Economic Forum, particularly, the Global Risks Report 2016. Also, the arguments why some topics have played or are currently playing a key role in the Estonian security perception will be presented and discussed. As the authors see it, the comparison and the further analysis contributes to the better understanding of whether there are any "black swans" or "black elephants" that people in Estonia do not realize currently, but which could cause serious turbulences also in Estonia if the "unlikely" risks should materialize in the future. The article uses a descriptive analytical approach and comparative method for analysis and conclusions.

Mapping the global risks: A brief overview of the Global Risks Report 2016

To have a reference point to evaluate Estonian risk perception, the current study will first map and rank the risks evaluated in the Global Risks Report published by the World Economic Forum from 2006 to 2016 on aims to define global risks and trends, analyse interconnections between them and search for solutions (Global Risk Report 2016). The reports are based on the Global Risks Perception Surveys, conducted among the experts and decision-makers from business, academia, civil society and the public sector around the world. The most recent report was published in 2016, being based on the survey that was conducted among 750 experts and policy-makers in 2015 and next to the current threats provides valuable insights into the global security outlook in the next 20 years' perspective.

The 2016 Report defines 29 global risks and 13 global trends. Citing the report, "global risk" is defined as an uncertain event or condition that, if it occurs, can cause significant negative impact for several countries or industries within the next 10 years" (The Global Risks Report 2016, 11), The risks are divided into five categories: geopolitical risks (P), economic risks (Ec), societal risks (S), technological risks (T) and environmental risks (En). All these risks are analysed in a dynamic way, assessing in particular their likelihood and impact, their evolvement over the years, regional breakdown of the perceived likelihood of risks, interconnections among risks, and the level of concerns in the short and long term (Global Risk Report 2016, Part 1). A trend of risks is defined as a long-term pattern that is currently taking place and that could contribute to amplifying global risks and/or altering the relationship between them. Unlike risks, trends are occurring with certainty and can have both positive and negative consequences. Trends can alter how risks evolve and interrelate, and they inform efforts at risk mitigation" (The Global Risks Report 2016, 11). In

addition, long-term security risks are estimated and three alternative scenarios of the international security landscape to 2030 such as "walled cities", "strong regions", and "war and peace" are suggested (Global Risk Report 2016, Part 2). In the report, global risks are rated in two categories: first, how likely is their occurrence, and second, how large would their impact be. Moreover, the respondents were asked to consider global risks over a 10-year horizon, as well as to nominate the risks of highest concern over 18 months. The risks are also differentiated according to the regions.

Based on the report, the following global risks with the highest likelihood for 2016 were outlined:

1. Large-scale involuntary migration induced by conflict, disasters, environmental or economic reasons;

2. Major property, infrastructure and environmental damage as well as human loss caused by extreme weather events;

3. Potential failure of the governments and businesses to enforce or enact effective measures to mitigate climate change, protect populations and help businesses impacted by climate change to adapt;

4. Bilateral or multilateral disputes between states which escalate into economic (e.g. trade or currency wars, resource nationalization), military, cyber, societal or other conflicts;

5. Major property, infrastructure and environmental damage as well as human loss caused by geophysical disasters such as earthquakes, volcanic activity, landslides, tsunamis or geo-magnetic storms.

Overall, three out of the Top-5 risks rated most likely constitute global environmental risks. At the same time, the risk rated as the

most likely was of societal background – large-scale involuntary migration – together with serious geopolitical risk of interstate conflicts with regional consequences which ranked as fourth. Two of the risks ranked most likely – large-scale involuntary migration and failure of climate-change mitigation and adaption – belong also to the risks with the largest global impact. However, in the short-term perspective over the next 18 months, societal (such as large-scale involuntary migration), geopolitical (e.g. state collapse of geopolitical importance; interstate conflicts with regional consequences; and inability to govern a nation of geopolitical importance due to weak rule of law, corruption or political deadlock) and economic risks (e.g. a sustained high level of structural unemployment or underutilization of the productive capacity of the employed population) are the main concerns of the survey respondents. What is more, large-scale terrorist attacks ranged slightly above the average level both in terms of likelihood and impact (Global Risk Report 2016).

Rank	Top 5 risks in terms of likelihood	Top 5 risks in terms of impact	Top 5 of risks of concern for the next 18 months	Top 5 of risks of concern for the next 10 years
1st	Large-scale involuntary migration (S)	Failure of climate-change adaption (En)	Large-scale involuntary migration (S)	Water crisis (S)
2nd	Extreme weather events (En)	Weapons of mass destruction (P)	State collapse or crisis (P)	Failure of climate-change adaption (En)
3rd	Failure of climate-change adaption (En)	Water crisis (S)	Interstate conflict with regional consequences (P)	Extreme weather events (En)
4th	Interstate conflict with regional effects (P)	Large-scale involuntary migration (S)	High structural unemployment (Ec)	Food crises (S)
5th	Major natural catastrophes (En)	Severe energy price shocks (Ec)	Failure of national governance (failure of rule of law, corruption, etc)(P)	Profound social instability (S)

Table 1: The results of the Global Risks Report 2016

Source: The Global Risks Report 2016, Figure 1-4, Tables A-B, pp. 11, 13, 69–70.

At the regional level, economic risks – excessive debt burden which could generate sovereign debt crises and liquidity crises, high level of structural unemployment, asset bubbles in major economies, and severe energy price shocks – were mentioned by the respondents from Europe, and fiscal crises and unemployment together with the risks of unmanageable inflation and interstate conflicts were mentioned by the respondents from Russia. Estonia was mentioned once in the report in connection with cyberattacks that were perceived as the risk of highest concern in Estonia. The same applies to Germany, Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Singapore, Switzerland, and the United States.

To summarise, as the authors see it, particular attention should be paid to the risks that are ranked most likely to materialize over the next 10 years and that could simultaneously have massive global impact. Thus, the direct focus should be on various societal, geopolitical and economic risks that need to be addressed as rapidly as possible. However, in the long-term perspective the environmental risks and broader societal risks (including, e.g. water and food crises) should not be underestimated.

What concerns the Estonians most? The results of the public opinion surveys on security and defence issues in Estonia in 2006–2016

Public opinion surveys on security and defence issues have been conducted in Estonia over the last 15 years, from 2001 onwards. The surveys have been ordered by the Estonian Ministry of Defence and in the course of time conducted by four different social and market research companies (Estonian Ministry of Defence 2016a and Estonian Ministry of Defence 2016b). The aspects of security were included to the survey from 2006 on and are comparable for two periods, from 2006 to 2016 and from 2014 to 2016. Among various topics, the surveys from 2006 to 2016 focus on the likelihood of different threats impending Estonia in

the future. In addition, the last surveys from 2014 to 2016 also assess the effects of various factors on peace and security in general, as the Estonians see them. To introduce briefly the background of the surveys, in various periods the survey sample has varied from 1,000 to 1,250 persons. In recent public opinion polls (from 2014 to 2016), the survey method has been personal interview, in previous years, face-to-face interviews in combination with paper questionnaires were used. As additional sources for the current study, two separate Eurobarometer surveys also concerning possible threats and options for solutions were analysed (Eurobarometer 2014 and Eurobarometer 2015).

In the eyes of the Estonians, the key factors affecting peace and security around the world in 2016 are the activities of the Islamic State and the military conflict in Syria, immigration of refugees to Europe and activities of terrorist networks (respectively, 67%, 63% and 62% of the respondents agreed that the factor has "certainly" an effect on peace and security) (see, Figure 1). In this sense, somewhat differently from the overall results of the Global Risks Report, Estonians are extremely concerned about the activities of terrorist networks and terrorist attacks. This concern is partially also reflected in the general attitude of Estonians towards the massive influx of refugees in the EU countries – although the local political elite claims the opposite, among the public the recent terrorist attacks in Brussels, Paris and Nice tend still to be associated with the European refugee crisis (Veebel and Markus 2015). Accordingly, the share of respondents who are concerned about the activities of the Islamic State and terrorist networks has significantly increased in 2016 compared to the previous years, 2014 and 2015. This could be partially explained by the fact that two terrorist attacks from 2016 in Nice and in Brussels directly affected Estonians, as two Estonians were killed and several injured in terrorist attack in Nice in July 2016.

Figure 1: Variables impacting security in 2014–2016, based on the Estonian public opinion polls in 2014–2016 (% of respondents pointing that the factor has an effect on security).
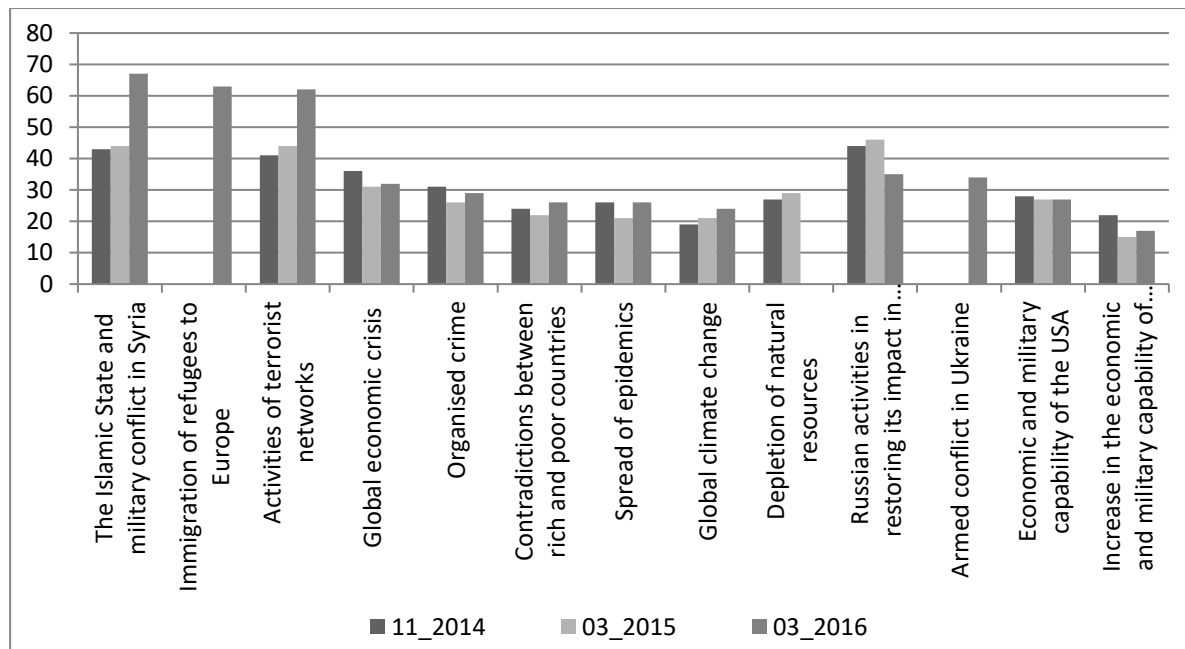
Source: Estonian Ministry of Defence 2016a and Estonian Ministry of Defence 2016b

The recent Russian activities in restoring its authority over former Soviet territories are also assessed as a threat to peace and security by the Estonians (35% of the respondents agreed that this factor has "certainly" had an effect on peace and security), however, to a lesser extent and quite surprisingly this factor has declined in importance in 2016, despite Russia´s constant pressure on NATO and, indeed, on Estonia within it. Intriguingly, even if predictably, this is also one out of two categories for which the assessments of the local Estonian-speaking and Russia-speaking communities differ drastically (see, Figure 2). In the last three years, on average 58% of the Estonian-speaking respondents see Russian activities in restoring its authority as a threat, but only 6% of the foreign-speakers (i.e. Russian community) agree to that. Thus, not really surprisingly, the same phenomenon of divergence in opinions occurs in the opinion of the people about the effect of economic and military capability of the USA on peace and security around the world. The difference here is once again fundamental – whereas the Estonian-speaking community sees the USA as a reliable ally and a reliable guarantee to peace and security in the region in the framework of NATO partnership, the foreign-speakers (mostly Russian) see the increase in the role of the USA as a potential threat (Estonian Ministry of Defence 2016a and Estonian Ministry of Defence 2016b).

Figure 2: Responses to the question "Dangers to peace and security in the world" 2014–2016:
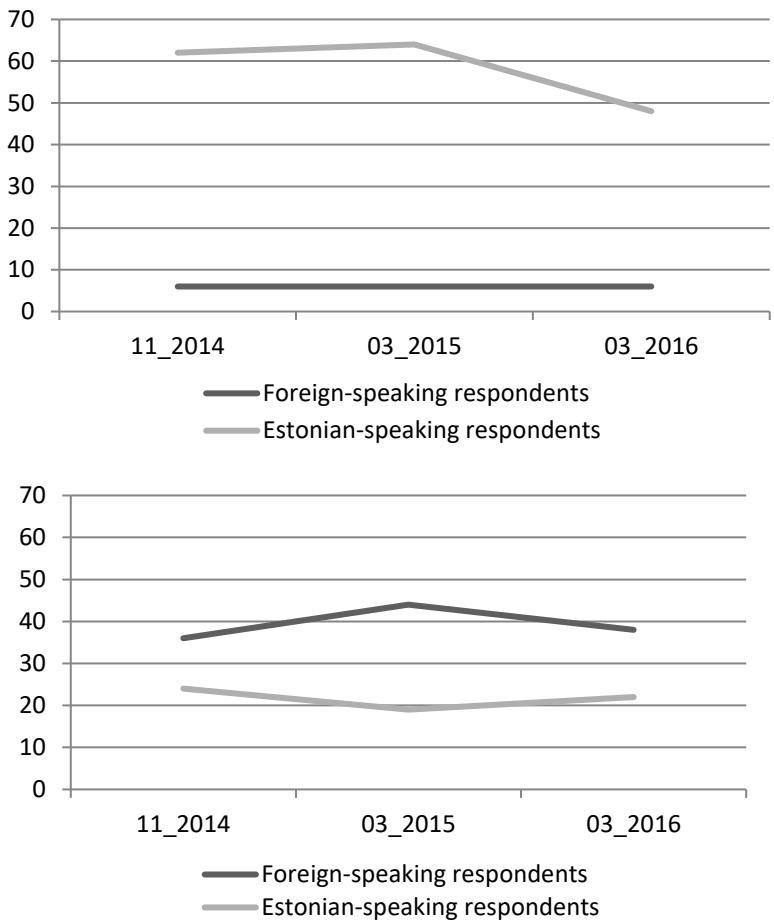
(a)   Russia´s attempts to restore its impact in areas that belonged to the Russian empire   (b) Economic and military capability of the USA

Source: Estonian Ministry of Defence 2016a and Estonian Ministry of Defence 2016b

This conclusion is also confirmed by the differences in opinion regarding NATO membership (Figure 3(a)). In the last two surveys covering years 2014–2016, people were asked about the important factors that would ensure maximum security to Estonia and whereas approximately 2/3 of the Estonian-speaking respondents named NATO membership, only 24–30% of the foreign-speaking respondents agreed to that. At the same time, a large majority of the foreign-speakers strongly supported cooperation and good contacts with Russia (about 57–67% of foreign-speaking respondents). Merely 13–17% of the Estonian-speaking respondents agreed with that (Estonian Ministry of Defence 2016a and Estonian Ministry of Defence 2016b).

Although both economic and environmental risks were highlighted by the experts in the Global Risks Report 2016, these factors are considered as rather less important on peace and security in Estonia (see, Figure 1). The same applies to some broader societal risks (e.g. opposition between rich and poor countries).

Figure 3: "Security guarantees for Estonia" 2014–2016: (a) Membership in NATO; (b) Cooperation and good relations with Russia (% of respondents).
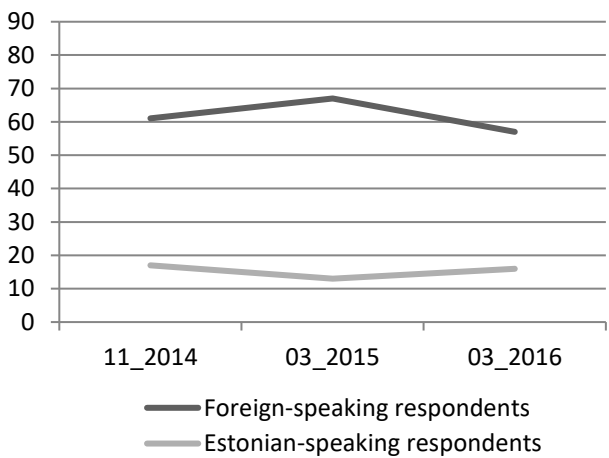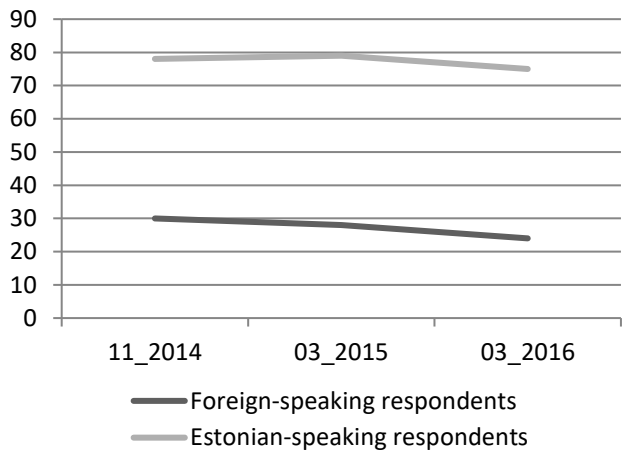
Foreign-speaking respondents
Estonian-speaking respondents

Foreign-speaking respondents
Estonian-speaking respondents

(a) Membership in NATO   (b) Cooperation and
   good relations with Russia

Source: Estonian Ministry of Defence 2016a and Estonian Ministry of Defence 2016b

More information on perceptions of security in Estonia is provided by the public opinion surveys from 2006 to 2016, focusing on the probability of different threats endangering Estonia in the forthcoming years (see, Figure 4).

Based on the results of public opinion surveys from 2006 to 2016, two types of threats – cyberattacks and foreign state interventions into Estonia's policy and economy – were considered highly probable in Estonia in the forthcoming years and their importance can be seen as steadily increasing over time. This partially overlaps with the conclusion of the Global Risks Report 2016, that cyberattacks are perceived as the risk of highest concern in Estonia. Also the likelihood of terrorist attacks is perceived as increasing, according to the public opinion survey results. Against the background that differences of opinion have recently increased between the Estonian-speaking community and the mostly Russian-speaking community in Estonia, it is also important to emphasize that the assessed probability of clashes on ethnic or religious grounds has increased in recent years. It is vital to mention that it has reached the same level seen in 2007, during the turbulent times when Estonia faced street riots organised by some members of the foreign-speaking community in Estonia (see, also Section 4). However, as the authors see it, in the light of the European refugee crisis the increase in the probability of such clashes is rather more likely to happen on religious grounds than on ethnic grounds. The probability of environmental accidents in Estonia (such as extensive marine pollution, explosion of a fuel train in an oil terminal or nuclear disaster at a nuclear power station) is relatively low and rather decreasing, as indicated by the public opinion survey results.

