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**RECENT CONTRIBUTIONS OF LITHUANIA TO THE EU
COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY**

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<u>BRUNO VANDECASTEELE</u>

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<u>PROMOTOR</u>: PROF. DR. HENDRIK VOS

<u>COMMISSARIS</u>: DR. AN SCHRIJVERS

<u>COMMISSARIS</u>: PROF. DR. JAN ORBIE

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Abstract

This thesis is about the role of Lithuania in CFSP.

In the first part, two general questions about Lithuania's contributions to CFSP are discussed: the position the Lithuanian governments want to take in CFSP, and the reasons why they do so. By examining government programs and scientific research on Lithuania's foreign policy, Lithuania appears to be a very 'pro-Western' country, very sceptical towards Russia, and an advocate of further Eastern enlargement of the EU. This position is influenced by the country's geopolitical peculiarities and history.

The second part focuses on two other questions. First, an outline is made of Lithuania's CFSP contributions in two recent cases: the Russia-Georgia war of August 2008, and the Russia-Ukraine gas crisis of 2008-2009. The EU's policy towards these cases is described; Lithuania's involvement is distinguished through government statements, news articles, and interviews with representatives to the EU. For each case, hypotheses about Lithuania's positions are made. In both cases, Lithuanian policy makers take no surprising positions: they support Russia's opponents, and Russia is blamed of having started and aggravated the disputes. The second question is about the extent to which Lithuania can influence the EU policy. This influence was rather little in both cases.

The first and second part give rise to new questions about the relevance of history and geography for foreign policy, the influence of individual States on CFSP, and the future of CFSP. These questions are shortly discussed in the third part, and could be interesting topics of future research.

Contents

List of abbreviations

Abbreviations used in text:

bcm = billion cubic meters

CFSP = Common Foreign and Security Policy

CIS = Commonwealth of Independent States

CSCE = Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe

EECs = Eastern European Countries

EPC = European Political Cooperation

ESDP = European Security and Defence Policy

EUMM Georgia = European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia

FRTD = Facilitated Rail Transit Document for Russian citizens between the Kaliningrad Oblast and Russia

FTD = Facilitated Transit Document for Russian citizens between the Kaliningrad Oblast and Russia

GAERC = General Affairs and External Relations Council

GATT = General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

LNG = Liquefied Natural Gas

mmcm = million cubic meters

PCA = Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Russia

Russia = Russian Federation

tcm = thousand cubic meters

TTEC = Transport, Telecommunication and Energy Council

Abbreviations used in references:

CEU = Council of the European Union

CPEU = Czech Presidency of the European Union (January-June 2009)

EC = European Commission

ECDR = European Commission's Delegation to Russia

EPR = Europa Press Releases

GRL = Government of the Republic of Lithuania

LRS = Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas (Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania) *in Lithuanian*

LRV = Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė (Government of the Republic of Lithuania) *in Lithuanian*

MFAGE = Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MFALT = Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania

OSCE = Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

PLT = Office of the President of the Republic of Lithuania

PRL = Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania

PRLEU = Permanent Representation of Lithuania to the European Union

PRUS = President of Russia

REU = Raad van de Europese Unie (Council of the European Union) *in Dutch*

RIA Novosti = Russian Information Agency Novosti

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Preface

This master thesis is written in order to obtain a degree of master in political science, international politics.

I would like to express my gratitude to several persons, whose assistance was very important during the writing of my thesis. First of all to Hendrik Vos, my supervisor. He was always ready to answer my questions, by e-mail or during a consultation. He gave quick and useful information about the progress of my work. He gave me the freedom to work on my own tempo and according to my own ideas regarding the subject, the method and the structure of my thesis.

The support of my girlfriend, Lina Gedeikytė, was essential. During my Erasmus stay in Vilnius from September 2008 to January 2009 I already started to study the Lithuanian language, but sometimes I needed help from a native Lithuanian. Lina translated government programs from Lithuanian to English, and helped me to translate Lithuanian articles and documents when they were too difficult for me. In this way, I had access to original and valuable documents about Lithuania's foreign policy. From time to time, she encouraged me with a magic *"viskas bus gerai"* ("everything will be okay").

My father, Luc Vandecasteele, read my thesis and gave some very useful critical comments about language and contents. My mother and sisters supported me in a psychological and a sometimes gastronomical way.