Figure 4: Probability of different threats endangering Estonia in the forthcoming years, 2006–2016 (% of respondents who answered "very probable")
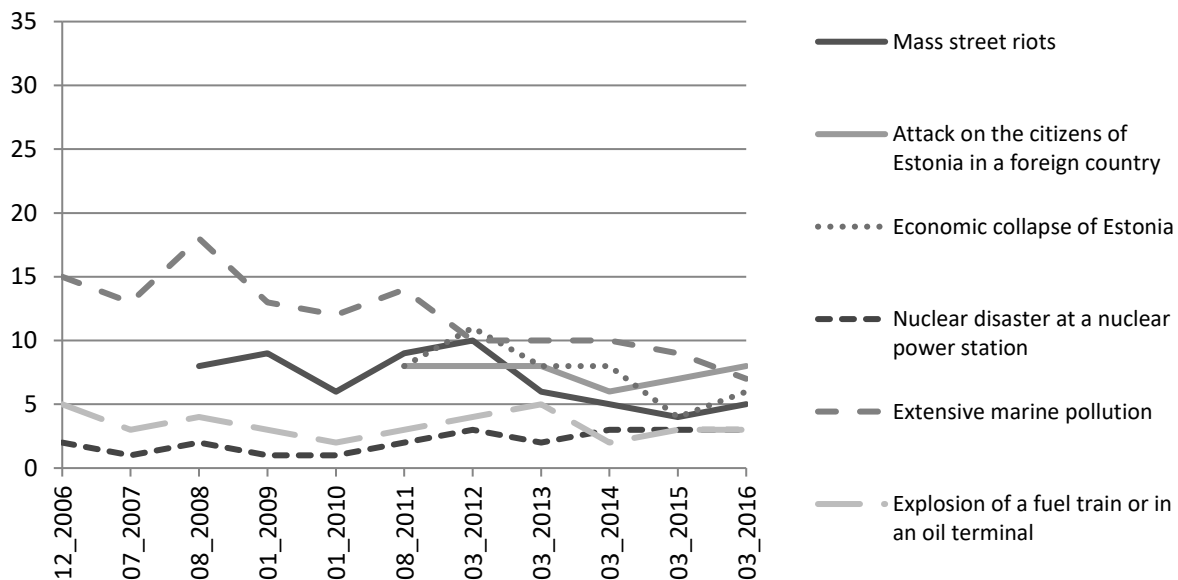
Source: Estonian Ministry of Defence 2016a and Estonian Ministry of Defence 2016b

A look at the general security attitudes in Estonia in 2004–2016

After the restoration of Estonia´s independence in 1991, the country has linked its security with the full integration with the European and transatlantic security networks, the EU and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Today, more than ten years since joining those networks, the statement "Estonia's security is currently better ensured than ever before" is often used at the national level. It mostly refers to the reliable military deterrence and collective defence provided by NATO. At the same time, the current debate on security interests and guarantees in Estonia is more than ever driven by the fear of Russia's aggression. The biggest concerns in Estonia are clearly related to the recent events in Ukraine and the military conflict in Georgia almost a decade ago. In this light, the so-called "Russian card" has also been, to a greater or lesser extent, shaping the security concept of Estonia over the last decade.

Overall, the security situation in Estonia can be seen to have been redefined four times during the last decade. First, in 2004 initiated by the membership of NATO and the EU accession, a "multilateral soft security paradigm" started to dominate both public opinion surveys and security policy planning (Riigikogu 2004). This vision was shared by the political elite and the majority of the population. The regional security space was perceived in the framework of the post-modern security logic where territorial and total defence concepts were seen to be obsolete and stagnated. Against this background, the main focus was on collective defence measures, international missions, special mobile capabilities and specialization in the framework of collective security organisations. Russia was not taken to be an aggressive neighbour, but as a gradually developing and generally peaceful strategic partner in need of assistance in modernization and democratization.

Some novel security concerns were raised in 2007, when also the first signs of the change in attitude towards formerly positive image of Russia occurred in Estonia. This was related to the events accompanying the removal of the so-called Bronze-soldier in Tallinn. Among the public and policy makers in Estonia, the illusion of Russia as a strategic partner of the EU and a peaceful neighbour began to fade. But as the situation resolved more or less peacefully, no major visible changes in the security policies were made by NATO, the EU, or by Estonia.

However, what changed the existing security perspective relatively dramatically for Estonia was the Georgian–Russian war in 2008. Among the public and the political elite in Estonia, Russia was increasingly seen as a real threat in terms of conventional war, eager to re-occupy former Soviet territories. Still, what complicated the situation was that this change was not felt in the similar way by NATO and most of the EU allies. As France, Italy, Germany and the United Kingdom mostly did not share this general vision of the Russian threat, Estonian politicians and military leaders suddenly found themselves alone with their internal fears. Accordingly, Estonia continued treading two parallel paths, focusing on international missions and post-modern securitization approach while simultaneously feeling deeply concerned about Russia's activities abroad.

The Ukrainian–Crimean–Russian events in 2013–2014 amplified the Estonian security concerns and internal fears even further. There were many obvious reasons for this. First, the situation in Ukraine from 2014 on reminded Estonians quite accurately of the situation in Estonia in the 1940s when Estonia lost its independence after Russia had first proposed to establish its military bases and then used the deployed forces to occupy the country. Second, the reactions of France, Germany and Italy to the violation of the territorial integrity of Ukraine were seen to be rather inadequate by the Estonian military leadership and the local

political elite. Both these circles started to worry about the question whether their allies understand the Russian "near abroad" principles[1]. Third, in order to minimize Russian attempts to put pressure on Estonia, suddenly it appeared that fast reforms in the Estonian security and defence sectors may be needed to increase the territorial and total defence components in Estonia. Hence, an urgent need appeared to purchase infantry fighting machines, self-propelling artillery and air defence equipment.

In terms of the future, under the label of protecting Russian citizens in these countries the Russian Federation is expected to go on with its pressurizing policy towards former Soviet Republics. Nevertheless, as could also be seen from the results of the public opinion surveys presented in the previous section (see, first and foremost the categories of "Large-scale military attacks by a foreign country" and "Massive street riots" in Figure 4), despite these upsetting developments the public in Estonia is not overly concerned about the possibility of the Russian Federation directly attacking Estonia in the upcoming years or the local Russian-speaking minority initiating riots and pushing for autonomy referenda.

The public reactions to the actions of the parties in the Ukrainian conflict were decidedly different in Estonia. In general, Russia was clearly seen as an aggressor and initiator of the conflict. The Western world was seen as being too passive and, in particular, the EU was secretly suspected to entertain some support for the Russian explanations. NATO was not expected to intervene in any other way in the conflict other than offering media support to

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[1] Russian foreign policy concept popularized by former Russian minister of foreign affairs Andrey Kozyrev, referring that Central and Eastern European states formerly belonging to the Soviet Union or socialist block can and should be treated differently by Russia, from states in Western Europe in terms of their sovereignty (see Cameron and Orenstein 2012).

Ukraine and delivering emergency equipment. Finally, Ukraine itself was partially seen as responsible for the events, due to the tremendous corruption and the choices former political leaders had made. Still, in general, Estonians very emphatically condemning the events in Ukraine, largely because of the relatively numerous and friendly Ukrainian community in Estonia. Although, it could also partly be taken vice versa, the local Ukrainian community became close since Ukraine fell under Russia's attack.

However, despite the fact that the current debate on security interests and guarantees in Estonia is more than ever driven by the fear of Russia´s aggression, in the long term even the most radical political parties or movements in Estonia do not perceive the country as the next possible target of Russian aggression. From the "big powers", the USA is seen as the main ally and source of both moral and military support, followed closely by the United Kingdom. At the same time, compared to the latter, Germany is seen as a less committed partner, also because of the Nord Stream gas pipeline connection with Russia. Regionally, Finland is trusted most among the Nordic countries, while from Sweden or Poland not too much support is expected. The closest neighbours to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, are seen as committed partners (Veebel 2016). Yet, as it is realised that all three Baltic countries are facing similar threats from Russia, instead of offering help, Latvia and Lithuania may also need assistance themselves.

Cybersecurity concerns and future outlooks

Cyberattacks are perceived as the risk of highest concern in Estonia. As the authors see it, risks related to cyberattacks are clearly felt by Estonia for two reasons. First, the country has faced serious cyberattacks in 2007 already, which makes Estonia more sensitive to these issues. More specifically, only a few hours after Estonia relocated a memorial to Soviet soldiers in spring 2007, the

country faced cyberattacks that lasted a period of 22 days and were combined with several bouts of public unrest organised by some members of the local Russian-speaking community. Aggressive attacks hampered the functioning of numerous Estonian websites, weakened the public infrastructure, harmed the telecommunication and banking sectors and caused financial losses. Among various methods, illegal robot networks (or botnets) consisting of 85,000 computers from 178 countries were used in three waves to attack the websites of the Estonian parliament, presidency, ministries, political parties, commercial banks, big news agencies, telecommunication companies and even the emergency call service (CERT 2007). As a response, these websites were closed to foreign internet addresses on security grounds over a certain period and were accessible only for domestic users. For example, the website of a major local news agency was inaccessible to international visitors for a week. These actions were considered to be the first incident of modern cyber warfare (the so-called *Web War I*), where organized and guided cyber-attacks were used to target a particular country. Although the organizers of the attacks could not be identified with absolute certainty (next to Russia, computers from the USA, Japan, Vietnam, China, Egypt and other countries were also used for coordinated cyber-attacks), in the early phase of the attacks some of the internet addresses of the attackers pointed directly to Russian state institutions. Nonetheless, while perhaps not surprisingly, Russia has denied its participation in these cyber incidents, but at the same time also declined to cooperate in a joint investigation.

The second reason for this awareness, this paper argues, has to do with the fact that Estonia has been one of the digital pioneers in international cyber security. This makes the topic more visible in Estonia. Fortunately for such a small country, contrary to military capabilities, the size of a country does not make any difference here. As regards cyber war, the whole world is the new battlefield

where quality, initiative and position are often more important than quantity. However, there exist several potential risks to Estonia's leading role in cyber defence that the country should be aware of in order to avoid. For example, the current national initiative could be discouraged by outdated rules, moral dilemmas, inadequate legal procedures, incompetent rotation and unwillingness to contribute to the area financially and in terms of international cooperation. To maintain its progressive reputation in this area, first and foremost, both the resources and the knowledge of private and public sector need to be combined, thus guaranteeing sufficient flexibility when countering the cyber threats.

As it is no secret from the public opinion surveys in Estonia that people feel increasingly threatened by Russia's aggressive behaviour in its neighbouring countries, there is a good reason to question whether Russia would consider using the "cyber war" techniques again to destabilize Estonia or the Baltic region. At the same time, based on Russia's strategy applied in regional conflicts with its neighbours since 2007, it is highly likely that the elements of "cyber warfare" shall also play an important role in the possible future conflicts fuelled by Russia. Namely, similar or even more advanced patterns compared to Estonia were observed during the Russian-Georgian conflict in 2008 and during the on-going Ukrainian conflict since 2013. In Georgia, the targeted denial-of-service attacks (DDOS) were combined with military attacks both to impede strategic communication at the national level and to give rise to panic among civilians. During the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, Russia's strategy has among other methods focused on disinformation and psychological warfare by the online media and various webpages, massive internet trolling in social media, and even mobile phone operators to destroy both the morale of the Ukrainian soldiers as well as to attack their families and relatives. Yet, considering Russia's current ambitions in Ukraine as well as

its limited financial resources, it can be assessed as rather unlikely that Estonia would become the most important target for cyberattacks initiated or supported by Russia in the coming years (Veebel and Markus 2016). However, as both the profile and the dimension of the "cyber war" from 2007 have shown, Estonia is vulnerable to threats arising from modern cyber warfare. If there is going to be a change in the international power balance in the future in Europe or in transatlantic relations, it may happen that Estonia (or any other Baltic country) comes under pressure again.

Addressing traditional military threats: is NATO sufficient or does Estonia need European Army?

After the restoration of Estonia's independence in 1991, Estonia has linked its security with the full integration and partnership with the European and transatlantic security networks. The transatlantic partnership is also considered as the key element of the Estonia´s defence doctrine. This is clearly reflected in the National Security Concept of Estonia for the period 2013–2022, stating that "Estonia views its national security as an integral part of international security./…/ NATO, with its transatlantic nature and the principle of collective defence serves as the cornerstone of European security and defence./…/ Estonia regards its security and the security of its allies as indivisible — the factors affecting the security of its allies also affect Estonia, and vice versa./…/ Estonia ensures credible deterrence and military defence through NATO's collective defence./…/ Estonia develops national military defence capabilities, which form a part of NATO's collective defence." (Riigikogu 2010). At the national level, the statement "currently Estonia's security is better ensured than ever before" is often used, which clearly refers to reliable military deterrence and collective defence provided by NATO (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2016).

The debate on the traditional security interests and guarantees in Estonia is mainly driven by the concern of potential Russian aggression and related options for collective transatlantic deterrence. According to the Eurobarometer survey from 2015, about 86% of the respondents in Estonia agreed that war or political instability in regions outside the EU could result in a threat to the internal security in the EU (the country's most popular choice in this category) (Eurobarometer 2015). Direct concerns in Estonia are clearly related to the recent events in Ukraine and military conflict in Georgia almost a decade ago. In addition to that, other topics such as the outlook of economic relations between Russia and Estonia as a potential security guarantee in the region, the unexpected result of the US presidential elections (European Council on Foreign Relations 2016) and the future developments of NATO are also in the picture, shaping the debate on the security matters in Estonia. In 2016 related to the UK's vote on Brexit, additional concerns related to transatlantic and European unity and integrity in terms of defensive alliance and anti-Russian deterrence were also risen.

According to the national public opinion surveys, the key factor in ensuring Estonia's security and defence is considered to be NATO. A survey conducted in 2009 (Kivirähk 2009) indicated that 61% of the respondents (and 78% of the respondents with Estonian citizenship) considered NATO to be the main security guarantee in Estonia, whereas only 44% mentioned the EU and 23% of the respondents stated that Baltic cooperation and Estonia's independent national defence capability are important. The attitude towards NATO has not remarkably changed over time: in 2016, 59% of the respondents (and 75% of the respondents with Estonian citizenship) considered NATO to be the main security guarantee in Estonia. However, today the share of the respondents who also stress the role of the Estonia's

independent national defence capability has increased, being 41% of the respondents (Estonian Ministry of Defence 2016).

The possible alternative idea to create a European Army, as proposed by Jean-Claude Juncker in March 2015, has received rather modest reactions in Estonia. The same applies to the most recent strategy document at the EU level, "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe/A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy", presented to the member states on 28 June 2016. The political elite and military circles have treated the idea of a European Army mostly with caution and even pessimism. The media debates were practically non-existent, being limited only to several rather skeptical headlines and mostly focused on the question of why we should restrict ourselves only to the European common military forces, whilst at the same time knowing that there exists a much wider and fully functioning transatlantic security network. The overall criticism in Estonia is mainly directed to the unreasonable duplication of military structures and inefficient usage of the EU military resources.

At governmental level, it has been repeated by cabinet ministers (e.g. the former Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas) that NATO membership and the idea of collective defence and solidarity of NATO allies should not be questioned and debated. The former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Keit Pentus-Rosimannus (RE), has stated that European security is based on transatlantic relations which cannot be replaced by a European Army. She also outlined that the member states' commitments to NATO should be considered to be a priority, and that duplication of the governance structure of military forces should be avoided, considering that financial resources are limited. In this light, the proposal to establish a European Army is impracticable in the short term. However, she also emphasised that the capabilities of national military forces should be strengthened, starting with the increase in

the military expenditures. At the EU level, the focus should be on finding additional resources for joint financing of EU operations, which would contribute to the strengthening of the military capabilities of the EU.

Among military experts, former Lt Gen Johannes Kert has argued that the EU's efforts consolidating its foreign policy, which among other instruments includes military forces, seems to be a rational step and that common military forces combined with the EU membership in NATO would give a boost to the increased standardization, more optimal usage of resources in Europe and more operative decision mechanism. He suggests that the European Army will be created in the 2030s. However, he puts into question the real ability of a European Army to function as a tool of collective deterrence. (Kert 2015). Former CHOD General Ants Laaneots has stated that the idea to create an EU Army could get entangled in the different demands of the EU member states (Laaneots 2015). He used the example of Afghanistan to show that the EU countries have different demands and limits in military action.

However, another Eurobarometer survey from early 2014 (Eurobarometer 2014) indicated that people in Estonia are rather undecided, as 47% of the survey respondents were in favour and 44% of the respondents opposed the idea of a European Army. At the EU level this result is still rather positive, considering that on average 46% of the respondents in the EU-28 supported the idea and 47% were against it. In addition, when interpreting this result one should also take into account that this comparative survey was conducted in 2014, before the Russian-Ukrainian crisis and the European refugee crisis erupted. Thus, it can be reasonably expected that today the public opinion in Estonia could be even more in favour of the creation of a European army than in 2014.

Are there any "black swans" or "black elephants" looming on the horizon for Estonia?

Against this background, it is justified to ask whether there are any signs of unpredictable events with massive consequences which we either "don't know yet" or "would rather prefer to ignore". The following discussion is necessarily of subjective nature and reflects solely the views of the authors. However, next to the clearly perceptible threats such as acts of terrorism, Russia's aggressive attitude towards its neighbours and risks related to the "cyber world", Estonia should – more than the country has done so far – focus on three categories of potential "black swans"/"black elephants": a) risks related to the loss of credibility of the national government; b) regional economic outlook and economic risks; c) the role of the Russian-speaking community in Estonia in ensuring security and stability of the country.

The risks related to low credibility of national government have been reduced after forming a new coalition and appointing a new prime-minister in December 2016. The expectations to new prime minister Jüri Ratas (Centre Party) are high (TNS Emor 2016) and list of urgent reforms is challenging, as it is not only the economy that has been left to its own and the tax system which is petrified and thereby a hindrance to the development of a modern service economy, but also the public health, pensions and education systems are in need of an overhaul.

A small and open country, Estonia is necessarily vulnerable to external political and economic shocks. Hence it cannot afford even small political turbulences inasmuch as these could make the country unstable and vulnerable. Recent events during the presidential elections in Estonia in August-September 2016 have revealed how fast the political horse-trading could transform into a source of public dissatisfaction with both the current political system and the legal regulations, particularly the procedure for the

election of the president of the republic. Should the public support to the coalition parties decrease even further and "the horse-trading" between the coalition parties remain unchanged, it could pose some security risk to the country.

In addition, regional economic risks – as also stated in the Global Risks Report 2016 – should not be underestimated in Estonia. Due to high openness, the country is highly vulnerable to the economic developments of its economic partners. It is worrying that according to the recent flash estimates by Statistics Estonia from 11 August 2016, the GDP of Estonia increased 0.6% in the 2nd quarter of 2016 compared to the 2nd quarter of the 2015 and 0.3% compared to the 1st quarter of the 2015. According to the second estimates from September 2016, the GDP increased 0.8% in the 2nd quarter of 2016 compared to the 2nd quarter of the previous year. This result was significantly weaker than expected (Statistics Estonia 2016). Recently, also the dynamics of the oil shale industry has acted as a brake on the economic growth in Estonia (only 10% of the traditional sectoral volume has been produced in recent year)[2]. In general terms, as the rather modest economic outlook combined with turbulences in the political sphere could pose serious security threat at the national level should be seriously addressed. Although here some exogenous factors such as the economic outlook for Finland and Sweden are playing a major role, Estonia itself should focus more on the measures to raise its economic potential, also in comparison with its closest neighbours Latvia and Lithuania. As a remark, in recent years, economic growth in Estonia has heavily relied on the increase in employment. However, this is not an option anymore and any future growth can only rely on an increase in productivity.

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[2] Among the reasons, the most important are: low global oil and gas prices; the EU regulations, which make heating with oil-shale not profitable and development of alternative energy sources for electricity in recent years.

Finally, the role and importance of the large Russian-speaking community (however, many among them are not supporters of current Russian political regime) in Estonia cannot be overestimated. The long term policy, which has not seriously tried to integrate Russian speakers into the society, or engage its leaders into public debates, or provided much needed support for integration (e.g. the availability of language courses), has left it in the hands of Russia's state-controlled and heavily propaganda-laden media. While there are historical reasons for the Estonian community to be wary of extending their warm welcome to Russian speakers, it should have been all the more the role of the political elite to have attempted to achieve some vital steps of integration. Instead, the party system has exploited the wider distrust among the communities and rather deepened that. Nevertheless, the possible threats related to the separateness of this ethnic/ linguistic group have been increasingly debated and analysed since the events of 2007–2008. The discussions have intensified again since the end of 2013. The results of the public opinion surveys on security matters clearly refer to the fundamental difference in opinions between the Estonian-speaking and foreign-speaking respondents on main threats. To decrease the likelihood that these differences grow into a much larger conflict, the Russian speakers need to be integrated more. Several proposals have been made, most of them offering additional rights for non-citizens. These rights consist of both material and legal assets, which can be offered simultaneously. For example, it is already understood that more comprehensive language training programs are needed. However, despite this new level of understanding, the key questions still tend to fall back to the fundamental historical distrust. Thus, it has been asked whether a simplification of the process of acquiring Estonian citizenship for the Russian speaking minority would increase their loyalty to Estonia, and whether most of the Russian-speaking non-citizens are interested in acquiring Estonian citizenship at all. In addition, as the author sees it, there

is a potential risk that the loyalty of the Russian-speaking non-citizens could decrease in the light of the recent EU-wide efforts to reallocate refugees. If this vulnerable group feels that no, or relatively little, attention will be paid to the Russian-speaking community and the non-citizens – compared to the reallocated refugees who are currently receiving significant attention from the Estonian government – their discontent might even increase, thereby posing an additional security threat to Estonia and playing into the hands of Russia.

Conclusion

This article has attempted to map and analyze Estonia's perceptions of security threats in the context of global security problems as revealed in the respective surveys. The main theme of this paper has been related to differentiating "black elephants" from "black swans", i.e. "known unknowns" from "unknown unknowns". If the latter category is by definition tricky to deal with, a relatively common problem is to mistake the former for the latter. It may be characteristic of an age to overlook certain obvious signs that do not cohere with its dominant ideology, it is all the more vital to become aware of those unknowns we could actually be aware of. Thus, if on the global scale the "black elephants" have been outlined, for Estonia they mostly concern the social, political and economic weaknesses that the political elite has had difficulties to adequately address.

On the social front these are the deep divisions between the Estonian and Russian-speaking communities, which can develop into a source of tensions and instability. The party-political landscape itself is barren of trust and goodwill, even among the so-called progressive parties. Finally, economic planning at the governmental level requires fresh angles of analysis and more ideas together with joint action to get the economy to grow again, and to

counter growing unemployment and young labor force leaving Estonia.

While Estonia's main security concerns are related to NATO and its ability to deter Russia, reforms are also needed in terms of the European Union's competitiveness, cohesion, institutional integration and long term economic sustainability. More attention is also needed to understand, to define and to overcome the core-periphery development gap in the EU to prevent a financial or debt crisis from re-emerging in the Eurozone.

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LATVIA'S SECURITY AND DEFENCE POST-2014

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ABSTRACT. This article takes a comprehensive look at developments in Latvia's security and defence policies since 2014. The annexation of Crimea and the outbreak of the military conflict in Ukraine provided a major impetus for Latvian decision-makers to counter external and domestic threats to national security. The article discusses three key aspects of Latvia's post-2014 security and defence developments. First, it looks at the transformation of security perceptions on the policy-making level. Second, the article discusses Latvia's efforts to strengthen its military capabilities. Domestic security developments are also discussed. Third, differences between attitudes of Latvians and Russian-speakers towards a number of security and defence-related issues are presented. The article concludes that much has been done since 2014, but progress has been uneven. It will take more than just a few years to close the existing gaps in domestic and external security of Latvia.

Introduction

It has become a cliché to argue that the Baltic states' security and defence policies have been heavily affected by Russia's annexation of Crimea and the military conflict in Eastern Ukraine. Yet, that cliché is correct. Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia were increasingly seen as NATO frontline allies subject to potential military and other probes by Russia (Grygiel & Mitchel 2016). The Baltic states' security perceptions have also undergone a sea change. The threat emanating from Russia was regarded primarily as political and

economic before the conflict in Ukraine. That is no longer the case. The Baltic states had to adjust their estimations of the threat posed by Russia to include a more prominent military element.

That the Baltic states had to readjust their threat assessments is a trivial statement. To state, however, that their responses to the rapidly changing security situation in Europe have been somewhat different depending on domestic and external constraints and opportunities is not trivial. This article looks at the changing security perceptions in Latvia post-2014. The changing security perceptions in Latvia are analysed across three dimensions, which largely correspond to the structure of the article. The first section looks at the policymaking level, that is, how policymakers' perceptions of security have transformed and how that has affected Latvia's security and defence policy. The second section looks at the implementation of policy decisions, that is, whether Latvia has managed to reduce some of the vulnerabilities that it arguably had even a few years ago and whether Latvia's military capabilities have increased. The third section addresses public perceptions related to Latvia's security. The article concludes that Latvia has a number of achievements in the twin realms of security and defence policy, but progress has been uneven. Military capabilities have been strengthened, and greater NATO presence has marked the shift from assurance to deterrence, but there are still gaps in terms of domestic aspects of security such as overly benign views of Russian-speakers towards Russia and a weak civil security system.

Political Decision-Makers' Security Perceptions and Policies

The annexation of Crimea and the military conflict in Eastern Ukraine were definitely the two landmark events contributing to the perception of political leaders and general public in Latvia that Russia might harbour malign intentions also against its small Baltic neighbours. However, notable changes in terms of shifting security

perceptions were already well under way before the crisis in Ukraine broke out in the spring of 2014. Although most measures aimed at strengthening Latvia's defence capabilities took place in the aftermath of the fateful events in Ukraine, the origins of these decisions and their subsequent implementation are to be found well-before 2014. The single most important decision that the Latvian government has made over the past few years was the decision to increase defence spending up to 2 percent of GDP in 2018. The government made the decision in 2015, and the plan is that defence spending would increase rapidly from the low point of 1 per cent of GDP in 2015 to 1.4 percent of GDP in 2016. A further increase to 1.7 percent of GDP would take place in 2017, and the aim of 2 percent of GDP would then be reached in 2018 when the approximate value of Latvia's defence expenditures would be close to 590 million euros. This decision, however, was preceded by the State Defence Concept of May 2012 (shortly before the NATO Chicago Summit) which stipulated that Latvia would increase defence expenditures up to 2 percent of GDP by 2020 (The State Defence Concept 2012, p. 15).

The adoption of the State Defence Concept in 2012 was the result of quiet, but persuasive criticisms on the part of other NATO allies, most notably, the United States. Also, the Long-Term Development Plan of the Armed Forces of Latvia 2012-2024 was adopted in June 2012. Plan was elaborated in order to justify higher defence expenditures and also stipulate development of specific military capabilities. The main reason why Latvia did not spend more on defence at the time was the obvious necessity to recover from the economic crisis that reduced Latvia's GDP by almost a quarter. It also affected armed forces harshly in 2009 when the budget dropped by 44 per cent, damaging the military personnel system (480 military persons retired), and putting on hold various modernization projects such as mechanization of land forces (Romanovs 2016, p. 122). However, on a conceptual level,

the idea that Latvia would have to spend more on defence had already taken hold before 2014.

Considering the fact that other sectors (e.g. education, health care) had also seen considerable budgetary cuts during the economic downturn, the decision to increase defence spending was at risk because there would be two parliamentary elections between 2012 and 2020. The Ukraine crisis in 2014 spring was a game changer in this respect, forcing political parties to start implementing defence-related documents which were adopted in earlier years. As of October 2016, there are no indications that the current government would not be ready to live up to its commitments regarding defence expenditures, although there is a possibility that future defence budgets might be smaller because of slower economic growth. Thus, Latvia would meet its NATO obligation to spend at least 2 percent of GDP on defence, but its gross domestic product would be smaller than envisaged in real terms.

There have also been other, more subtle, changes. Three perceptual shifts have taken place since the outbreak of the military conflict in Ukraine. First, much of the thinking about security of Latvia rested upon the assumption that stability in the Baltic region was largely a function of the following factors. NATO military superiority was such that Russia would not dare to openly challenge sovereignty and territorial integrity of any NATO member state. Furthermore, Russia would be deterred from military aggression because it would not be willing to break international norms. Also, Russia was seen as being unwilling to create instability on its western flank which would have detrimental effects on its security and economic interests. Thus, the specific balance of forces in the Baltic region did not matter, and the military capabilities of Latvia and both of its Baltic neighbours were also of secondary importance. An increase in military expenditures of the Baltic states or NATO presence in the Baltic region would likely have a destabilizing effect because the

prevalent view was that stability in the Baltic region would be best preserved through absence, rather than presence, of NATO. Although the basic elements of this view could still be correct, the thinking within Latvia and NATO more broadly has changed. The current assumption is that stability in the Baltic region (and elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe) rests on the twin pillars of presence of NATO troops and boosting of military capabilities of the frontline NATO member states. This rationale does not ask for parity in terms of military balance between NATO and Russia, as that is still regarded as too provocative and politically unrealistic, but the notion of 'more NATO' and 'more capabilities' is increasingly seen as a precondition for stability in the Baltic region, Latvia included. In short, Latvia and other NATO member states have largely embraced the notion of deterrence as the basis for stability in the Baltic region.

Second, the idea that a more substantial military presence of other NATO member states is needed and that Latvia would have to develop sizable military capabilities for deterrence to work, has necessitated the discussion about the particular military capabilities that Latvia would need to develop. This issue is closely related to that of specific military contingencies that Latvia would need to prepare in the coming years. These contingencies range from relatively unproblematic potential attempts by Russia to cultivate separatism in parts of Latvia that have sizable Russian speaking minority communities to more dangerous contingencies that include a full-scale military invasion. Although Latvia's political decision-makers have time and again emphasized that the risk of a military aggression against Latvia is low, it is something that the Latvian military has to prepare for. The choices related to development of specific military capabilities are addressed in the following section. Here, it would suffice to say that some of these choices are clearly discomforting because Latvia is facing a potential adversary that has multiple military and other options

that it can use against its smaller neighbours. Also, taking into account that the baseline for Latvia in developing certain military capabilities has been rather low, the issue of costs and timing of acquisitions have been a particularly sensitive subject. Although the Latvian government has tried to project the image that it knows which capabilities it needs to develop and what specific military equipment it needs to procure, doubts have been expressed whether particular types of military equipment are suited for Latvia's needs, as evidenced by the heated exchange between the opposition member of parliament Mr. Andrejs Elksniņš and Defence Minister Mr. Raimonds Bergmanis regarding the purchase of armoured combat vehicles from the United Kingdom (Elksniņš 05 August 2016; Bergmanis 07 September 2016).

Third, much of the debate about security and defence post-2014 has been about domestic security. The discussion which largely began as an attempt to assess the extent of Russia's influence in Latvia in terms of soft power, has added over the past years some notable hard power elements. On the positive side, the understanding of the Russian speaking part of the population has improved considerably within both policy-making and academic communities as a number of public opinion polls have been carried out in recent years. Although this subject is explored in greater detail in the third part of this article, it would suffice to say at this point that the attitudes of Latvia's Russian speakers towards various issues related to foreign and security policy and societal integration are markedly different from those of ethnic Latvians. However, even those Russian speakers who support narratives that are dominant in Russian media are unlikely to express their discontent with government's policies in a violent manner (Berzina 2016). Also, there is evidence that the Russian speaking community in Latvia is internally diverse which opens up possibilities for the government to engage in dialogue with

different parts of this community each on its own terms (Ozolina 2016).

On the negative side, it seems that Russia has become more proactive in seeking influence in Latvia through numerous NGOs which it supports financially. These efforts have been noted and discussed on all levels, that is, Russia's 'soft power', as it is usually referred to, has become the centrepiece of discussions on Russia's attempts to influence Latvia's politics and society. So far, these efforts have been only partially successful. According to the recent assessment of the Constitution Protection Bureau of the Republic of Latvia[1], Russia's compatriot policy is one of the most visible instruments of influence in Latvia, but the usefulness of this instrument has been limited, as it 'allows Russia to manipulate a few individuals and organizations, not all Russian speakers residing in Latvia' (Constitution Protection Bureau 2016, p. 6). The report also takes note of Russia's concerted activities in the information space. The key aim in this respect is to undermine public confidence in NATO security guarantees (Constitution Protection Bureau 2016, p. 5). Notable studies on Russia's soft power in Latvia and elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe have been published by the Centre for East European Policy Studies (Kudors (ed.) 2016; Kudors (ed.) 2014a; Kudors 2014b; Pelnens 2010) and the Latvian Institute of International Affairs (Rostoks & Sprūds 2015). There has also been an interest in the extent to which Russia has economic leverage in Latvia (Sprūds 2012). The debate about the extent of Russia's influence in Latvia is far from over, but the key conclusion thus far has been that Russia's attempts to influence the domestic politics and foreign policy of Latvia have backfired, that is, they have for the most part alienated the ethnic

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[1] The Constitution Protection Bureau (SAB) was founded in 1995. It is one of the three state security and intelligence services in Latvia, the other two being the Latvian Security Police (DP) and the Defence Intelligence and Security Service (MIDD).

Latvian part of the population while having little effect on government's policies. It should be mentioned though that Russian speakers in Latvia have largely sympathetic views of Russia. Thus, Russia's soft power works with regard to the Russian speakers, but it has limited appeal to ethnic Latvians.

One issue, however, has been conspicuously absent from the domestic debate. Latvia abolished conscription in 2006 shortly after joining NATO, but a broader discussion in Latvia on whether conscription should be reintroduced has been missing. In contrast, Estonia did not abolish conscription, and it has been recently reintroduced by Lithuania. Although the security environment in Europe has changed since 2014, Latvia's defence officials have stated on numerous occasions that Latvia does not need to reinstate conscription and cannot afford to do so even if it wanted to. Latvia's Defence Chief Raimonds Graube has pointed out that there is not feasible to renew conscription because "it would require huge budget allocation and re-investments in infrastructure" (The Baltic Times, 6 April 2016). Public opinion is split on this issue with 47 percent of respondents in favour of reintroducing conscription and 43 percent against. It is important to note though that the younger generation who are most likely to be affected if conscription is reintroduced are not enthusiastic about it (SKDS 2016c). Also, one third of the respondents note that military knowledge and skills should be acquired through the National Guard where participation is voluntary (SKDS 2014). All in all, the thinking on security and defence in Latvia has changed drastically over the past years. There is much more emphasis now on stronger self-defence capabilities, greater presence of troops from other NATO member states in Latvia, and domestic security. However, Latvia's decision-makers have not gone as far as to reintroduce conscription.

Developments in Latvia's defence system

Developments in Latvia's defence system have largely been a function of perceptions of Russia's capabilities and intentions. Participation in international operations was the main pillar of Latvia's defence strategy during the first decade of membership of NATO and the EU because Russia was perceived as a concern but not a real threat. Latvia regarded participation in international operations as a convenient way to demonstrate its commitment to collective defence and to gain experience from international operations for its armed forces (Vanaga 2013). Latvian armed forces participated in international operations and mission in the Balkans (Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Macedonia), Iraq, and Afghanistan. The most important benefits from participation were political ones that Latvia could gain within NATO. For instance, participation in international operations provided the necessary weight for political bargaining when there was a necessity to extend NATO's Baltic Air Policing mission. Continuing Latvia's contribution in mission in Afghanistan (approximately 10-14 million euros per year) even throughout the years of severe cuts in the defence sector (2009-2011) was a very important argument when the Air Policing mission was questioned or when after the Georgian-Russian war (2008) Latvia together with the other Baltic States urged NATO to come up with Baltic Contingency plans (2010). Nationally as well, participation in international operations was perceived by Latvian members of parliament as the best way to contribute to collective defence and, in case of crisis, to would receive assistance from Latvia's allies according to Article 5. This was the dominant discourse over the years encouraging policy makers in the defence sector to put under the umbrella of participation in international operations many initiatives as then there was an assurance that the funding for participation in international operations would be approved by the Parliament (Vanaga 2015).

At the same time, the over emphasis on participation in international operations has resulted in a disregard of territorial defence. Only minimal self-defence capabilities have been developed (State Defence Concepts 2008, 2012). But even this commitment stayed as a formal priority never to be materialized as there was a constant lack of financial resources (Vanaga 2013). Hence critical military capabilities for self-defence such as air defence, indirect fire support, and medical support were not developed (Romanovs, 2016). The Long-term Development Plan of the Armed Forces of Latvia 2012-2024 was an attempt to boost development of necessary military capabilities in order of priority. The plan embraced a list of 28 military capabilities: SOF, explosive ordnance disposal, combat engineering, mechanization of one infantry battalion, elements of air defence, helicopters for search and rescue, command and control of "Skrunda" class patrol ships, indirect fire support, brigade level reconnaissance and others (Ministry of Defence 19 June 2012). The implementation of the plan never entirely took place due the crisis in Ukraine in the spring of 2014 when it was clear that it should be reviewed, putting self-defence capabilities on the top of the list.

Events in Ukraine significantly shifted Latvia's defence strategy from collective to territorial defence. The threat of Russia became so obvious that it made members of parliament review the mantra of participation in international operations as the best way to provide national security. It was concluded that Latvia, in comparison with the other two Baltic States, had the biggest shortfalls in self-defence capabilities. Besides the lack of self-defence capabilities, other areas of vulnerabilities towards Russia's so-called hybrid warfare were identified: lack of NATO military presence in the Baltic region, inability to protect Latvia's information space, underfunded interior security structures (Security Police, Boarder Guard etc.), weak cooperation and coordination between defence and interior sectors, and potentially

harmful effects of the presence of a large Russian-speaking minority in Latvia. In order to address these challenges in 2016 a new State Defence Concept was passed, that emphasizes the necessity to develop self- defence capabilities and work on the state's resilience (The State Defence Concept 2016).

Self-defence capabilities

The measures adopted shortly after the Ukraine crisis aimed at increasing the manpower of the Latvian armed forces by 2018. Strengthening of the National Guard, which was severely underfunded before, was an integral part of these measures. The new guidelines stipulated allocation of more than 70 million euros for development of 18 increased readiness National Guard units from all over Latvia that have obtained air defence, anti-tank, sniper, engineering, protection against weapons of mass destruction, mortar and engineering capabilities (Ministry of Defence 29 July 2014). In order to increase the patriotism and interest of youth in defence matters, a Youth Guard Development Programme 2015-2024 was initiated with the aim to increase its membership from 6000 up to 16000 and allocating more than 2 million euros per year until 2018 to achieve this purpose (Cabinet of Ministers 10 March 2015). Also, decisions to review and reorganize the recruitment system of armed forces and to increase personnel of professional armed forces from 5000 soldiers up to 7000 were made (Vējonis 22 January 2015).

With regard to the development of military capabilities, the Long-term Development Plan of Armed Forces of Latvia 2012-2024 was reviewed and the sequence of priorities was changed. Priority was given to such critical self-defence capabilities as electronic warfare at tactical level, medium and long indirect fire support, ground based short and medium range air defence, command and control with other NATO units, anti-tank, SOF, information operations in a very broad sense and others. Development of these capabilities

has gone hand in hand with procurements. In this respect, the mechanization project was by far the most important priority. The decision to procure 123 Combat Vehicle Reconnaissance (Tracked) (CVR(T)) completely overhauled platforms from the United Kingdom was adopted in the autumn of 2014. In order to integrate CVR(T) into the armed forces structure, an appropriate battalion structure had to be established, including additional personnel and training. Latvia also procured the fourth generation man-portable fire-and-forget anti-tank guided missile systems "Spike" and a couple of hundred man-portable reusable anti-tank recoilless rifles "Carl Gustav" for strengthening anti-tank capabilities (Sargs.lv 15 October 2014). In 2015, procurement of an air defence radar system was launched. Considering the fact that air defence systems are extremely expensive, Latvia signed an agreement with Lithuania in 2016 on synchronising their efforts in defence procurement, especially with regard to medium range air defence systems (LSM 14 September 2016).

Greater NATO presence

In order to improve NATO's ability to respond quickly in the time of crisis, development of host nation support (HNS) capabilities is regarded as one of the top priorities. The HNS package includes investments in infrastructure – developing "Lielvārde" airbase, expanding Ādaži base, building barracks, depots, training areas, ammunition storages etc.) – and command and control. In order to improve HNS capabilities, support defence planning and assist in coordinating training and exercises, it was decided at the NATO Wales Summit to establish NATO Force Integration Units (NFIU) in the three Baltic States, Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria. Plausibly one of the most important contributions of NFIU to the Baltic defence is to have all three NFIU of Baltic States plugged in one chain of command and control, being subordinated to the Multinational Corps Northeast (MCN) based in Szczecin, Poland. That gives NATO a better overview of the Baltic operational

theatre, exchange of information and coordination of activities and functions as another platform that enhances the Baltics States' ability to work together (Interview with representative of NFIU 13 April 2016). Another established cooperation platform for the Baltics, after years of talks led by Latvia, is that the Baltic Combined Joint Staff element in Riga will become a platform for military planners from the three Baltic States to meet 2 or 3 times a year to coordinate operational plans, share intelligence, synchronize HNS activities and to discuss strategic communication issues (Interview with representative of J5 5 April 2016).