Two Lithuanian representatives to the EU, Rytis Martikonis and Darius Jonas Semaška, gave me the opportunity to interview them during respectively 3 and 2 hours. They were very happy that a Belgian was interested in their small country. Maybe, while writing my thesis and talking about it with my friends, this small country became a little bit more known among Belgians.

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Bruno Vandecasteele

Gent, May 12, 2009

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Introduction

From the 1970's, even before European Political Cooperation (EPC) was treaty-based, it was obvious that a coordination of the member States' foreign policies is very difficult (Marsh & Mackenstein, 2005, pp. 11-12, pp. 60-61). In the 1992 Treaty of Maastricht, EPC was re-named "Common Foreign and Security Policy" (CFSP) (Vanhoonacker, 2005, pp. 79-83; de la Serre, 2005, pp. 24-32). Since that time, cooperation and coordination in this part of the EU's external policy have much increased, but it's still an issue of much discussion.

Formulating CFSP decisions has not become easier when ten so-called Eastern European Countries (EECs) joined the EU in 2004 (Colson & Corm, 2006, p. 55). Lithuania is one of those countries.

Its historical and geographical peculiarities make it a very interesting country from the point of view of CFSP. North of the country, there is Latvia, another post-Soviet republic that joined the EU in 2004. Lithuania's Eastern neighbor is Belarus, a country considered politically unpredictable and economically unstable (Lopata et al., 2002, p. 1). In the South, Lithuania has a border with Poland, one of the most pro-American countries in the world and an emerging great power among the EECs (Kapiszewski & Davis, 2005, pp. 193-197, pp. 205-207). And West, there is the Kaliningrad Oblast, a strategic exclave of the Russian Federation (Russia), surrounded by Lithuania and Poland, with an important port near the Baltic Sea.

This master thesis is about recent contributions of Lithuania to the EU's CFSP. In order to understand these recent contributions, a very brief overview of Lithuania's foreign policy since 1990 is necessary.

In the first part of this master thesis, foreign policy positions of Lithuania from before and during EU membership are discussed in short. This description of foreign policy headlines will be focused on Lithuania's relations with the EU and with Russia. Concerning the EU, it is examined which role Lithuania wants to play in the EU, what aims it sets itself in its EU membership, and which external policy it wants the EU to conduct, especially towards the Eastern neighborhood. Inevitably, Lithuania's position and role in the NATO have to be discussed here. Relations with neighboring countries are addressed where they are linked with Lithuania's position in the EU. Special attention is paid to the relations with Russia, because this is important with a view to the cases studies later.

In general, the two research questions of the first part are what Lithuania wishes to contribute to CFSP, and why.

For this first part, several kinds of sources are relevant. First of all, constitutional and governmental statements and regulations of Lithuania are significant. Furthermore, scientific articles and books on Lithuania's international position are written by several Lithuanian authors linked to the Vilnius University Institute of International Relations and Political Science: G. Miniotaitė (1999; 2003; 2005; 2006; 2007), T. Janeliūnas (2006), R. Lopata (2002; 2003), G. Vitkus (2002; 2005), R. Vilpišauskas (2002) and others. Also D. Budrytė (2005) and M. Budrytė (2001) wrote interesting texts about this

subject. Scientific work about Eastern Europe, Russia and the Baltic States (Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia) is also available from numerous authors all over the world. Remarkable contributions were written by M. Leonard & N. Popescu (2007), and T. Lane (2001). And last but not least, personal conversations with two key actors of Lithuania in the EU were important. Rytis Martikonis, Lithuania's Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the EU, Representative to COREPER II was interviewed in Brussels on March 6, 2009; the second interview took place in Brussels on March 30 with Darius Jonas Semaška, Ambassador-at-large, Lithuania's Deputy Permanent Representative to the EU, Representative at the Political and Security Committee. These persons gave interesting information about Lithuania's aims and interests in the EU.

After this describing part, recent contributions of Lithuania to CFSP will be examined on the basis of two recent cases that were very important for the EU, Lithuania and Russia.