The most visible result of the Baltic States' cooperation has been the elaboration of the joint position with Poland for the NATO Warsaw Summit asking for deployment of multinational battalions on a rotational basis in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. Considering the challenges that NATO faces regarding its ability to act rapidly in the case of a crisis in the Baltic Sea region and Russia's anti-access and access denial (A2/AD) military capabilities, it was crucial to have at least a battalion-size multinational force present on the ground. Although from a military point of view this kind of force is not even close enough to counter Russia's military superiority, from a political perspective it is a significant contribution to NATO's deterrence posture. It not only demonstrates NATO's efforts to strengthen its conventional presence in the Baltic region, but also is a part of nuclear strategy as from 16 NATO member states that provide their troops for participation in multinational battalions three are nuclear powers (Lute 29 September 2016).

As of Spring 2017, Latvia will host a multinational battalion with Canada as the lead nation. Other participating countries are Spain, Italy, Slovenia and Poland. The next step that Latvia is willing to work on is for that battalion to consist of three mechanized, preferably armoured, manoeuvring companies with anti-tank (medium and long range) capabilities, indirect fire support, air

defence, intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance, engineering and airlift capabilities. As discussed above, Latvia has pledged to develop some of these capabilities on its own, but it lacks both financial and personnel resources to provide all of them in the short term. Thus, it is still left for a discussion among policy makers which capabilities would be developed by Latvia itself and which could be provided by its NATO allies.

Another issue that Latvia will address are the command and control of the battalion. It is known that the battalions stationed in the Baltic states will be subordinated to MCN (Szczecin, Poland). But MCN is not a part of the NATO command and control structure itself and it is primarily centred on land force. The mandated and deriving tasks and rules of engagement are also unclear. The normative approach would be to have the force not only for the case of crisis, but it would also function as an assistance tool for training critical capabilities of national armed forces. Clear rules of engagement are very important in order to avoid Russia using activities of the battalion in its information warfare against Latvia and NATO, arguing that Russia is being provoked. Although the multinational character of the force demonstrates the solidarity among NATO member states, the effectiveness of the battalion can be a problem because of interoperability issues (especially when it comes to communication) and the strength of force in terms of manpower. Interruptions between rotations may occur. Thus, it is of great importance for Latvia to have a predictable schedule, and rotations should be "heel-to-toe" with no gaps between them.

Military exercises needs to be mentioned as well as they remain an important element when it comes to the demonstration of NATO's increased presence in the Baltic region right after the beginning of Ukraine crisis. They became a significant part of NATO measures aimed at reassurance, as after exercises some of

the participating NATO member states' forces would remain in Latvia for several months, until they were replaced by other member states' forces. That can be seen also in statistics, as in 2015 more than 90 military exercises were held in Latvia. In 2016, more than 70 military exercises were planned. These would involve participants not only from the Baltic states, but also from countries such as Germany, Norway, Poland, Denmark, US, Canada, Germany, UK, Belgium, Poland, Netherlands and even NATO partnership countries (Finland and Sweden) (Interview with J7 1 April 2016).

Most military exercises are focused on testing and training the elements of HNS. The most important annual military exercise for HNS is the Baltic Host that is aimed at training the Baltic States defence sectors together with other responsible civilian institutions in providing HNS while receiving the Allied troops and humanitarian support. Accordingly, these exercises help to enhance the interoperability among Baltic countries and NATO forces, to coordinate and provide regional support for NATO forces by using military and civilian resources, to improve integration of civilian authorities into the regional decision making, and to test the legal basis and procedures. Considering the amount and scope of exercises one of the greatest challenges for Latvia was to keep up on this pace not only from an organizational point of view but also to write down the lessons learned and to work them into policy recommendations (Interview with Representative of Crisis Management Department 5 October 2015).

Strengthening of the interior structures

Russia's hybrid warfare tactics in Ukraine were an important element that contributed to Ukraine's societal instability and demoralized its interior structures. Thus, Latvian policy makers had to reassess the situation in the interior sector. Latvia's government has increased salaries for personnel in the Security

Police, Border Guard, Prison Administration and Police. In 2016, the budget of the Interior Ministry was increased by 40 million euros, half of which was allocated for salaries. After adopting the new salary system, it is expected that interior structures will have a sustainable personnel system. Analytical and intelligence capabilities of the Security Police have also been improved (Interview with Trofimovs 20 April 2016).

Inter-sectoral cooperation between the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Interior has considerably improved. Both ministries have come up with many suggestions for amending existing laws in order to provide a more precise definition of war and specifying the responsibilities of respective institutions in crisis situations. One of the amendments stipulates that the Border Guard will act under the command of the Latvian National Armed forces in case of a crisis. In order to provide the interoperability of weapon systems, the Ministry of Defence is procuring weapons for border guards and conducts joint exercises on a regular basis. There have also been attempts to secure the eastern border of Latvia, developing a 12 metres wide zone that will provide mobility along the border and improve the early warning system. The project is financed by the Ministry of Interior and is expected to be completed by 2019.

Lastly, in order to improve the early warning system and functioning of crisis management that could fall under Article 5, the Ministry of Defence is organizing exercises for the Cabinet of Ministers and representatives of government institutions (Interview with Trofimovs 20 April 2016). Although the steps taken to strengthen the interior sector can be seen as successful, nothing has been done so far to improve the civil security system. Latvia had a well-functioning civil security system during Soviet times, but it has largely been dismantled since then. The general public lacks information about what is to be done during a crisis, including war. 55 per ent of respondents admit that they do not

know what to do in case of a crisis and 75 percent are willing to know more (SKDS 2016b). Lithuania produced a manual on what to do in case of war (Reuters 15 January 2015). Latvian policy makers, despite tje newly approved State Defence Concept (2016) which states that resilience is one of Latvia's defence pillars, have not yet acknowledged that policies aimed at civil security are needed to increase the resilience of society.

Strengthening the information space

The division of Latvia's information space into two spaces – Russian-speaking and Latvian – is a problem that is widely acknowledged by policy makers. However, it was not perceived as a threat to national security until recently. Since the beginning of the Ukraine crisis when the effects of Russia's disinformation campaign on public opinion became clearly visible (72 percent of Latvian speaking respondents thought that the cause of the Ukraine crisis is Russia's interference and 64 percent of Russian speakers perceived it as the result of Western interference (Factum 2015)) placed the problem in the spotlight. Latvian policy makers tried to deal with this challenge in three ways. First, they discussed a necessity to establish a joint TV channel in Russian language with the other two Baltic States. Such a TV channel would provide an opportunity to influence the attitudes of the Russian-speaking communities in all three countries. As this idea did not materialize due to political reasons, Latvia (like the other two Baltic States) had a domestic discussion about establishing a national TV channel in Russian language. Unfortunately, there was lack of political support for that in Latvia because the nationalist party National Alliance argued that it would send the wrong signal to Russian-speaking minorities, namely, that a state sponsored channel in Russian language would encourage them not to learn Latvian language (Interview with Dimants 2 May 2016). Estonia was the only country that established a new channel in Russian language " ETV+". This TV channel is funded by the government

and provides Russian speakers with local news and daily events with an emphasis on the positive aspects of life in Estonia (Re:Baltica 23 November 2015). Latvia chose a different strategy by allocating more funding for the existing bilingual TV channel LTV7. These efforts have not delivered the expected results because this TV channel is too 'Russian' for the Latvians and too 'Latvian' for the Russian-speaking community.

There have also been efforts to ban certain Russian media from Latvia's information space. In April 2014, the National Electronic Mass Media Council (NEPLM) prohibited for three months the TV channel "Rossija RTF" and shut down an internet home page "Sputnik" in March of 2016. It is likely that more such cases will follow because Lithuania banned three TV channels – Ren TV Baltic, NTV Mir Lithuania and RTR Planeta – due to disinformation about the events in Ukraine and misinterpretation of Lithuanian history. But in Latvia's case as the former head of the NEPLM notes, the main obstacle has been the divided political position about NEPLM decisions, which politicized the process and spread speculations in public about the legitimacy of the decision. Also, public support for such measures is relatively low with only 34 percent of respondents being in favour of banning Russian TV channels (Factum 2015). Thus, Latvia has done relatively little in comparison with the neighbouring countries.

Risks of Social Destabilisation

Initially, there were concerns among policy makers that a scenario broadly similar to the one that was played out in Ukraine could also take place in Latvia because of its geographical proximity to Russia, large Russian-speaking minority, and the large proportion of Russian speakers in Latgale (the Eastern region of Latvia) The concern was that this situation would provide enough ground for Russia-backed separatist movements. A thorough analysis of public opinion nationally and, more specifically, in the Latgale

region demonstrated that even though there are large groups of Russian-speakers in Latvia which support Russia's narratives about Latvia, the probability of mass protests and support for Russia's provocations was unlikely. The behavioural analysis of Latvia's society revealed that political and social participation was low. The majority of people do not want to stand out from the crowd, and they do not believe that their actions (also in the form of protests) can change anything. Thus, it would be challenging for Russia to cause widespread societal unrest. Specifically, the survey of the Latgale region demonstrated that there was indeed considerable support for Russia's narratives, but there was little support for separatism. One of the findings of the public opinion survey was that those speaking the Latgalian dialect held the most patriotic views and supported Latvia's Western geopolitical orientation (Berzina 2016). The Latgalian dialect, which is linguistically close to Latvian language, is spoken by a substantial part of the population of Latgale. Although it was very unlikely that those who live in this region would develop separatist tendencies, it was nevertheless a relief that Latgalians turned out to be even more patriotic than Latvians themselves.

All in all, Latvia's efforts to strengthen its information space reveal a mixed picture. On the one hand, Latvia has done less in terms of offering its Russian-speaking community a more balanced view about Russia's foreign policy, its relations with the West, and life in Latvia more generally than Lithuania and Estonia. On the other hand, multiple public opinion surveys since 2014 reveal that there is little ground for mass unrest and separatism. Russian-speakers hold benevolent views on Russia, but they are unlikely to support Russia-backed efforts to destabilize Latvia.

Public Perceptions of Security

Latvia is a multi-ethnic society, and this factor has major implications for security and defence policy. According to the

Central Statistical Bureau, the share of ethnic Latvians was 62.1 per cent in 2011, an increase from just 52 per cent in 1989. Meanwhile, the share of ethnic Russians was 26.9 per cent in 2011, a decrease from 34 per cent in 1989. Russians are unevenly distributed across Latvia, as they for the most part reside in the biggest cities. For example, Russians comprise 40.6 percent of the population in Riga. The uneven geographical distribution of ethnic minorities is largely to blame for the fact that Latvians are a minority in Riga (46.3 per cent) and the Latgale region (46 per cent) (Central Statistical Bureau 2012). Moreover, a category of Russian speakers, which includes Ukrainians and Byelorussians, alongside ethnic Russians, has gained increasing salience in terms of predicting political attitudes and behaviour. The share of Russian speakers is roughly 37 per cent in Latvia. Taking into account their patterns of media consumption (mostly media in Russian language or media originating in Russia) and unwillingness to criticize their country of origin, the differences between the views of Russian speakers and ethnic Latvians are substantial (Berzina 2016). The following paragraphs address the following issues related to public perceptions of security in Latvia: perception of various threats to personal security among Latvians and Russian speakers; Russia as an economic opportunity; results from a public opinion survey in Latgale, the easternmost region of Latvia; limits of the Russian speakers' support for Russia's foreign policy; support for government's security-related policies and the presence of NATO troops in Latvia; and the ability of Latvia and its NATO allies to defend Latvia in the case of an armed conflict.

Regarding public perception of Russia as a threat, surveys show that to some extent she is seen as a threat. According to the FACTUM 2015 public opinion survey, 48 percent of respondents regard Russia as a threat while 43 per cent disagree. Predictably, there are considerable differences between Latvians and Russian speakers: 64 per cent of Latvians regarded Russia as a threat, while

just 23 per cent of Russian speakers agreed with such an assessment (Rostoks 2016, p. 9). Russia's policies, however, are not among top concerns, as the general public regards 'low wages and a lack of social and employment guarantees' (94 per cent), 'low birth rate and the general demographic situation' (82 percent), 'problems in Latvia's health care system' (76 per cent), 'corruption' (76 per cent), 'crime' (58 per cent), and 'problems relating to societal integration' (49 per cent) to be more important than the threat emanating from Russia's policies. Interestingly, the views of Latvians and Russian speakers differ only on foreign policy and societal integration (i.e. the use of Latvian as the official language, and the presence of other nationalities in Latvia).

On all other issues there are hardly any differences between Latvians and Russian speakers. Moreover, longitudinal data from SKDS surveys starting from 2002 reveal that most of the time less than 10 percent of Russian speakers and less than 40 percent of Latvians have regarded Russia as a threat to Latvia, with the years 2008 (the Russia-Georgia War) and 2014-15 (the military conflict in Ukraine) being exceptions rather than the rule. SKDS data also indicate perceptions of Russia as a threat have decreased by 10 per cent when compared to 2014 (a decrease from 64 percent in 2014 to 54 per cent in 2015) (Rostoks 2016, p. 12). In short, ethnic Latvians are more likely than Russian speakers to see Russia as a threat, but Russia's policies are on average regarded as less of a threat when compared to other threats to personal security as evidenced by data presented earlier in this paragraph (Berzina 2016, pp. 20-21). Also, it seems that the general public's perception of Russia as a threat is decreasing when compared to 2014.

Latvians are more likely to see Russia's policies as a threat than Russian speakers, but what are the views of both groups on Russia as an economic partner? Public opinion surveys reveal that there is no willingness among the general public to sever economic relations with Russia as a result of Russia's role in the military

conflict in Ukraine. Figure 1 indicates that about a quarter of general public (26 percent) were willing to strongly condemn Russia in early 2015. The rest were either in favour of manoeuvring between Russia and the West (26 percent) or in favour of being on friendly terms with Russia irrespective of its role in the military conflict in Ukraine (35 percent). Although differences between Latvians and Russian speakers are stark in this respect, even among ethnic Latvians the support for condemning Russia (40 percent) is less than the sum of those who want to be on friendly terms with Russia no matter what (24 percent) and those who favour of manoeuvring between Russia and the West (21 percent). Russian speakers, in turn, are unequivocal in their support of maintaining good relations with Russia or at least manoeuvring between Russia and the West (Berzina 2016, pp. 22-23). Thus, Russia as an economic partner and opportunity looms large for the general public in Latvia, despite its military involvement in Ukraine.

Figure 1. How should Latvia develop its relationship with Russia in the context of the Ukrainian crisis?
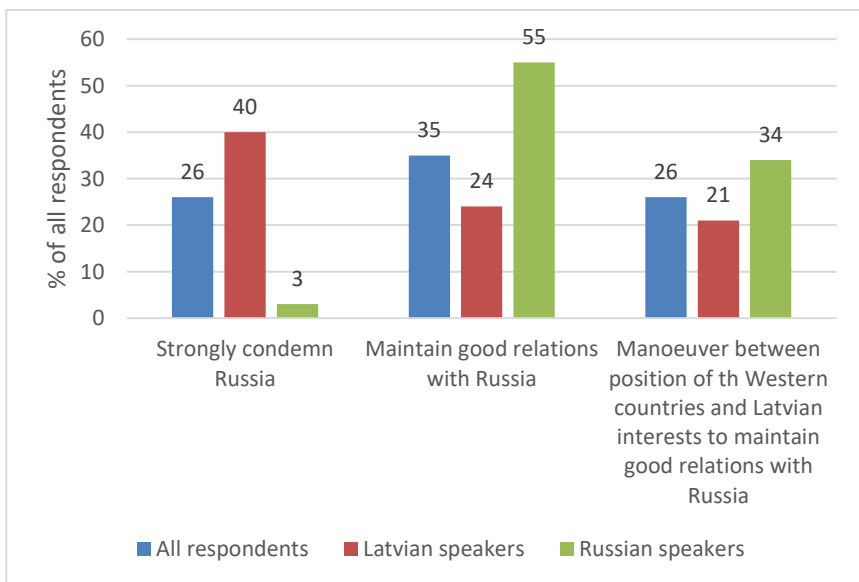
Source: FACTUM, 2015. Survey commissioned by the Centre for Security and Strategic Research, Latvian National Defence Academy.

Another aspect of Russia as an economic partner is worth exploring. A large part of the general public are in favour of increasing the Eastern element of Latvia's foreign policy (Eastern states, including Russia and former CIS states). Opinion survey data reveal that Eastern foreign policy orientation has been the preferred choice of a greater share of the general public than the Western orientation. Figure 2 indicates that this changed in 2014, but two years later (in 2016) Western and the Eastern foreign policy orientations were equally attractive, with 36 percent of all respondents preferring the Western orientation and 37 percent preferring the Eastern orientation (Rostoks 2016, p. 19).

Figure 2. Latvia's desirable foreign policy orientation. Which countries should Latvia's foreign policy decision-makers prioritize?
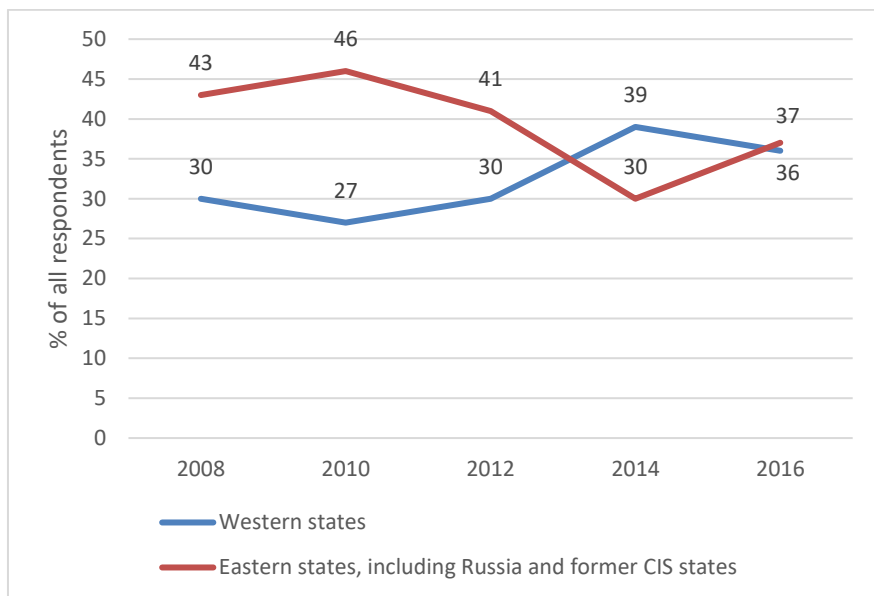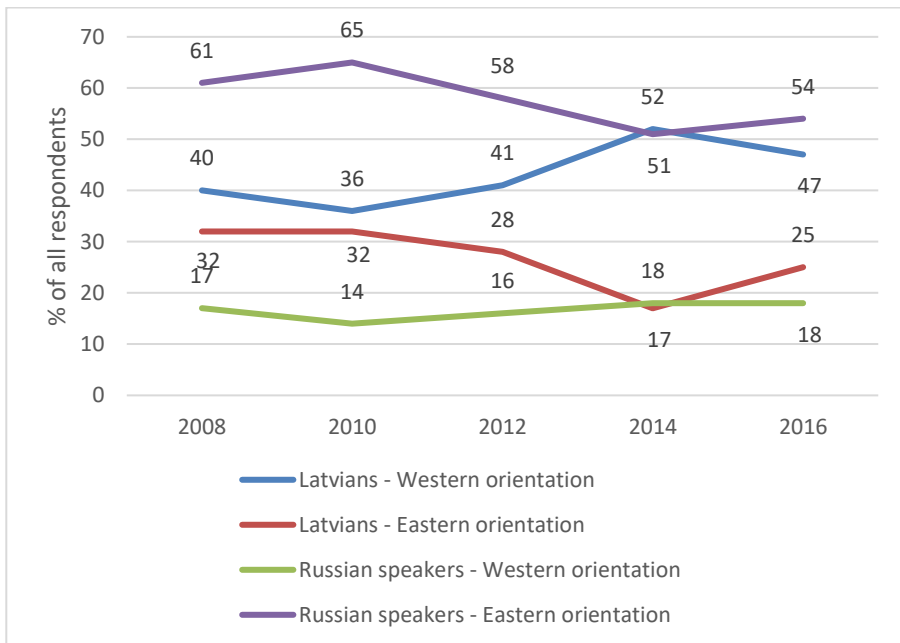

Source: SKDS data, 2008-2016.

When it comes to public support for Western and Eastern foreign policy orientations, the differences between Latvians and Russian speakers are significant. In fact, views of Latvians and Russian speakers are mirror images in reverse. In 2014 approximately three times as many Latvians were likely to be in favour of the Western foreign policy orientation than the Eastern one (52 percent against 17 percent). Russian speakers, in turn, despite Russia's complicity in the turmoil in Ukraine were almost three times as likely to be in favour of the Eastern foreign policy orientation over the Western one (51 percent against 18 percent). In the absence of military conflicts involving Russia, support among Latvians for the Eastern foreign policy orientation increases, while Russian speakers are likely to be even more enthusiastic about the Eastern foreign

policy orientation at the expense of the Western one (see Figure 3) (Rostoks 2016, p. 20).

Figure 3. Latvia's desirable foreign policy orientation. Which countries should Latvia's foreign policy decision-makers prioritize? The views of Latvians and Russian speakers.

Source: SKDS data, 2008-2016.

Results from a separate survey from the Latgale region conducted in early 2016 reveal mixed results. On the one hand, this survey confirms that a large part of the general public strongly believes that Russia plays an outsized role in Latvia's economy. 80 percent of all respondents agreed with the statement that "Economic relations with Russia are very important for Latvia's economy". 69 percent of Latvians, 85 percent of Russian speakers, and 80 percent of respondents who use the Latgalian dialect on a daily

basis agreed with this statement. Also, the majority of respondents agreed with the statement that "Latvia needs good relations with Russia even though Russia has demonstrated its readiness to defend its interests more aggressively, as it has done in Georgia and Ukraine" (see Figure 4). 62 percent of all respondents agreed with this statement (52 percent of Latvians, 68 percent of Russian speakers, and 50 percent of respondents who use the Latgalian dialect on a daily basis agreed with this statement) (Rostoks 2016, pp. 21-22). Thus, a clear majority across all major groups regards Russia as a very important economic partner and does not want to risk economic relations because of Russia's policies with regard to Georgia and Ukraine.

**Figure 4.** Respondents' views on Latvia-Russia relations. Question: Do you agree with the statement "Latvia needs good relations with Russia even though Russia has demonstrated its readiness to defend its interests more aggressively, as it has done in Georgia and Ukraine"?
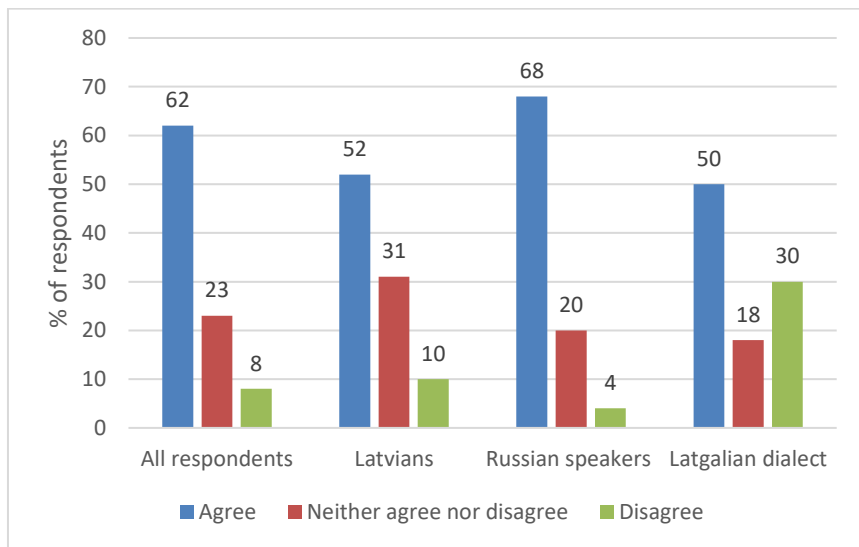
Source: SKDS data, 2016a. Survey commissioned by the Centre for Security and Strategic Research, Latvian National Defence Academy.

On the other hand, however, results from the SKDS public opinion survey in Latgale (2016) as well as the FACTUM survey in Latvia (2015) indicate that support for Russia's foreign policy among the Russian speaking part of the population in Latvia has its limits. When asked to assess whether Russia should become more involved in helping to solve problems of Russian speakers in Latgale, the majority of those who took part in the survey indicated that they do not want Russia's involvement. 52 percent were against Russia's political involvement (22 percent were in favour), 55 percent were against Russia's economic involvement (17 percent were against), and 68 per cent were against Russia's military involvement in the Latgale region (8 percent were in favour) (SKDS survey, 2016). Results of the FACTUM survey from 2015 reveal similar results, that is, there is little support for all sorts of Russian involvement in Latvian politics (see Figure 5). Even the majority of all Russian speakers is against Russia's involvement in defending the rights and interests of Russian speakers (Rostoks 2016, pp. 25-26).

Figure 5. Responses to the question: Do you agree that the rights and interests of Russian speakers in Latvia are violated to such an extent as to justify Russia's involvement?
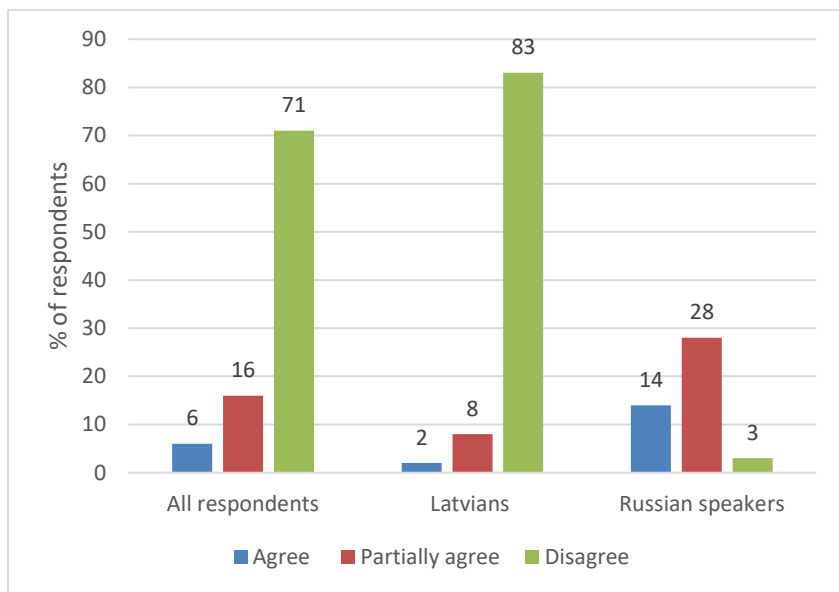
Source: FACTUM survey, 2015.

The Latvian government has adopted key decisions in recent years regarding the increase of the defence budget up to 2 percent of GDP and the presence of troops from other member states on a rotational basis in Latvia. Do these decisions enjoy widespread public support? Data from the SKDS survey which was conducted in the spring of 2016 reveals a mixed picture, and there are substantial differences among Latvians and Russian-speakers on most key aspects of government's security and defence policy and its relationship with NATO. To start with, data on support for the government's decision to increase defence budget up to 2 per cent

of GDP reveals that a significant plurality supports this decision. 39 percent of all respondents support this decision, while 35 percent do not (20 percent neither support nor oppose this decision). The support for increased defence expenditures is higher among Latvians (53 percent) than among Russian speakers (18 percent). In contrast, 60 percent of Russian speakers oppose the decision to increase defence expenditures, while only 19 percent of Latvians seem to think that defence expenditures should not be increased (SKDS 2016b).

NATO as an organization is largely regarded in favourable terms, although support for the Alliance is mixed. 48 percent of all respondents are confident about NATO, while 43 percent are not. Latvians see NATO in more favourable terms than Russian speakers. 65 percent of Latvians are confident about NATO, but 27 percent are not. Russian speakers, in contrast, distrust NATO, with 69 percent of them having unfavourable views about NATO and only 21 percent expressing confidence in the Alliance. Moreover, there are significant differences among Latvians and Russian speakers on the issue of the presence of troops from other NATO member states in Latvia. 41 percent of all respondents have positive views on this issue, while 28 percent hold negative views (another 28 percent are neutral on this issue). 58 percent of Latvians see the presence of troops from other NATO member states in Latvia in positive terms, and only 12 percent disagree, while 54 percent of Russian speakers regard the presence of troops from other NATO member states in Latvia as negative (and only 14 percent see this in positive light). Russian speakers, however, are more likely than Latvians to disagree with the statement that there is enough information about the presence of NATO troops in Latvia. 40 percent of Russian speakers regard the amount of publicly available information as insufficient. Only 19 percent of Russian speakers disagree with such an assessment. Latvians, in turn, seem to be more satisfied with the amount of available

information on the presence of NATO troops in Latvia. 34 percent of Latvians regard the amount of information to be sufficient, but 28 percent think that there is not enough information on the presence of NATO troops in Latvia (SKDS survey, 2016b).

There is broad support for NATO among the general public in Latvia, but the public is hesitant regarding increasing the number of NATO troops in Latvia. Despite the fact that 36 percent of all respondents disagree with the statement that the possibility of an external military attack is so small that it does not make sense to prepare for this contingency (29 percent agree with this statement), the public is hesitant about the need to increase the number of troops from other NATO member states in Latvia. 50 percent of all respondents agree with the statement that the stationing of troops from other NATO member states in Latvia would needlessly provoke Russia (15 percent disagree). Only 23 percent of all respondents are in favour of stationing more U.S. troops and military equipment in Latvia, while 44 percent disagree. Scepticism with regard to NATO troop increases in Latvia is not restricted to negative attitudes towards U.S. troops, as only 23 percent of all respondents are in favour of increasing the number of troops from other NATO member states in Latvia (39 percent disagree) (SKDS survey, 2016b). Thus, the general public seems to be more in favour of the idea that deterrent measures against external military threats are mainly carried out by the Latvian military alone or in tandem with other NATO member states. There is substantially less public support for an outsized NATO presence in Latvia because that would be either unnecessary or too provocative.

All in all, the analysis of public opinion in Latvia reveals that Russia's policies are seen as threatening by a substantial plurality of respondents, although there are considerable differences between Latvians and Russian speakers. In fact, substantial differences between Latvians and Russian speakers exist on all foreign,

security, and defence policy issues involving Russia and NATO. Latvians are likely to be more critical towards Russia's policies in Ukraine. Latvians are less likely to have favourable views on Russia as an economic partner. NATO membership, in turn, is viewed rather favourably by Latvians. Also, Latvians are in favour of increasing defence expenditures. There are, however, two important limits to public (mostly Latvian) support for government policies. First, the general public is not willing to sacrifice the economic relationship with Russia for geopolitical reasons. Russia is seen as an important economic partner. Second, the public is hesitant with regard to the stationing of more troops from other NATO member states in Latvia, as Russia may see this move as too provocative. It is up to the government though to communicate with society and to explain the rationale behind strengthening Latvia's defence capabilities.

Conclusion

A sea change has taken place in Latvia since the annexation of Crimea and the beginning of the military conflict in Eastern Ukraine. Latvia's key priority in the defence sector before the Ukraine crisis was to contribute to international operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. This contribution was seen as sufficient to ensure allied support for Latvia in the unlikely event of a military conflict. Latvia managed to make the best out of these efforts because it succeeded in developing some military niche capabilities and obtaining allied support for NATO initiatives that were important for its national security. Unfortunately, the negative effects outweighed the few gains considerably because another consequence of this strategy was that Latvia had negligible self-defence capabilities.

Over the past few years, however, Latvia has taken major steps to increase its defence capabilities. Also, NATO presence in the Baltic region has increased substantially. Steps have been taken to

reduce vulnerabilities, such as underfunded interior security institutions, vulnerability of Latvia's information space, and concerns about the large Russian-speaking minority in Latvia. So far the most successfully implemented initiatives have been related to increasing NATO visibility through intensive military exercises, establishing NFIU, and the soon-to-happen deployment of a multinational battalion. As for national efforts, Latvian policy makers have made a commitment to increase defence spending up to 2 percent of GDP by 2018. Also, many procurement and training programmes have been launched in order to strengthen self-defence capabilities. In addition, the recruitment system has been reviewed with the aim to increase the number of men and women in the Latvian military. Still, the policies that would address vulnerabilities emanating from a weak civil security system are lacking.

In order to address the asymmetric threats, cooperation between defence and interior sectors has intensified, and laws and administrative procedures for crisis management have been adjusted. Steps have been taken to strengthen early warning and border control. The efforts to engage in dialogue with Russian-speakers can be described as half-hearted at best. Latvia has done little to counter Russia's information warfare because it failed to establish an alternative Russian language platform (a nation-wide TV channel, for example) that could counter Russian propaganda narratives. Nevertheless, social survey results lend proof that Russia's influence on society is limited because a relatively small proportion of Russian-speakers support Russia's narratives. There is little support for Russia-backed separatism in Latgale and Russia's involvement in protecting the rights of Russian-speakers in Latvia. Also, Russia's influence on Latvia's foreign policy has been negligible because, if anything, Latvia integrated even further in the EU and NATO over recent years.

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SUBJECTIVE SECURITY IN A VOLATILE GEOPOLITICAL SITUATION: DOES LITHUANIAN SOCIETY FEEL SAFE?

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ABSTRACT. The geopolitical situation of Lithuania has deteriorated since the annexation of Crimea and the military conflict in Eastern Ukraine. It has affected the objective security of the state as well as subjective security of the Lithuanian population. This article analyses subjective security and deals with the subjective perception of geopolitical and military threats, mainly social attitudes towards national security and the willingness to defend the country. Article is based on theories of securitisation and human security and holds that individuals are the primary referents of security. Empirically, the article relies on the original data of the research project "Subjective Security in a Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors and Individual Strategies", funded by the Research Council of Lithuania. Article shows the dynamics of social attitudes towards security. Over the last 15 years, a clear shift towards the understanding of potential military threats has occurred. Nevertheless, the predominant concern about individual security, overshadowing security of the state and

security of the global order, found in previous studies, has persisted. An individual, as a rule, feels most secure in his/her "closest" environment, e.g. family and friends, and least secure in the "farthest" environment, e.g. other continents.

Introduction

The annexation of Crimea and the ongoing military conflict in Eastern Ukraine has created a tense geopolitical situation in Europe. In response, the Lithuanian state has securitised the issue of geopolitical threats. Military expenditure has grown and in April 2015, the Lithuanian National Defence Council decided to reintroduce compulsory military service, which was suspended in 2008 with a provision that it could be reintroduced in the case of a deteriorating geopolitical situation.

The changed geopolitical situation of Lithuania has affected the objective security[1] of the state and has also affected the subjective security[2] of the Lithuanian population. In the previous two decades, Lithuanian researchers from various disciplines – political scientists, economists, sociologists, criminologists and lawyers – have been interested in the public perception of security. Researchers have mostly concentrated on political, economic and social aspects of subjective security (Grėbliauskas 2003; Šiukštienė 2004; Šimašius, Vilpišauskas 2005; Surplys 2007; Mažylis, Unikaitė-Jakuntavičienė 2014) as well as on public aspects of subjective security (Dobryninas, Gaidys 2004; Vileikienė 2010; Dobryninas et al. 2012; Dobryninas et al. 2013). Much less research was carried out on into other dimensions of security: ecological (Gavėnienė 2008; Sinkevičius, Ignatavičius 2009), energy security (Šatūnienė 2004; Budrys 2008), information security (Jurgelevičiūtė 2007), military security (Kojala, Keršanskas 2015) and perception of

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[1] Objective security means being safe.

[2] Subjective security means feeling safe.

military threats (Janušauskienė, Novagrockienė 2002; Gečienė 2015).

The most consistently analysed aspect of subjective security in Lithuania is public security, e.g. protection against crime. Every year since 2005, the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Lithuania has conducted a survey based on the same methodology (Vileikienė 2010; Vileikienė 2015). The accumulated data allows the establishment of long-term trends and shows how the perception of security in the population has changed at different levels (in the country, in the city, town or village, or the immediate neighbourhood); reasons for feeling insecure; factors that influence the perception of security and the influence of this perception on the trust in the institutions of criminal justice as well as on the evaluation of their performance.

Meanwhile, this article is devoted to the analysis of subjective perceptions of military threats in Lithuania and the individual strategies of coping with these threats, including willingness to defend the country. The article is based on part of the data collected within the project "Subjective Security in a Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors and Individual Strategies", carried out at the Lithuanian Social Research Centre, Institute of Sociology and supported by the Research Council of Lithuania. The article uses the quantitative data of the project – a representative national survey (N=1,004) that was conducted in February 2016 by the polling company "Spinter tyrimai". The research included a questionnaire on security perception at different levels: in the immediate neighbourhood (e.g. family and friends); in the community (e.g. city, town or village where an individual lives); in the country; in the EU; and in the world; as well as on the change of perceived security in comparison to five years ago and, prospectively, five years from 2016. The research also included questions on how people perceive the importance of certain threats to security in Lithuania and the EU, and how they

perceive the probability (risk) that those threats might actually affect Lithuania. Additional empirical data sources are the above-mentioned surveys commissioned by the Ministry of Interior from 2005–2015, monthly surveys of trust in institutions[3] and Eurobarometer survey data.

Individuals as primary referents of security

Security studies underwent considerable transformation after the end of the Cold War. The primary concern of security studies in the Cold War period – international military security – was gradually losing its supremacy and giving way to new approaches. "Different referents, dangers and strategies" (Both 2013: xv) as well as new topics of research started to appear. Importantly, referents of security have extended from nation states and international political organisations to communities, families, and individuals, one the one hand, and the whole Earth, on the other hand. Threat stopped being associated purely with the war. Threats of local and global ecological and natural disasters, viruses, international criminal activities, cyber-attacks, terrorism, etc., have all become more prominent subjects of academic scrutiny. Strategies of coping with threats have evolved as well and went beyond the military and intelligence areas and into subjects as diverse and complex as cyber-safety, ecological safety, health safety, individual safety, social guarantees, civic rights, and many others. New areas of analysis include such phenomena as human trafficking, ecological security, and post-colonial security.

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[3] In Lithuania, surveys of trust in institutions are performed by two public opinion and market research companies: "Baltijos tyrimai" (commissioned by news agency ELTA) and "Vilmorus" (commissioned by the daily "Lietuvos rytas"). Representative face-to-face surveys are performed monthly. Although in both surveys respondents are presented with the same question "For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it", the answer options are slightly different.

Human security is one of the broadest "umbrella-type" theoretical alternatives to state-based international military security. The theory of human security goes "beyond purely state-based notions of military and territorial security" (Hudson et al 2013:25) and claims that individuals, not nation states, are the primary referents of security. Human security expands the understanding of threats, both within and outside the state. It stresses that contemporary "threats increasingly lack identifiable enemies and people can be insecure inside secure state" (Hamil as quoted in Hudson et al 2013:25).

For the first time, the term "human security" appeared on the agenda of security studies in 1994 in the United Nations' "Human Development Report". The Report stated that "there have always been two major components of human security: freedom from fear and freedom from want. <…> But later the concept was tilted in favour of the first component rather than the second" (Human Development Report 1994:24) and that "forgotten were the legitimate concerns of ordinary people who sought security in their daily lives. For many of them, security symbolized protection from the threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environmental hazards (Human Development Report 1994:22). Thus, the Report redirected the attention from security of nation states and from war to security of individuals, their everyday life and their human rights: "human security is not a concern with weapons – it is a concern with human life and dignity" (Human Development Report 1994:22).

The Human Development Report defined human security in a very broad way, covering seven areas of security: economic (the threat for human security comes from falling incomes and unemployment); food (the threat comes from absence of access to basic food, food safety); health (threats come from infectious, parasitic, and other diseases, HIV/AIDS and other epidemics); environmental (threats come from intensive industrialization,

population growth, natural disasters, pollution, water scarcity and degradation of local ecosystems); personal (threats from the state (physical torture), threats from other states (war), threats from other groups of people (ethnic tension), threats from individuals or gangs against other individuals or gangs (crime, street violence), threats directed against women (rape, domestic violence), threats directed at children based on their vulnerability and dependence (child abuse), threats to self (suicide, drug use); community (threats from ethnic conflicts, problems of gender equality, oppressive practices of traditional communities, vulnerability of indigenous people); and political (threats of violation of human rights and state repressions) (Human Development Report 1994:23-32). The report wrote about global human security, pointing out that "real threats to human security in the next century will arise more from the actions of millions of people than from aggression by a few nations" (Human Development Report 1994:33).