The first one is the Russian-Georgian conflict that flared up in South Ossetia and later in Abkhazia in August 2008, and the resulting (continuous) tensions between Russia-Georgia and Russia-EU. The EU policy towards this crisis can definitely be called 'CFSP'. The EU attaches great importance to a peaceful resolution of this frozen conflict in the Southern Caucasus (European Commission [EC], 2007a, April 23, 2009, p. 7).

The second case is the gas crisis in Ukraine in December 2008 – January 2009, which led to a complete cutoff of Russian gas through Ukraine to the EU for almost two weeks. Ukraine is considered a key strategic partner of the EU in securing its energy supplies (EC, 2007b, April 23, 2009, p. 28). Whether this is a 'political' / 'CFSP' or rather an 'energy' case is not always very clear, and will be one of the discussion points.

Obviously, the selection of cases influences the results of the analysis. It's likely that the (CFSP) position of a country differs according to the policy subject. These two cases are selected for several reasons. First, they took place recently and their aftermath is still evolving, which makes it very interesting to follow and to discuss them. Second, in both cases there is a strong 'Russian' factor. Lithuania has a long history of occupation and bad or less bad relations with Russia, and the EU-Russian relations are a very important issue in the country's foreign policy. Furthermore, both events took and are taking place quite close to Lithuania, in the Eastern neighborhood of the EU. Probably, the country is interested in solving both crises quickly and avoiding new ones in the future, and probably it has a certain expertise on the matters. Fourth, the cases have something to do with issues Lithuania is apparently very concerned about: territorial integrity and energy security. Finally, the relations between the EU and Russia are not always very easy. Contributions of a country like Lithuania to the EU's Russia-policy are interesting in this respect.

For each case, hypotheses about Lithuania's behavior will be formulated. They are derived from the first part of this thesis, from Lithuania's relations with the countries involved, and respectively from the security- and energy situation in Lithuania. Subsequently, these hypotheses are tested.

In this way, two other research questions are addressed. First: which role does Lithuania really play in CFSP, what are its contributions in those two concrete cases? This question is about the relation between rhetoric and reality, whether Lithuania behaves like it wants to behave, and how it conducts its policy. The second question is about Lithuania's 'success', to what extent Lithuania succeeded to make its policy an EU policy. Both questions are not easy to answer; much depends on whether a country has 'allies' within the EU, on its geographical position, its history, power, the nature of the case, previous decisions of the EU, etc. To have an idea about Lithuania's role, the actual policy measures and positions taken by the EU and by Lithuania in both cases are matched and compared.

As for the first part, official statements and documents from the involved parties – Lithuania, Russia, EU bodies, Georgia, Ukraine – are important sources. For background information on the Georgia-Russia conflict, GlobalSecurity.org, an American website which provides facts on military and security issues in the world, is useful. The Oxford Institute for Energy Studies provides significant research about gas. Newspaper articles and news websites from Lithuania, Belgium, France, England, the USA, Georgia, Russia and Ukraine are used for up-to-date information about the two cases. Of course, the interviews with R. Martikonis and D.J. Semaška were also very useful. They made it possible to identify more clearly what were Lithuania's positions in both cases.

Before making conclusions about this thesis, there is a (short) third part. Here, a fifth question is considered: what is the relevance of what was discovered in the case studies? An attempt is made to draw lessons from what was discussed before, based on the same literature. For example, a question that arises is how influential individual (small) States are or can be in CFSP. The importance of history and the geopolitical position of a State in its foreign policy positions are shortly discussed. Some reflections are made about CFSP orientations of the EU towards Russia in the future, and about the achievability of a real *Common* FSP in the EU.

The answers to these questions are of course not decisive; they are rather indications of issues to be addressed in future research.

Part 1: Lithuania's position in the EU and in the international community

Lithuania was on March 11, 1990 the first among the Soviet Republics to declare its independence (Lopata et al., 2002, p. 5-6). Since that date, the main lines in the country's foreign policy remained strikingly constant. In this part, a brief overview of these foreign policy orientations is made. Relations with neighboring countries are discussed where they are relevant for Lithuania's relations with the EU. In order to understand Lithuania's position in the two cases discussed in the second part, relations with the EU and with Russia are discussed in more detail. Also the special position of the 'transatlantic community' in Lithuania's foreign policy deserves some attention. All this is approached from two sides: first, government programs and official documents are discussed. Second, scientific research on Lithuania's foreign policy is reviewed.