Nevertheless, this all-inclusive approach was criticised that it "has made human security too vague to have any meaning for policy-makers" (Hudson et al 2013:26) and that it "shift[s] attention and resources away from conventional security issues" (Paris in Hudson et al 2013:26), and that the boundaries of definitions used in human security concept are not clear since "it is hard to know where human rights and human development end and where human security begins" (Hudson et al 2013:26). Nevertheless, despite these limitations, the human security approach creates a strong counter-theory to military-nation-states-centred approaches, and remains the major policy approach of the UN as well as the EU.

Securitisation was another important post-Cold War theory. It was developed by the Copenhagen school (formed at the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute) in the end of the 20th century. In 1998, Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde wrote a book called "Security: A New Framework of Analysis". The very notion

"securitization" was first introduced by Ole Wæver who went beyond the debate of whether security is objective (what really constitutes a threat) or subjective (what is perceived as a threat), suggesting that security is socially constructed by the speech act. Therefore, in order to better understand security, it is important to study ways in which certain issues are socially constructed as threats no matter whether these issues constitute a real threat or not. Thus, "securitisation refers to the process through which an issue is labelled a "security" issue by an (elite) actor, a process which moves the issue out of the normal political sphere and into the security sphere" (Nyman 2013:52). According to the Copenhagen school, to consider a speech act as securitising, this act should be connected to the notions of survival, urgency, threat, and defence. Securitisation, thus, refers to a discursive process by means of which "the issue is presented as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure" (Buzan, Wæver, de Wilde 1998:23-4).

The theory of securitisation holds that security should be understood more broadly than political and military state-based arrangements and therefore speaks about five areas of security: military, environmental, economic, societal and political security (Buzan, Wæver, de Wilde 1998). In comparison to the theory of human security which revolves around seven areas of security (economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political) and does not directly speak about military security, the approach of securitization is quite similar even though it does not speak about societal security in detail as the theory of human security which refers to food, health, personal and community security.

Subjective security, which is a key issue in this article, deals with the feeling of safety. Objective security, on the other hand, refers to "being protected from danger" (Buzan 2009:50). In addition to

subjective security as a feeling of safety, it is necessary to mention "being free from doubt (confidence in one's knowledge)" (Buzan 2009:50). This means that an individual feels safe when he/she does not doubt his/her knowledge of the situation. The other important issue about objective and subjective security is that these two notions do not coincide as a rule. As Buzan states, "the referent threats (danger and doubt) are very vague, and the subjective feeling of safety or confidence has no necessary connections with actually being safe" (Buzan 2009:50).

Perception of security and threats by the individuals

Security can be defined as a freedom from threats. The bottom line of security is about survival, but it also includes concerns about the conditions of existence (Buzan 1983: 36–37). Such an understanding of security implies two main aspects of analysis: perceptions of existential threats and responses to these threats. Since security is inevitably linked with real or imagined threats, security analysis must include analysis of subjective perceptions of threats.

In general, there is a lack of empirical studies in Lithuania on this topic. In 2003, Janušauskienė and Novagrockienė published an article on the perception of security issues by the Lithuanian population based on qualitative interviews. They have reviewed survey data on security perception that were available in Lithuania up to 2002, and came to a conclusion that at the time, the Lithuanian population was mostly concerned with internal, as opposed to external, threats to security. In a survey from 2002, only 1% of population referred to external threats (Janušauskienė, Novagrockienė, 2003: 301–302). Surveys show that 15 years ago, the indicated sources of insecurity were first of all social and economic, e.g. unsafe living environment, level of crime, poor performance of law enforcement authorities, poor economic

situation, anxiety over price increases, fear of losing income sources, and health problems.

According to the data of the research project "Subjective Security in a Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors and Individual Strategies", presented in this article by members of the research team, the perception of threats has changed due to a new geopolitical situation in the region. In the quantitative representative national survey, respondents were asked an open question to describe what the first thing that comes into mind when asked about security is[4]. After sorting answers into categories, the largest category, 21% of respondents indicated geopolitical military threats; 15% indicated the general crime situation, 14% safety in their neighbourhood, 12% insufficient income, standard of living or economic situation, and 6% indicated health problems (see Figure 1). All this indicates that, unlike 15 years ago, citizens think much more often of their security in terms of international threats next to domestic threats.

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[4] In Lithuanian language, there is no difference between "safety" and "security". One and the same word is used to refer to both: "saugumas".

Figure 1. General perception of security in 2016 by percentage (Open question: "When asked about security, what are your first thoughts?").
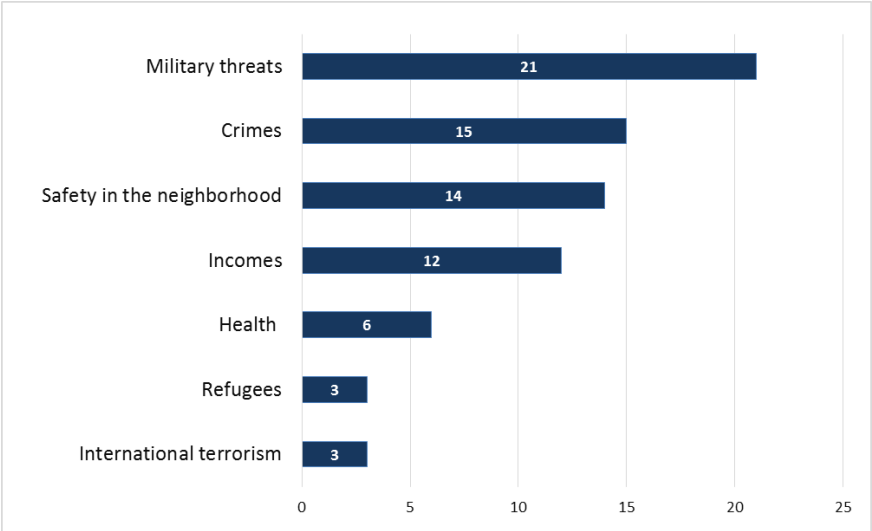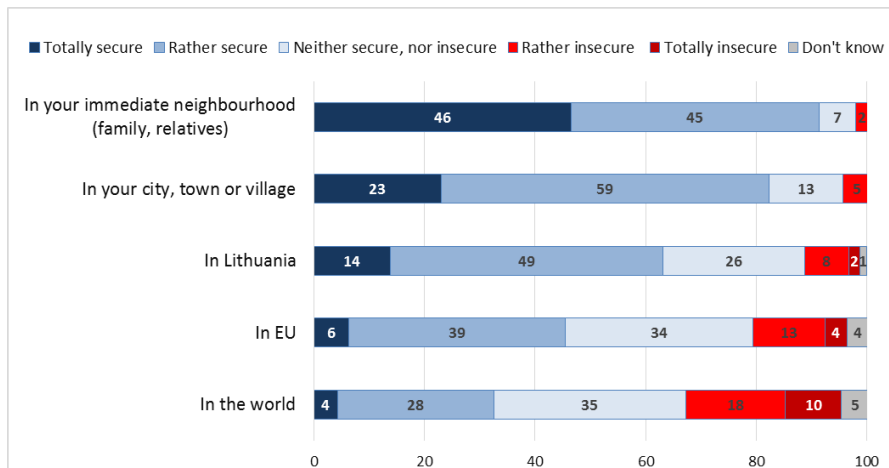

Source: Data of the research project "Subjective Security in a Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors and Individual Strategies".

Comparison of the feeling of security in different environments (family, community, country, the EU, and the global world) shows that the closer the environment, the more secure an individual feels. In the immediate neighbourhood (family, relatives, friends), 91% of respondents feel totally or rather secure; the respective percentage for the city, town or village is 82%; for Lithuania as country it was 63%; for the EU 45%; and for the world 32% (see Figure 2). Other surveys also indicate a certain gap between subjective feeling of security in different environments, although a smaller one. For example, Eurobarometer 2015 survey[5] also

reveals a difference between the feeling of security in the neighbourhood and the EU, but the difference is not as large[6].

Figure 2. Feeling secure in different environments in 2016 (Question: "How secure do you feel in your immediate neighbourhood, in your city town or village, in Lithuania, in the EU, in the World?").

Source: Data of the research project "Subjective Security in a Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors and Individual Strategies".

It is likely that in the case of more distant environments the feeling of security is associated not as much with real, as with perceived

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_432_fact_lt_en.pdf

[6] It must be noted that we used a different wording of the question than the Eurobarometer study ("To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement, that ... is a secure place to live?" , in our survey: "How secure do you feel in …"), as well as different answer options ("totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree, totally disagree, don't know" , in our study – a five point scale with a neutral position: "totally secure, rather secure, neither secure, nor insecure, rather insecure and totally insecure, don't know").

threats, for which the main source of information is mass media. Therefore, while considering the security situation in the EU and in the world, people tend to think about well-known media-escalated issues, such as military conflicts, political instability, terrorist attacks and refugee crises. Such selective use of information can build an image of a relatively secure Lithuania in comparison to other countries like France and Belgium or the Middle East. It could be said that Lithuanians tend to perceive their country as an oasis of relative safety in a dangerous world. Locally significant issues that are all but globally irrelevant overshadow important global problems. A good example is the limited coverage of global problems by the Lithuanian mass media after the terrorist attack in Nice this summer and of the failed Turkish *coup d'état*; at the time, the top news in the Lithuanian media was a story about a small hedgehog which was almost squashed by a drunk mob in a Lithuanian seaside resort[7].

Another interesting finding of the research was that people tend to exaggerate the importance of threats. Despite the fact that the majority of population (63%) say that they feel secure in their country and only 10% feel insecure, the data indicates that at the same time a majority (between 74−90%) see various issues of national security either as "very important", or "important" (see Table 1).

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[7] Delfi. Valatka, Rimvydas. Po Nicos ir Turkijos Lietuva tokia rami. O gal geriau apsidairykim? http://www.delfi.lt/news/ringas/lit/r-valatka-po-nicos-ir-turkijos-lietuva-tokia-rami-o-gal-geriau-apsidairykim.d?id=71827570

Table 1. The most important security issues in Lithuania and the EU as seen by the population in 2016 (percentage of respondents that think that it is "very important" and "rather important").

Security issues	In Lithuania	In the EU
Emigration	90	78
Unemployment	90	85
Crime	88	88
Energy security	87	89
Poor economic situation	87	87
Poverty and discrimination	85	79
Alcoholism	84	74
Protection of external borders	84	90
Possible military attack against one of the countries of EU	81	93
Terrorism	80	93
Health issues, such as epidemics, contagions	79	83
Possible collapse of the Euro zone	79	91
Man-made disasters, such as nuclear power plant accidents, oil spills	76	83
Lack of public awareness and patriotism	76	76
Large scale cyber-attacks against internet sites and computer systems of state institutions, businesses or media	75	87
Refugees from Asia and Africa	74	92
Hybrid war	74	86
Political instability, such as emergence of radical parties, political takeovers	74	85

Climate change and pollution	72	83
Military conflicts outside the borders of EU	68	87
Natural disasters, such as floods, droughts, earthquakes	65	81

Source: Data of the research project "Subjective Security in a Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors and Individual Strategies".

As the data indicates, there are important differences between the perception of security threats related to Lithuania and to the EU. When asked about the most important problems in Lithuania, respondents first of all emphasize social and economic problems such as emigration, unemployment, crime, poor economic situation, poverty and discrimination. The problems they associate with the EU are mainly military and political issues: military attacks, terrorism, refugees from Asia and Africa, and the possible collapse of the Euro zone. The association of one's own country with the "internal" threats and of the EU with the "external" threats might be explained by information presented in the media, as well as a tendency to focus on domestic issues and (mental and physical) disassociation from problems taking place "somewhere far away" that, many believe, are less likely to happen in Lithuania or directly affect them.

Analysis of the data shows that the perceived importance of issues is influenced by the perceived likelihood that the problem will happen (will become more prominent) in Lithuania (see Figure 3)[8].

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[8] The matrix is modelled on two survey answers. The horizontal axis indicates the perceived importance of the issue (percentage of respondents who think that the issue is very important or rather important for Lithuania). The vertical axis indicates the perceived likelihood that the problem will actually happen in Lithuania (percentage of respondents who think that there is a very high risk or a high risk that the problem will actually

Therefore, the issues of increasing unemployment, worsening economic situation and increasing crime form a distinct group of issues. People think of these problems as "more real" than real or imaginary threats emanating from migration, terrorism, cyber and military attacks, political instability or energy security. Interestingly, the problems of migration and terrorism have yet barely affected Lithuania.

Figure 3. Relation between the perceived importance of a security issue and the perceived risk of it actually happening in Lithuania in 2016.
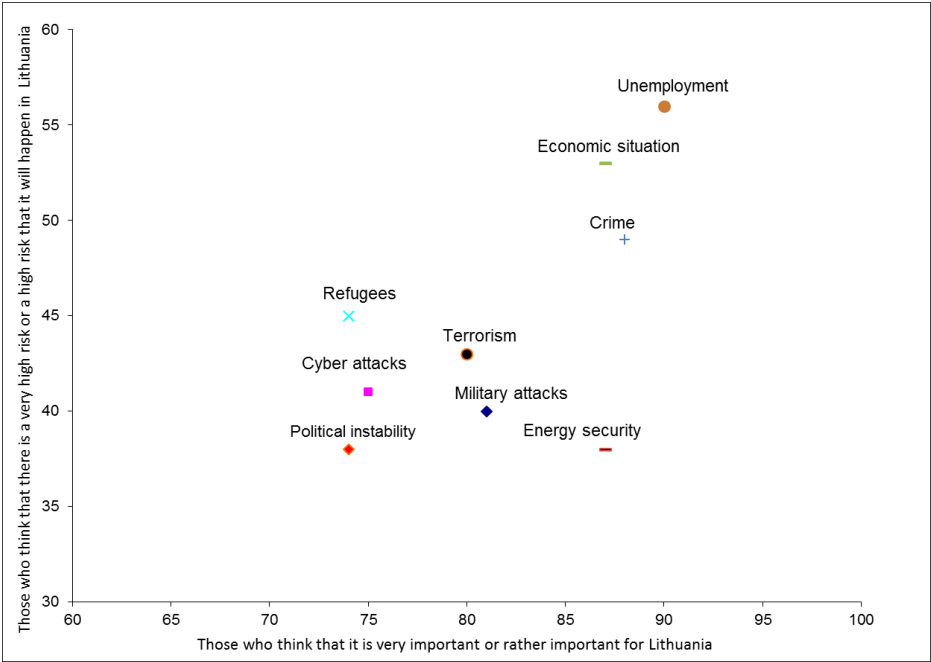
happen in Lithuania).

Source: Data of the research project "Subjective Security in a Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors and Individual Strategies".

Thus, changing geopolitical situation in the region has influenced individual perceptions of security. If 15 years ago few people were concerned with external risks and threats, at the time of writing the importance attributed to potential military threats is much higher. For a long time, the prevailing perception was that membership of the EU and NATO are sufficient security guarantees against military threats. However, events in Ukraine, Russian imperial ambitions, and memories of the Soviet occupation have sensitised Lithuanians to potential military threats. According to our research, over a half of those polled (53%) see Russia as an unfriendly country to Lithuania. A similar proportion (49%) said that because of the events in Ukraine they feel less secure in Lithuania. It is important that this section of the respondents emphasize the importance of military threats and see a higher risk that Russia could attack Lithuania.

Intentions to defend the country

The next step in our analysis is to see what the response strategies in the face of threats are. Until now there were few comprehensive studies based on the same methodology that would reveal value orientations of Lithuanians on this question. One of the studies, "Civil Empowerment Index", has been conducted annually since 2007[9]. In recent years, as the geopolitical situation was changing and as the prospect of a military conflict seemed to become more real, several surveys on the perception of threats were conducted, e.g. the survey commissioned by the news portal Delfi.lt[10] and the

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[9] Civil Society institute. "Lietuvos visuomenės pilietinės galios indekso tyrimas 2014 m." http://www.civitas.lt/lt/?pid=74&id=78 .

[10] National survey on threats to Lithuanian sovereignty: http://sprinter.lt/site/lt/vidinis_noslide/menutop/9/home/publish/Njg5Ozk7OzA=.

research within the project "Mokslo pieva"[11]. The surveys presented respondents with similar questions, but due to differences in research methodologies the results are somewhat different.

The "Civil Empowerment Index" study, conducted by the Civil Society Institute in November 2014, revealed how the perception of threats is related to patriotism and the intention to defend one's country in case of military attack. The data showed that more than half of the Lithuanian population would defend their country in the case of war[12]. This question was included in surveys since 1990. Back then, the number of citizens who would have defended their country was highest throughout the whole period of independence (61%); later surveys revealed a diminishing commitment. Only in 2014 did the numbers rise again, almost reaching the level of 1990 (see Figure 4). These fluctuations can be explained by the perception of a real military threat. The same study also revealed that the patriotic attitude is related with civic empowerment, since those respondents who expressed a positive willingness to defend their country had a higher individual civic empowerment index[13] than those who did not have such a willingness or were undecided.

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[11] "Lietuvos gyventojų nuomonė apie Lietuvos gynybą ir saugumą". "Mokslo pieva" project report http://mokslopieva.lt/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Lietuvos%20gyventoju%20nuomone%20apie%20Lietuvos%20gynyba%20ir%20sauguma.pdf

[12] The wording of the question: "Of course we all hope that there will not be another war, but if it were to come to that, would you be willing to fight for your country?" Answer options: Yes, No, Don't know.

[13] Civic Empowerment Index is calculated annually since 2007. It is constituted of four dimensions: the first one measures the actual civic engagement, the second measures the potential engagement, i.e. how many people would take action in the case of certain political, economical or local problems. The third dimension is the perception of civic efficacy, and the fourth shows the assessment of risks associated with civic engagement.

Figure 4. Willingness to defend Lithuania in the case of war in 1990 - 2016[14].
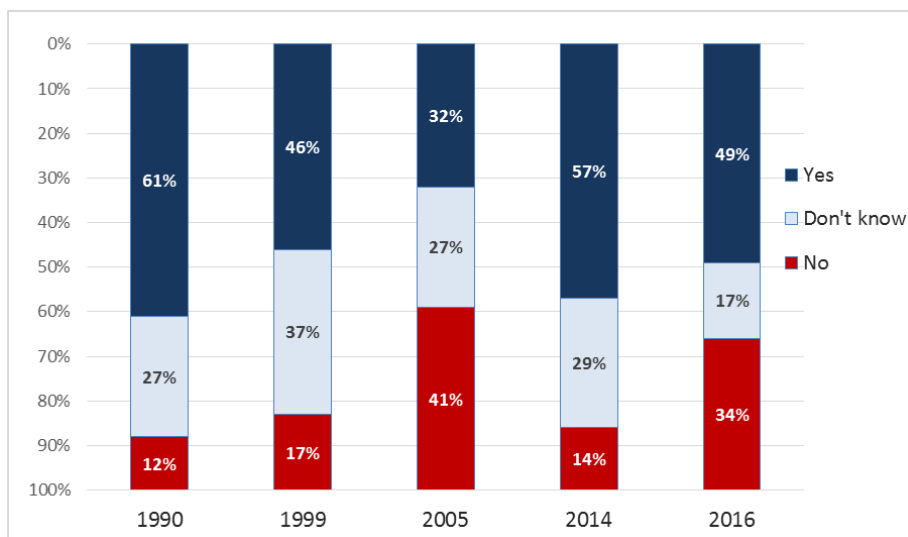
Source: European Values Survey 1990, 1999, 2005 m., Civic Empowerment Index 2014, data of the research project "Subjective Security in a Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors and Individual Strategies", 2016.