Throughout the first part, two research questions are to be answered: what does Lithuania want to contribute to CFSP, and why. The first question is answered by describing the country's relations with the EU before its accession, and by discussing its opinions about the external policy of the EU during its membership. The answer to the second question is found in Lithuania's geographical location, its history, and its relations with its neighborhood and with the USA.

1.1. An overview of constitutional and governmental statements since 1990

1.1.1. Foreign policy positions before EU-accession

Several references to Lithuania's sovereignty of the State are made in the Constitution of 1992 (Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania [PRL], 1992, February 11, 2008). Articles 1 to 4 discuss the sovereignty and independence of Lithuania, and according to Article 136, Lithuania shall only participate in international organizations if this is not in conflict with the interests and independence of the state.

The first government of Lithuania (March 1990 – January 1991) contributed 10 pages of its government program to foreign policy (Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė [LRV], 1990, March 17, pp. 4-13). The disintegration of the USSR and the approach between Central and Eastern Europe on the one hand and Western Europe on the other hand were considered the two main political processes of that time. The basic goals of Lithuania's foreign policy were to re-establish its independence and to come back to the world community. The <u>most important</u> (underlined by B.V.) priority of Lithuanian foreign policy was to harmonize relations with the USSR. Lithuania wanted its economical structures to become independent from the Soviet Union market, but wanted to continue cooperating in various areas – on the condition that there would be no USSR interference in internal affairs. Other priorities were to join the European integration process, first of all by joining the (former) Conference on

Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Accession to the UN and strengthening the diplomatic relations with the USA, Canada and Australia were important. Relations with neighboring countries were a priority, with the explicit underlying aim of facilitating the integration within Western European political structures. The government wanted to become a member of the Northern Council and to cooperate with European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

The second government lasted only 3 days and resigned after the disastrous events in Vilnius on January 13, 1991 (LRV, n.d.).

The third government (January 1991 – July 1992) had very similar foreign policy goals as the first one (LRV, 1991, January 13, pp. 6-10). The aims were the same: strengthening Lithuania's independence and recognition as a part of the world community, as well as the means to achieve these aims: settling the relations with the USSR through bilateral border- and other treaties – the USSR had not yet recognized Lithuania at that time, and participating in the European integration.

The government program of the fourth government of (July – November 1992) dealt only with economical policy and had no chapter about foreign policy (LRV, 1992, July 21).

The fifth government (December 1992 – March 1993) talked for the first time explicitly about becoming a member of the European Community (LRV, 1992, December 12, pp. 37-39). Relations with other European States were to be improved to serve this aim. Cooperation with the NATO was also very important. Furthermore, border demarcation with the Kaliningrad Region and Belarus was a priority. The startup of negotiations to enter or to increase the involvement in the main United Nations bodies was an important aim of the government, as well as becoming a member of GATT.

The purposes of the sixth government (March 1993 – February 1996) were: strengthening national security, protecting economical interests in other countries, and protecting the rights of Lithuanians living abroad (LRV, 1994, July 12, pp. 54-56). Lithuania wanted to have friendly and mutual beneficial relations with all surrounding countries, based on principles such as sovereignty of nations and inviolability of borders. Becoming a member of the EU was one of the priorities, as well as membership of GATT and NATO, and closer ties with Western and Northern European States and the USA. Relations with Russia should be mutual profitable, and for the aim of stability in the region the government wanted the Kaliningrad Oblast to be demilitarized.

The seventh government (February – November 1996) had the same purposes as the previous one (LRV, 1996, March 19, pp. 46-48). In this government program, membership of the NATO was considered the most important (underlined by B.V.) means to guarantee a stable national security. The government also started to prepare the country's strategy to integrate in the EU.

The main foreign policy aims of the eighth government (December 1996 – May 1999) remained the same as in previous governments: strengthening Lithuania's national security and economy (LRV, 1996, December 10, pp. 3-4). Therefore, Lithuania had to join the EU and the NATO as soon as possible (underlined by B.V.). In order to speed up the EU accession process, the government prepared internal law reforms, wanted to participate actively in CFSP, and wished to develop strong

bilateral relations with EU members and candidate countries. Especially good relations with the other Baltic and so-called Northern States were considered important in preparing EU accession. Internally, the government planned to inform the population about the integration process and about the advantages of EU membership.

The goals of foreign policy of the ninth government (June – October 1999) were – apart from internal economic reforms to meet the Maastricht criteria – the same as before (Government of the Republic of Lithuania [GRL], 1999, June 1, pp. 5-8). Land- and sea borders (still) had to be concluded with Belarus and Latvia.

Also the tenth government (November 1999 – November 2000) had the same foreign policy objectives and instruments as the four preceding governments (LRV, 1999, November 3).

The eleventh government (November 2000 – June 2001) had still the same foreign policy objectives towards the EU, the NATO, and Lithuania's surrounding countries (GRL, 2000, October 27). The government planned to participate actively in CFSP, and wanted to contribute to the implementation of European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), however preserving the NATO security role in Europe (underlined by B.V.). Towards Belarus, it wanted to preserve pragmatic and mutually beneficial economic relations and contribute to democratic tendencies.

The twelfth government (July 2001 – December 2004) of M. Brazauskas finally led Lithuania to EU membership. The government wanted to continue the foreign policy lines of the previous ones (GRL, 2001, July 4). Indeed, priorities and aims remained the same as before, but the government program was more extended and ambitious. Regional cooperation should reach the Black Sea and the Nordic States. Participation in CFSP was considered an inseparable part of European integration, and the establishment of ESDP – combined with enhanced transatlantic cooperation – was considered the basis of European security. It was the government's intention to improve relations with Russia and the Kaliningrad Oblast, based on dialogue on numerous policy issues. It wanted to make use of its geographical position between the EU and Russia, by participating in the EU's dialogue with Russia on cooperation and partnership.

1.1.2. After EU accession

The thirteenth government (November 2004 – June 2006) had to re-orient its foreign policy. Lithuania joined EU and NATO in 2004 (NATO update, 2004, March 29). From now on, its foreign policy wasn't aimed at accession, but at enhancing its position and developing partnerships inside these institutions (GRL, 2004, November 29, pp. 24-26). EU- and NATO membership and transatlantic cooperation were still considered prerequisites for national security. For this aim, supporting democratic reforms in Eastern neighboring countries was also very important. The government wanted to establish good relations with these countries, and wanted Lithuania to serve as an expert of European neighborhood policy.

The fourteenth government (July 2006 – October 2008) used the same foreign policy guidelines (GRL, 2006, July 18, pp. 28-29).

A. Kubilius' government, in office since December 2008, has the same attitude towards European integration and transatlantic cooperation: it's the basis of Lithuania's national security (GRL, 2008, December 9, pp. 37-50). Lithuania should be a *"productive, loyal and responsible member of the transatlantic community"* (GRL, 2008, December 9, p. 38) and wants to participate in EU internal and external policies (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania [MFALT], 2009a, March 18, 2009). The government seeks to strengthen cooperation between EU and the USA. Lithuania's will to contribute to an effective common and solidarity-based energy policy is emphasized. Regional cooperation remains a priority, and the government supports EU efforts to establish democracy in the Eastern neighboring countries. Furthermore, a specific provision is made of the government's support for Georgia's and Moldova's efforts to maintain or re-establish their territorial integrity, which implies a withdrawal of all Russian troops from their territories (GRL, 2008, December 9, p. 44). The government wants to develop good neighborly relations with Russia and the Kaliningrad Oblast, based on dialogue and mutual trust, and encouraging democracy and economic development.

The same attitude towards EU, NATO and USA is found in the Foreign Policy Orientations after Accession to the NATO and EU document of 2004 (Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas [LRS], 2004, May 1), and on the website of foreign affairs (MFALT, 2009a, March 18, 2009). The government wants to enhance the European-American ties, and sees the NATO as the main security organization in Europe. Because of the security situation in the South Caucasus region, it wants the EU to establish closer relations with this region. Cooperation with Russia should be deepened and based on mutual interests, commitments and respect.

In the Strategic Guidelines of Lithuania's European Union policy for 2008-2013, emphasis is laid on a common European energy strategy (MFALT, 2008, March 18, 2009, pp. 17-19). This means integration of Lithuania in the European energy infrastructure, diversification of resources and reduction of dependence on third countries.