The data of the survey conducted in February 2016 as a part of the project "Subjective Security in a Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors and Individual Strategies" showed a lower willingness to defend the country compared to the data of 2014. Almost half of respondents said they would defend the country (49%), about one third said they would not (34%), and 17% were not sure. When interpreting this data it is necessary to take into

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[14] Civil Society institute. "Lietuvos visuomenės pilietinės galios indekso tyrimas 2014 m." http://www.civitas.lt/lt/?pid=74&id=78 . Wording of questions: "Of course we all hope that there will not be another war, but if it were to come to that, would you be willing to fight for your country?" Answer options: Yes, No, Don't know.

account that not all people would be able to actually take part in the defence due to their age, health situation, physical capabilities and other circumstances. The data shows that the group of those who would defend their country is predominantly constituted of young and middle aged men, especially those who have military-related experience (military service in the Lithuanian army, membership in the National Defence Volunteer Forces, Lithuanian Riflemen's Union, boy scout organisations and the like). Other important indicators that have a strong influence on the willingness to defend one's country are being proud of Lithuanian citizenship and patriotism[15]: 60% of those who are proud to be Lithuanian citizens and 60% of those who considered themselves patriots would defend their country in case of war (these two groups do not entirely coincide).

It is not possible to explain attitudes purely by the indicators of gender and age. Hypothetically, it could be due to a shift of attention from the Russia-Ukraine conflict to the issues of terrorism and the refugees crisis in the EU which came into the media's spotlight. It is also likely that the intention to defend one's country was affected by the reintroduction of conscription in 2015, though it must be noted that the planned number of conscripts was almost entirely filled up by volunteers, including females.

Figure 4 shows that the willingness of Lithuanians to defend their country was very low in 2005, when only 32% expressed willingness to defend it, and 41% said they would not. Possibly, one of the factors that influenced this change was Lithuania's accession to the EU and especially NATO, and the belief that they would ensure that Lithuania is never attacked again. This is confirmed by Eurobarometer data from 2005, when Lithuanians were among the few European nations that had very high

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[15] Wording of questions: "How proud are you to be a Lithuanian Citizen?" and "Are you a patriot of Lithuania?"

expectations about NATO. For example, in that year there were only three European nations that gave a clear preference to NATO concerning decisions on European defence policy: Denmark (45%), Lithuania (30%) and Poland (30%). Confidence in EU defence abilities was lower: 30% in Denmark, 20% in Poland and only 9% in Lithuania[16].

A survey commissioned by the news portal "Delfi.lt" and conducted by "Spinter tyrimai" in 2014 showed that in the case of real threat to Lithuanian sovereignty, the population pinned its hopes on military intervention by NATO. When asked if they believed that in the case of threat NATO would defend Lithuania, 44% gave a positive answer, while 35% thought that NATO would do so, but not immediately. 14% did not believe in the help of NATO, and 7% did not have an opinion[17]. The data could be interpreted in two ways. It shows a high level of confidence of Lithuanians in NATO, but it could also be a sign of doubt in the Lithuanian armed forces' ability to effectively defend the country. However, to test these assumptions, further research would be needed.

Opinions of preparedness and capacity of the country to defend against military attacks

The project "Subjective Security in a Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors and Individual Strategies" also aimed to investigate the perception of preparedness and capacity of the country to

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[16]   Standart   Eurobarometer   64   October–November   2005. http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb64/eb64_en.pdf.
Wording of the question: "In your opinion, should decisions concerning European defence policy be taken by national governments, by NATO or by the European Union?"
[17]   National   survey   on   threats   to   Lithuanian   sovereignty: http://sprinter.lt/site/lt/vidinis_noslide/menutop/9/home/publish/Nj g5Ozk7OzA=.

defend against military attacks. Respondents were asked to evaluate the preparedness of Lithuanian society, of the national defence system, and of Lithuania together with the help of NATO. The data demonstrates the high expectations that Lithuanians placed on NATO and a rather pessimistic view of the capability to defend itself alone − 55% and 41% were critical of the capability of the society and of the Lithuanian army, respectively, to stop enemy attacks (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Attitudes about preparedness of Lithuania to stop the attacks of the enemy[18].
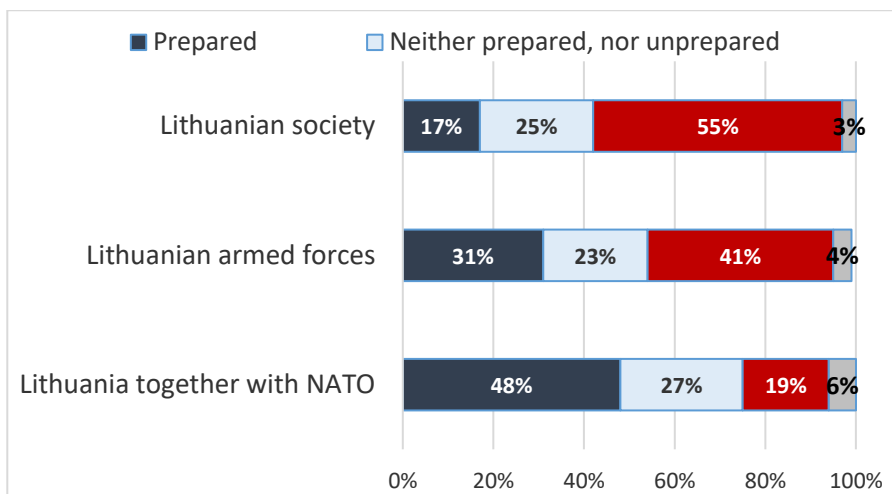
Source: data of the research project "Subjective Security in a Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors and Individual Strategies".

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[18] Wording of the question: To what extent, in your opinion, Lithuania is prepared to stop the attacks of the enemy?"

For a long time, the prevailing idea in the public sphere was that NATO membership is a bullet-proof guarantee against military aggression, and that the USA as the biggest and militarily strongest NATO member would do everything to protect Lithuania from losing its independence. These expectations were confirmed by President George W. Bush who said in November 2002 during his visit to Lithuania: "(…) anyone who would choose Lithuania as an enemy has also made an enemy of the United States of America"[19]. These expectations filtered into defence policy, especially after the recent economic crisis. Budget assignations for national defence were reduced starting from 2010, and in 2013 constituted 0.78% of GDP. They are being increased again since 2014. The changing geopolitical situation in the region prompted a review of the priorities, and in 2016, appropriations to national defence were to equal 1.48% of GDP and continue growing.[20].

Our project also investigated where Lithuanian citizens placed responsibility for their own security and the security of the state[21]. In the first case of public security, e.g. protection against crime, we can observe long-term trends, since this question is included into surveys commissioned by the Ministry of Interior[22]. According to the data from 2007, respondents placed responsibility for their

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[19] Text of Bush's Speech in Lithuania. The New York Times. 2002. http://www.nytimes.com/2002/11/24/international/europe/24LITHU-WIRE.html

[20] Appropriations for the national defence. Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania. http://www.kam.lt/en/budget_1065.html

[21] Respondents received two questions: "In your opinion, who is most responsible for your sense of security?"; "In your opinion, who is most responsible for the security of the Lithuanian state?" In both cases, respondents could choose up to three answers.

[22] Vileikienė E., Visuomenės saugumo jausmo ir teisėsaugos institucijų veiklos vertinimas. Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Lithuania. http://vrm.lrv.lt/uploads/vrm/documents/files/LT_versija/Viesasis_sa ugumas/Tyrimai/Gyventojuapklausa2010.pdf

own security on police (88%) and the population, i.e. themselves (63%). In 2010 the numbers were somewhat different: 63% and 47% respectively. The data from 2016 shows that citizens distributed the responsibility evenly: about half the respondents thought that both the police and the population had to take care of their security (see Figure 6). As indicated by surveys commissioned by the Ministry of Interior, the willingness to take more personal responsibility for one's own security is also evidenced by the increased willingness to personally take care for one's self-protection, and that of family and property (Vileikienė, 2015). It is also important, that during the last decade confidence in the police has increased dramatically, while recorded crime stabilised or even decreased, and unrecorded crime remained stable. This leads to the assumption that citizens consciously take more personal responsibility for their own security instead of expecting that "the state will take care of everything". On the one hand, people expect more from the police, yet, on the other hand, people have become active members of civil society and are less tolerant towards crimes. For example, the culture of driving has significantly improved, petty crimes have decreased, while personal responsibility for unsafe driving has increased.

Importantly, the largest part of respondents placed the responsibility for national security on the Lithuanian army (42%), and less so on the Cabinet of Ministers (37%), the State Security Department (36%), and NATO (36%).

Figure 6. Attitudes about the responsibility for the individual security and for security of the Lithuanian state in 2016.
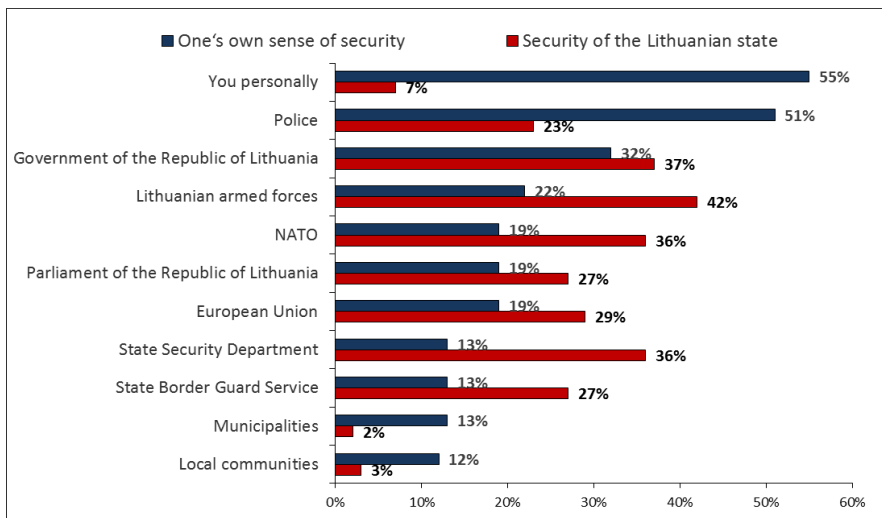
Source: data of the research project "Subjective Security in a Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors and Individual Strategies".

Unlike what was observed a few years ago, expectations vis-à-vis NATO went down and the belief that the citizens (or the state) themselves have to take care of the defence of the country has become stronger. It is likely that this change of attitude was influenced by the visible concern of the state leaders for the defence of the country against external threats and the associated political decisions, i.e. the reintroduction of conscription and increased funding of national defence. Nevertheless, the decision to reintroduce conscription was not received unambiguously. Our data shows that about a half of respondents (51%) were positive about it, a third (33%) were negative, while the rest were neutral.

Attitudes towards the Lithuanian army and NATO

One of the issues analysed in the project was whether the changing geopolitical circumstances in the region affect social attitudes towards the national army and NATO. One of the indicators for the attitudes of population towards the army is the level of trust in it. In Lithuania, a systematic research on trust in institutions, the army amongst them, started 20 years ago.

Analysis of the trends of trust in the army among Lithuanians has to take into account some important events that might influence attitudes towards the army. For example, how trust in army changed after Lithuania became a member of the EU and NATO in 2004, after conscription was suspended in 2008, after the Russo-Georgian armed conflict in summer of the same year, the economic crisis of 2009, the occupation of Crimea and military conflict in Eastern Ukrainian in 2014, the reintroduction of conscription in Lithuania in 2015 and subsequent discussions, and a flow of news messages and expert comments on military threats. It is likely that when the geopolitical situation was relatively calm and there were no apparent external threats, people attributed less importance to the role of the army as a guarantee of national security.

Recently, the population's trust in the army is among the highest, compared to other state institutions. However, the attitude was not always that positive (see Figure 7). Data from public opinion research company "Vilmorus" shows that in 1998 the proportion of those who trusted the army and those who did not were similar − 30% and 28% respectively, while the proportion of those who chose a neutral answer was as high as 42%. The latter opinion is changeable and can shift depending on circumstances.

Figure 7. Percentage trust in the army 1998–2015 in Lithuania (blue line – trust, red line – distrust).
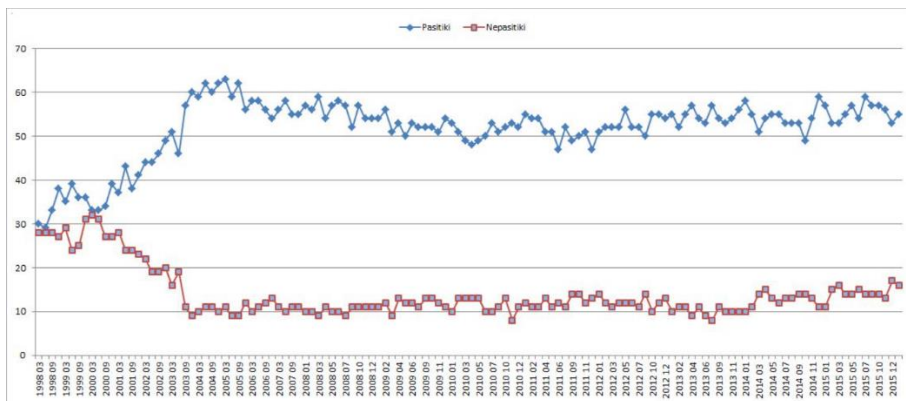
Sources: "Vilmorus" and daily "Lietuvos rytas"[23].

As the data shows that, since 2000, trust in the army started to increase gradually: in 2001, 40% said they did trust the army, about 50% in 2003, and in 2004–2005 it was about 60%. These years marked Lithuania's accession to the EU and NATO and the highest trust of Lithuanians in the army through the whole period between 1998 and 2016. A drop in trust level in October 2005 was related to the incident when a Russian fighter jet violated Lithuanian air space and crashed in its territory[24]. During that month, trust in the army dropped from 62% to 49%. Most likely, this incident raised doubts among the population in the state's

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[23]   Trust   in   army.   The   ministry   of   National   Defence.
https://www.kam.lt/lt/naujienos_874/pasitikejimas_krasto_apsauga_89
0.html

[24]   Delfi.   Įsimintiniausi   2005   metų   įvykiai   Lietuvoje.
http://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/isimintiniausi-2005-metu-ivykiai-lietuvoje.d?id=8383049#ixzz3XlVS8tfl

ability to control its air space. Although later the indicators of trust gradually recovered, they never reached the level of 2004–2005.

It should be noted that the Russo-Georgian armed conflict in summer 2008 had little impact on attitudes. Since the start of the military conflict in Eastern Ukraine in 2014, trust of Lithuanians in the army fluctuated from 49% to 58%. These fluctuations of trust in the army can be related to the public reaction to the annexation of Crimea and the increased flow of news on the conflict. Trust in the Lithuanian army dropped in March 2014, during Crimean occupation, and in the autumn of the same year, when the capacity of Lithuania to stop a possible attack of the enemy was actively debated in the public.

Analysis of trust in the army also must take into account the context, i.e. attitudes towards other institutions (Parliament, Government, President, political parties, church, media, police, courts, public prosecutor's offices, firefighters, state boarder guard service, banks, education, healthcare system, social insurance system, and municipalities). Comparison of trust in these institutions in 1998–2016 shows that there were only two institutions that had very high ratings during the whole period: firefighters and, less so, the Catholic Church. The army is among the most positively evaluated institutions. In 1998–2000 the level of trust in the army was lower, but since 2004, with minor fluctuations, more than half of the population trusted it, and only 10% did not. One of the factors that may have influenced attitudes towards the army is Russian propaganda, which aims at destroying trust in the army and understating readiness to defend the country, as well as the possibility of receiving help from NATO. This propaganda is transmitted through the Russian television channels some of which can be watched in Lithuania. According to the data of our project, in 2016, 15% of Lithuanian population watched Russian TV every day, 16% – a couple of times a week, and 9% – at least once a week. Most exposed were ethnic Russians: 65% of

them said that they watched Russian TV every day, 23% – a couple of times a week, and 10% – at least once a week. None of the ethnic Russians claimed that they never watched Russian TV. Among ethnic Lithuanians 52% never watched it. Russian political leaders and the mass media transmit messages that Lithuania and other Baltic states are weak. In addition, the information war is fought on the internet in comments sections. Trolls are working hard trying to create the impression that the society is dissatisfied and misses the old good (Soviet) times, awaiting that "the friendly army of the neighbouring Russia will come to save them"[25].

Conclusions

Changes of geopolitical situation in recent years have affected the subjective security of the Lithuanian population. If 15 years ago few were concerned about the external risks (such as an occupation), currently potential military threats are perceived as much more real. Nevertheless, people continue to be very concerned about their everyday life security as well. Issues of economic security, social security and heath, as well as security against crime remain of key importance. It is also important to note that people feel the most secure in their immediate environment (e.g. family and friends), and least secure – in the farthest geographical environments.

Perception of security in the population greatly depends on the political, economic and social situation in the country, individual situations, as well as the presence of external threats to the country and coverage of these threats by the mass media. Importantly, people associate their own country with the "internal" threats (such as emigration, unemployment, crime, economic situation, poverty and discrimination), and the EU with the "external"

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[25]   Delfi.   http://pasaulis.lrytas.lt/rytai-vakarai/rusijos-interneto-trolius-triuskina-gudrus-lietuvos-elfai.htm

threats (such as terrorism, migration from the Middle East, Asia and Africa). This type of association might be explained by the information available in the media, as well as the tendency to focus on internal issues of the country and disassociate from problems that are happening "somewhere far away" and are less likely to occur in Lithuania. As the analysis shows, the perceived importance of certain security issues is influenced by the perceived likelihood that the problem will happen (will become more prominent). Increasing unemployment, worsening economic situation and growing crime are regarded by Lithuanians as most important and at the same time most likely to happen. People think of these problems as "more real" than the threats of migration, terrorism, cyber-attacks, military or terrorist attacks, political instability and energy security.

Research has shown that patriotism and intention to defend the country in case of war are closely related. Those proud being Lithuanian citizens and considering themselves patriots are much more willing to defend their country.

The highest level of willingness to defend the country in case of war was observed in 1990 (61%), while later surveys revealed a diminishing commitment (by 2005 it has dropped by almost half to 32%). The changes may be explained by the accession to NATO and especially high expectations about security guarantees provided by membership, as well as relatively stable geopolitical situation in the region at the time. The willingness to defend the country increased again in 2014 (to 57%), and dropped in 2016 (49%). It is likely that these fluctuations were influenced by the international context. The increase can be attributed to the perception of real military threat during the conflict in Eastern Ukraine. The decrease can be explained by the shift of attention in the public sphere from this conflict to the issues of terrorism and migration. It is also likely that the intention to defend one's country was affected by the reintroduction of conscription in 2015.

Research data shows that the population's trust in the national army increases in the face of military threat. During the last 15 years the army has become one of the most positively valued institutions in Lithuania. In case of military attack, Lithuanians still have high hopes and expectations of NATO and are critical about the capacity of the Lithuanian army to defend the country on its own. Nevertheless, the belief that the citizens (or the state) themselves have to take care for the defence of the country has become stronger. It is likely that the change in attitudes was influenced by the visible concern of state leaders for the defence of the country against external threats and the associated political decisions, i.e. reintroduction of conscription and the increased defence funding.

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE UNQUIET FRONTIER

Review of Jakub J. Grygiel & A. Wess Mitchell (2016) *Rising Rivals, Vulnerable Allies, and the Crisis of American Power*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

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In times when the public, political and academic discourses flourish with contributions that deliberate on whether it is 'all quiet on NATO's Eastern flank', Jakub J. Grygiel and A. Wess Mitchell are among a handful that dare advance a straightforward argument on the 'unquiet frontier' with their 2016 book *'The Unquiet Frontier: Rising Rivals, Vulnerable Allies, and the Crisis of American Power'*. The authors – one a renowned academic, the other a think-tanker – have successfully managed to address the topic from both academic and policy-oriented perspectives. The book dismantles the current US strategy in relation to its allies – but also vis-à-vis growing revisionist powers – and advocates for both continued US presence abroad as well as the strengthening of ties with US allies worldwide.

The book begins with outlining who the US frontier allies and revisionist powers are, and why they are so important in global power dynamics. The authors argue that current US policy, if continued, could jeopardize global stability and increase US foreign policy expenditures. They point out that a decay in US extended deterrence encourages revisionist powers to engage in probing, which in some cases has already resulted in war (p.12). Grygiel and Mitchell argue that the Obama administration is not taking the importance of allies seriously enough and they stress the significance of frontier alliances to US prosperity and security (p.15).