1.1.3. Main lines of Lithuanian foreign- and EU policy aims in government programs

During the first decades of independence, the governments of Lithuania haven't been very stable: 15 governments in 18 years (LRV, n.d., February 11, 2009). Especially the first decade was very unstable. However, there has been some continuity in Ministers of Foreign Affairs: the Minister in office, V. Ušackas, is only the fifth since 1990. The foreign policy aims and ideas that appear in the successive government agreements are very constant since 1990.

During the first years of independence, settlement of the relations with the USSR / Russia was among the most important foreign policy priorities. Not because Lithuanians liked their Eastern neighbors,

but because they wanted to establish and strengthen their independence and sovereignty. Only from 1993 there was made mention of being more friendly to Russia and to normalize relations.

Since 1990, approach to – and very soon membership of – the EU was a priority. Cooperation with surrounding countries was seen as the best way to approach the EU. In other words, relations with neighbors were not a goal as such, but a means to come closer to the EU, and to facilitate Lithuania's integration. In the beginning, there were no statements about what kind of partner Lithuania wanted to be in the EU. It was only important to join that structure, in order to ensure national security. But the later, the more ambitious the governments became. They considered Lithuania an important partner of the EU because of their expertise in relations with the EU's Eastern neighbors. They portrayed Lithuania as a cooperative and productive partner. They explicitly mentioned their willingness to cooperate in EU's CFSP. They wanted to participate in developing ESDP, however preserving the NATO's security role in Europe.

Virtually all governments emphasized their willingness to enhance EU-USA cooperation, and the NATO has a central role in Lithuania's national security. In general, Lithuania is pro-European and pro-Western.

Recently, Lithuanian governments expressed their wish to develop a more cooperative energy strategy in the EU. Also the support for Georgia's territorial integrity is to be noticed, as well as the (perceived?) necessity of more EU involvement in the region.

1.2. Lithuania's relations with neighboring States

Lithuania's relations with the surrounding States are reviewed, as far as these relations influence the country's EU policy. Special attention is paid to the Lithuanian-Russian relations; they are important for Lithuania's EU policy and they influence the positions in the case studies of this thesis. Lithuania's relations with the EU are discussed, as well as the place 'Europe' takes in Lithuanian national identity. Finally, tensions in Lithuania's partnership with the EU and with the USA are examined.

1.2.1. Relations with the Baltic States

Outsiders have grouped – and are still grouping – Baltic States as one entity; probably because of their common recent history, their geographical proximity, and their similar foreign policy goals in the 1990's (Miniotaitė, 2003, pp. 264-265; Budrytė, 2001, p. 72). Also the EU treated these three countries in the first years of their independence as 'equal'. However, Baltic States consider themselves as a part of Western Europe – regarding cultural, economical and political identity – rather than as 'Baltic States' (Ozolina, 1999, p. 135). During their accession negotiations, there was sometimes even a strong competition between the three (Ozolina, 1999, p. 147). Lithuania is cooperative with the other Baltic States on issues where it's necessary, but it's not an enthusiastic

partner. Relations with Poland, the EU and the Kaliningrad Oblast are much more important (Ozolina, 1999, p. 132).

Despite some skepticism, there has also been cooperation. In 1993, the Baltic Free Trade Treaty was signed (Hiden & Salmon, 1994, p. 193). Lithuania also participates in various regional security organizations.[1] However, these cooperation initiatives were mostly established because of pragmatic reasons (they had common challenges and problems) rather than because of a feeling of 'unity' (Ozolina, 1999, pp. 136-142; Hiden & Salmon, 1994, p. 193).

1.2.2. Relations with Russia in general

Relations between Lithuania and Russia were very difficult from the beginning. Since the re-establishment of Lithuania's independence, the country defined its national identity as a non-Russian one. Yet, the USSR didn't easily accept the independence of its former federal republics. On the 1990 CSCE, the USSR delegation insisted to dismiss the Baltic States delegations (Vitkus, 2002a, p. 11). In January 1991, the Soviet army occupied press buildings in Vilnius and 13 Lithuanian unarmed citizens were killed (PRL, 1991, February 8).