The authors outline the historical reasons for the *de-prioritization of alliances* which they call the *'three temptations'*: (1) geography and the unique position of the US on the world map which keeps them safe and gives them confidence of defeating any potential threats; (2) technological supremacy which erases the need for allies; and finally, (3) both in the liberal and the self-balancing view of the world, a decreased US overseas presence and military interventions which will lead to increased US security (p.17). However, today, it is clear that none of these hold true. The authors explain the growing popularity of de-prioritization of alliances as a long-term result of perceived and practiced US self-sufficiency as well as its incremental focus on domestic programs (p.32). US technological superiority remains a factor in alliance de-prioritization, albeit it is ´in a broader temptation to approach security threats through technological solutions alone rather than by combining them with political involvement, including alliances´ (p.38). Drones, airpower and missile defense are mentioned as technological temptations due to which costly invasions and political involvements could be avoided in the future. Finally, the authors argue that while alliances are vital for smaller countries and their security, the US fears it could get entrapped in allies' local conflicts, and with this lack of support for an exposed ally comes a posture of accommodation towards the rival power (p.41).

The book further discusses how revisionist powers probe weakening US influence in their areas. The authors go into details of '*probing behaviour'* of revisionist states where they explain its purpose, features, benefits and much more (p.44). 'Probing' is an act of testing a nation's power and its will to maintain security and influence in a region, rather than a direct attack on a rival´s ally (albeit war is indeed a possible extension of successful probing). Probes help to identify who the rival is, what threats they present and where these threats may materialize, in other words, probes are beneficial in terms of being able to better prepare for possible aggression from the revisionist state (p.75).

For the past couple of decades, US allies were able to direct all their focus on their economies as they were certain that the US was both capable and willing to back them up in case of military confrontation (p.77). However, today, signs of a weakening of the extended deterrence of the US gives frontier allies reasons to worry. Even though the first

choice for most frontier allies is still US-backed security, alternative solutions to make up for the lack of support from Washington have been used. Most often this has been ´military self-help´ (p.80). Asian countries significantly increased defence spending, investing mostly in naval capabilities. Similarly, the Gulf states found themselves preparing for a future war with nuclear-armed Iran, and the CEE countries – in response to Russian aggression – have been investing more and more in their military capabilities. In short, US allies are preparing to be able to defend themselves on their own, which again illustrates the diminished perception of US deterrence credibility. In some cases, they are even acquiring offensive capabilities and gravitating towards offensive doctrines (p.91). Furthermore, regional alliances are mobilising in order to increase defence capabilities – closer cooperation within ASEAN countries in Asia or the GCC countries in the Middle East can be seen. The same trend can be observed within Europe, for instance in the V4 group (p.95) which is increasingly cooperative. An alternative way of coping with revisionist powers and declining US support is adopting strategies of accommodation (p.101), evidence of which can be seen in all regions coping with revisionist powers.

There are many ways that the US benefits from alliances. From the geopolitical point of view, alliances can be seen as war prevention mechanisms which dissuade revisionist states from attacking, as containment tools which keep the rival from expanding and potentially becoming a global superpower, as balancing tools by having influence in allied countries and preventing large powers from becoming too powerful, and finally as a way to preserve the status quo of international relations (p.118). From the military point of view, allies can be seen as capability aggregators which significantly increase American military power and as power projection tools strengthening America´s deterrent effect, reassuring allies and, finally, overcoming large distances between the US and Eurasian continent through the use of foreign military bases (p.137). Last but not least, geo-economic benefits of alliances are exemplified by allowing US control of global trade choke points around the world via allied countries (p.148).

Grygiel and Mitchell argue that the value of alliances is going to increase in the future, especially that of frontier allies located nearby revisionist

states that themselves grow in power (p.154). The geopolitical advantage of the US will be less reliant on their advanced military technologies due to the narrowing gap between the US and rival countries, and will be more reliant on alliances, which is why revisionist powers aim to undermine US relations with its allies (p.156). The dangers of accommodating the daring great-power demands and how this can intensify the abandonment fears of US allies are well pointed out by the authors. An alternative to accommodating rivals' demands is offshore balancing which seeks to place the burden of managing regional problems on allies. Even though this is increasingly attractive, long term disadvantages outweigh the temporary advantages stemming from this approach (p.159).

The authors suggest that the best option for the US is the strengthening of alliances, starting with frontier states which are most exposed to rivals. This is to be based on two pillars – political will and military effectiveness. In each region – CEE, Middle East or Asia, there are allies which are more exposed and need to be given priority in this regard (p.165). The risks of rearming US allies are highlighted and the authors argue that local defences need to be developed amongst frontier allies, as well as limited offensive capabilities (p.182). Grygiel and Mitchell conclude that the US losing its allies would be much more devastating in the long run than possible entrapment of the US in local conflicts.

In conclusion, '*The Unquiet Frontier*' is a very well written book which goes straight to the point and depicts in full what the authors have labelled as ´The Crisis of American Power´. Examples are provided throughout the entire book to help readers to put things into perspective and the authors present convincing arguments on the importance of allies to the US security and prosperity.

ESSENTIAL READ ON SECURITY?

Review of Peter Hough, Shahin Malik, Andrew Moran and Bruce Pilbeam. 2015. *International Security Studies. Theory and Practice.* London and New York: Routledge.

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War in Ukraine and Syria, North Korea's nuclear ambitions, militarization of the South China Sea, the migration crisis, terrorism in the European Union, cyber threats, and environmental issues are just few examples exposing both the quantity and the diversity of contemporary security challenges. Not surprisingly, the extent of these security issues has motivated scholars to expand the literature on security by writing books and articles on the theoretical implications, issue-specific security challenges, and the security of particular regions and countries. The textbook by Peter Hough *et. al.* stands out among the aforementioned literature because it does not limit itself to theory, particular security concepts and challenges or a certain region. Instead, it ambitiously attempts to provide: "students with a comprehensive and accessible introduction to the subject of Security Studies, with a strong emphasis on the use of case studies" (p.2). Not only does the book distinguish itself by its wide scope, but also stands out by its ambition. The authors see their work as an essential read for: "all students of security studies" (p.2). Thus, they perceive it among classic textbooks used for teaching[1] introductory courses on security.

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[1] The book contains many pedagogical features, such as textboxes, summary points and recommended further reading.

Is it an essential read on security for newcomers in the field as the authors claim? The answer to this question is mostly subjective, because it largely depends how one perceives an introductory course on security. It might be solely focused on theory highlighting the discrepancy between theoretical approaches, exposing their advantages and limits for analyzing a particular object of security studies. The courses might include a conceptual or topical focus on the diversity of security sectors, such as military, economic, cyber, energy, water, food security, etc. and their impact on security at global, national and individual levels. The introduction on security can also be organized geographically, highlighting the security challenges for some countries or regions. Finally, it can be some kind of mixture of the above. Therefore, in order to answer if the book is an essential read on security, one has to recognize that introductory courses on security are different and the book might be a better option for some, while not a good choice for others at the same time.

If one considers the content only, it seems that the editors did a remarkable work and achieved their objective successfully. The book begins by introducing the diversity of security studies and continues by covering both conventional and unconventional theoretical approaches to security. In the following two sections it focuses on diverse security challenges and most important concepts by classifying them as military related and unrelated security issues. The book proceeds by analyzing the role of institutions in contemporary security architecture and concludes with case studies on security in particular areas, for example U.S., Russia, China, Europe, Africa, the Arctic, Latin America, Middle East, etc. Thus, the composition of content shows that the book is well balanced between classical and unorthodox theoretical approaches, conceptual and policy-related security issues and that it has avoided Western-centrism by diversifying the geographical scope of case studies. Most importantly, it seems that such

content can match the expectations of most introductory courses on security.

The book also excels by well summarized and persuasive presentations of the most important arguments the authors try to make. Each chapter is opened by a short summary and concluded with the most important points and suggestions for further reading. The way the authors use boxes is admirable. They contain interesting examples either summarizing the essence of long discussions or short case studies that supplement their arguments with the analysis of specific events or descriptive statistics. The usage of the latter is both original and convincing, for example, the comparison of fatalities caused by man-made disasters and warfare gives an opportunity to imagine the true extent of each security threat (p. 267). Not only do such editorial decisions make the book more convincing and pushes the reader to think critically, but it is also helpful for the teaching process. Case studies and statistical comparisons in boxes provide an excellent teaching resource.

 On the other hand, the book is not without shortcomings. It fails to capture the full scope of security issues. Even though it covers topics that are frequently omitted from the security literature, such as food security, environmental security and the relationship between security, health, disasters and crime, it does so at the expense of such fundamentals as energy security and migration. The current refugee crisis in Europe and numerous Russo-European energy conflicts makes the textbook less relevant in comparison to the books that address these issues. Security challenges associated with migration and refugees were known long before the migration crisis in Europe – they were on political agenda of Italy, Greece, United Kingdom, U.S., etc., something reflected in older textbooks, such as the one of Jef Huysmans (2006).

Another problem of the book is the lack of balance between the complexities of each section. The theoretical section is not for newcomers, even if the authors perceive it that way. The

theoretical part is prepared for graduate students or those with a background in international relations theories as there is a stark contrast between the book and classic introductory literature on international relations theories, such as "Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches" by Robert Jackson and Georg Soresen (2013). Some chapters, such as the one on food security, fit the needs of a less advanced readership in security studies, while others, namely the ones on nuclear proliferation and the rise of private military and security companies, are fit for those with more prior knowledge. Even though the case studies can be read separately and are mostly written for newcomers into a certain geographical area, a common denominator for the complexity of the entire book is lacking.

Furthermore, the connection between the conceptual and empirical framework is debatable in terms of its applicability for teaching introductory courses on security with a topical focus.[2] The book provides a deep conceptual analysis of relevant security issues, but does not support them with comprehensive case studies on particular policy issues. For example, the book has a solid chapter on nuclear proliferation but only supports it with a one-page case study on Iran's nuclear ambitions (p. 127). For courses with a topical focus, such an approach is too narrow as the concepts need to be elaborated with deeper insights into current policy issues, such as Iran or the North Korean nuclear talks. In this context, the book favors a wide as opposed to deep approach. It presents the main security concepts, but does not relate its case studies to them. Instead, it continues with the analysis of a wide range of security issues in various countries and regions.

The final point in terms of criticism is that the novelty of the book is mostly limited to a concentration of case studies and its recent publication gives it a temporary advantage over textbooks that

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[2] The authors themselves used this book as their main teaching material for an introductory course on security with a topical focus: "Security Challenges in a Contemporary World".

were written earlier. Advanced readers will not find something they have not seen before in the works of Randal E. Osborne and Paul Kriese (2008), Elke Krahman (2005), in earlier books of Peter Hough himself (2013) or in other literature on security. However, they will find a solid concentration of theory, concepts and topical issues, relevant institutions in security architecture and case studies in particular geographical areas.

Having said that, can one consider this book as an essential read on security studies for the newcomers in the field as the authors ambitiously strive for? The answer is no due to the following reasons. First, even if the theoretical section is very insightful, it is far too complicated for newcomers, especially ones having no background in international relations theory. Furthermore, the imbalance between the level of complexity in conceptual sections does not correspond to the needs of beginners. Finally, the book fails to include chapters on important concepts, such as energy security and migration, and, most importantly, does not support other concepts with exhaustive case studies on related policy issues – a necessity for courses with a topical and conceptual focus. Thus, its applicability for introductory courses on security is constrained both on a theoretical and topical level.

However, saying the book is not essential does not make it bad. The ambition was there, and even if the execution was not perfect, it was good nevertheless. The book is a valuable contribution for both security studies and its teaching process in ways that the authors have not intended it to be, for example, it is a good option for teaching advanced students about theoretical issues in security studies. It has a solid theoretical framework, covers a wide range of security concepts and maps most relevant security issues in diverse areas making it a good reference book in general. The book includes relevant and original information in separate boxes and excels at summarizing lengthy discussions in short points. If the editors manage to update the second volume by adding chapters on migration and energy security, whilst also simplifying the

theoretical section, and if they relate their case studies to security concepts, whilst maintaining the current level of excellence, then further volumes might become an inseparable part of introductory courses on security studies in Western and non-Western universities alike.

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IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER
Review of Philippe Bourbeau, ed. (2016) *Security. Dialogue Across Disciplines*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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Security is the continuously present topic in several academic disciplines, though in some of them it is more dominant than in others. The communication between disciplines is also quite sparse, therefore the book edited by Philippe Bourbeau is a timely contribution to the broadening of understanding of security for all the academics working on the issue. The possibility of creating a dialogue between the disciplines is taken seriously by all the authors of the book's chapters, and thus presents a great map of understanding of security across nine disciplines: such "natural" ones for studies of security as international relations (further – IR), to philosophy, anthropology, geography, sociology, psychology, international political economy, criminology and international law. The four questions that were raised regarding security are quite well answered in each of the chapters. These questions look into the concept, dominant theories, questions orienting research on security and strengths and weaknesses of the discipline when it comes to studying security. (p.xi)

The book indeed presents a great resource for anyone engaged in studying the subject to understand the diversity and pluralism as well as the similarity in the themes addressed by these different and diverse disciplines. Each of them brings in something

particular to the study of the topic, while following the same general tendencies. These general tendencies could be divided into 'positivist' and critical approaches in terms of epistemology and 'human' versus 'state' security thinking in terms of object of analysis. These divisions permeate most of disciplines and if nothing more, can serve as an easy transition into thinking on the issue of security from a more interdisciplinary point of view. Thus, while the book is divided into sections addressing understanding and use of security from the perspective of different disciplines, it manages to retain cohesion through both the authors addressing questions provided by the editor and through following these two general threads.

The book's second chapter (first is the introduction) deals with the understanding of security in philosophy. This chapter presents the understanding of the concept since Greco-Roman times, through the Medieval ages to the philosophical investigations of contemporary scholars. In the pre-modern times, as it is explained, security was understood as primarily a personal state of mind, with the Greek word *ataraxia* bringing in the connotation of 'freedom from fear' to the concept. A major shift comes with the publication of Hobbes' *Leviathan* in which security is understood as the 'mechanism by which citizens get "themselves out from that miserable condition of war."' (p.26) The state becomes a major referent of security as it is only through the strength and stability of the state that the security of its people can be guaranteed. In contemporary thinking, it is argued in the chapter, security is understood as: 1) a social and political practice; 2) a particular mode of enjoying a good; 3) as a state of being, the latter further divided into national and human security types. (pp.30-31) The philosophical debates, in addition to these conceptual issues, also centre on three other distinctions – division between those who focus on all potential harms and those who only are concerned about the harms coming from other human beings; division

between subjective and objective security, also portrayed as a division between security and fear; and security as a good or a right. Going down to applied philosophy, the author, Johnathan Herington, introduces debates that saw strong participation of philosophers, such as the torture debate, the liberty versus security debate, the privacy and security debate and the moral legitimation of securitization, i.e. identification of conditions in which the use of emergency measures is justified.

Chapter 3 of the book deals with understanding of security from perspective of anthropology. The specificity of this discipline is well presented in the article, while it revolves around the concept of culture and is methodologically unified around ethnography, it borrows from other disciplines many of the theoretical perspectives and thus follows the bifurcating paths of critical/'positivist' studies with a heavy lean towards the first. On the 'critical' side, as culture is the central concept of anthropology, its contribution is also in addressing the issues of security culture or the culture of terror, and focuses on the cultural construction of security and insecurity and on the changing, culturally specific understanding of security in general. On the 'positivist' side, the 'security anthropologists 'engage security largely in terms established by the state' (p.51)

The chapter focusing on geography is also organized around the division between 'positivist' and 'critical' branches. It is emphasized that geography as a discipline was created to wage wars more effectively, on military control of the space and many of the traditional tasks of geography have been currently taken over by the intelligence agencies of the state. The critical geographers, on the other hand, look into carceral spaces, spaces and landscapes of defence or scripted geopolitical spaces of (in)security and look how spatial representations affect security discourses. The one issue that a reader may have with the chapter is that it is very much skewed towards the critical perspective. The chapter's conclusion

contains acknowledgement of the 'positivist' perspective's contribution to the discipline, but one hardly finds its contribution in the chapter itself.

The next chapter addresses the understanding of security from a sociological perspective and compares two understandings of security there – political security versus social (in)securities and suggests that sociology offers a unique way to combine the two. The authors suggest that in order to achieve such a useful fusion 'sociologists need to leverage their understandings of insecurity as a subjective perception to study how it is made real by institutions and practices' (p.104) and offer some intriguing examples of how this could be done. Examples in the chapter are captivating and truly invite one to expand one's library. It also very usefully provides linkages with other disciplines on security, linking the discussion to political science theories on the one side and criminology on another.

The Chapter 6 deals with the 'usual suspect' – IR and its approach to security. The authors have a daunting task to cover the discipline which has security at its core in 25 pages and they deal with this task not by trying to create a Procrustean bed for this plethora of works and theories, but by addressing three misconceptions that are common in the field: that security studies only have the state as a referent; that there is a great chasm between Northern American and European works on security; and that critical approaches are incompatible with the 'positivist' ones. The authors challenge these misconceptions with numerous examples to the contrary and emphasize the fluid and evolving, fast growing nature of the field. They note that currently the scholars in the field are celebrating diversity as well as focusing on what unites them instead of on what pulls them apart.

The chapter on psychology, as can be expected, focuses more on human security. It starts from a premise that insecurity is

undesirable from the psychological point of view. The psychological analysis deals not only with the individuals, but addresses the issues of groups as well and analyses what factors influence feelings of security and insecurity among groups. It presents theories that explain the intergroup dynamics and examines the theories of how responses to these feelings influence intergroup relations and how these later can be affected. The authors emphasize that psychology is uniquely placed to 'explain and predict how subjective perceptions of insecurity create actual insecurity' (p.153), though they argue that psychology also has space to grow in this area and would especially benefit from more interdisciplinary interaction with, for example, political science.

The chapter on International political economy gives a theoretical overview of the discipline and focuses readers' attention on three 'surprising' conclusions: that realism in IR is, at its core, an economic theory, that security itself is much less at the core of IR than previously thought and that security studies and IPE are two sides of the same coin. Though the chapter manages to convince on all three counts, it leaves some questions unanswered. The largest of these is – why IPE deserved a special place in this collection of disciplinary approaches to security and could not be integrated into that talking about IR in general, especially given that the authors themselves admit that 'security remains something slightly outside the realm of actual IPE studies' (p.176).

The chapter on criminology is much more integrated in this collection. It presents the history of criminology, explaining its origins as focusing on crime rather than 'safety'. In this sense, the chapter again follows the lines of distinction between the 'positivist' and 'critical' strands. In this chapter the authors argue for the need to go beyond the criminology's usual focus on the criminal and crime and to the safety and security of societies and the principles of governance designed to ensure this. In this respect, a lot of attention is given to the concept of risk and the

complexities of contemporary societies that led to what Ulrich Beck describes as *The Risk society*. In this type of society, harm management and its prevention takes the centre stage and we see the same developing with the current criminology (prevention of terrorism programs are probably prime examples).

Going back to the more top-down approach in investigation, the chapter on international law discusses the impact of securitization on this discipline (in both its practical and theoretical variants). The chapter deeply describes the internal logic of the (international) legal profession and then delves into the explanation of the different logics of legalism and of securitization. It is observed that security is sometimes used as a trump card in the debates about legal issues, supposedly overriding the 'usual' legal arguments. Yet, it is argued, one cannot simply dismiss the legal arguments as a hoax or a fig leaf, but to engage in it with the deep understanding of what is offered and what is at stake, 'to engage with the way the field of security is construed through the constant production and contestation of legal arguments.' (p.218) It thus cautions against the attempts to 'define away' the normative side of international law and the lament that when it is used in an 'interdisciplinary context' international law is often hijacked by other disciplines, such as political science, economics or sociology (p.216-217).

A major question for the collection is why political science did not deserve a place in it. Even though it could be argued that it is reached through IR, the two have a different focus and the lack of a political science perspective, which is actually mentioned in at least three chapters, is unfortunate. This and some other, smaller criticisms notwithstanding, the collection of articles can easily be read as a coherent whole and the editor has surely done a great job in both collecting the essays and keeping their authors in line with the essence of the project. Everyone who has ever done such a job knows what an ordeal this task can be. Therefore, this book is

definitely a recommended read for anyone dealing with security issues from whichever discipline's perspective, and is surely inspiring in creating new, interdisciplinary approaches to its research.