The independence of the Baltic States was recognized by the USSR on 6 September 1991, one and a half year after their declaration of independence. But the countries' economy was still almost completely integrated in the structures of the USSR, and there were still Russian troops in all Baltic States (Vitkus, 2002a, pp. 16-17). Lithuania took a very strict position towards the withdrawal of Russian troops and even made an issue of it at the UN General Assembly. Because of this no-compromise position and the support of the NATO and the USA, Lithuania achieved withdrawal of the troops in August 1993 – it was the first of the former communistic countries in Europe. In the first years of Lithuania's independence, getting the territory free of foreign troops was one of the main foreign policy aims, as well as the legalization of state borders (Gylys, 2004, pp. 95-97). In short: consolidating the independence.

The normalization of Lithuanian-Russian relations could start only when the Russian troops were withdrawn, and when guarantees were given on behalf of the EU that the EU-Lithuanian approach and normal Russian-Lithuanian relations were not necessarily contradictory (Lane, 2001, p. 206). Russia fulfilled its international obligations regarding troop withdrawal, brought its military forces to CFE standards (Vitkus, 2002a, pp. 23-24) and decreased substantially the amount of troops in the Kaliningrad Oblast in a few years (Nies, 2004, pp. 166-167).

However, several issues prevented both countries in the 1990's from establishing good relations; Lithuania's policy towards Russia was pragmatic but not more (Budrytė, 2001, p. 74). The Baltic

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[1] Lithuania is a member of BALTBAT (Common Baltic Battalion of the Baltic States), BALTNET (Baltic Air Surveillance Network), BALTRON (Baltic Naval Squadron) and BALTDEFCOL (Baltic Defence College) (Michta, 2006, pp. 89-90; Budrytė, 2001, pp. 75-77).

States were reluctant to 'trust' Russia; they are small and don't have any influence on Russia's goodwill; even after the reductions of the Russian military force, it was still much stronger than the Baltic armies; and of course there is the living memory of a long history of occupations. Lithuania and the other Baltic States preferred to seek partnership with Western States and organizations (Vitkus, 2002a, pp. 27-29). Moreover, nationalistic forces in Lithuania were strongly opposed to any attempt of the government to approach Russia (Lane, 2001, pp. 201-202). The Lithuanian government was the only one who refused to sign an agreement with the other Baltic States, Russia and Belarus on energy cooperation, because it was seen as blocking the country from the West (Miniotaitė, 1999, pp. 30-31). Also from Russian side there were problems: politicians who didn't recognize the whole Lithuanian territory as sovereign had still huge support in the Duma elections of 1993 (Gylys, 2004, pp. 99-100), and the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs stated in 2000 that the USSR didn't occupy Lithuania in 1940, but that it joined the Union voluntarily (Pavlovaitė, 2003, p. 202; Lane, 2001, pp. 206-207), which led to a wave of protest. In the 1990's, various ideas circulated about the regional security architecture. The Russian government made some proposals for a renewed (military) cooperation (Karabeshkin, 2007, p. 73; Miniotaitė, 2003, pp. 274-279; Lopata et al., 2002, p. 15). In 1997, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs and the President stated that they were interested in the stability of the Baltic States, and *"if any threat to Lithuania arises, that state will have to deal with us"* (Vitkus, 2002a, p. 32). Unsurprisingly, the offers were rejected by Lithuania. Already in 1994, Lithuania had declared that EU- and NATO membership were its primary strategic goals (Paulauskas, 2005, p. 182; Lopata et al., 2002, p. 26).

By the end of the 20th century, Russian-Lithuanian relations slightly improved (Miniotaitė, 2005, p. 77-78), despite some internal disagreement in Lithuania about which security discourse should guide the policy towards Russia.[2] Several agreements were signed, and the Russian market became (again) increasingly important for Lithuanian export (Lopata et al., 2002, pp. 18-20). Lithuania and Russia realized that they had a common interest in regional economic growth. Therefore, as we saw in the government programs, good neighborly relations with non-members of the so-called Euro-Atlantic community became a priority in Lithuania's foreign policy. A border treaty was signed with Russia in 1997 (Lane, 2001, p. 206).

The events of September 11, 2001 in New York entailed several changes in the big powers' security conceptualizations (Morozov, 2004, p. 325). Security discourses became focused on an external enemy, rather than on national identity.[3] It led to an approach and more constructive cooperation between the NATO and Russia, in order to deal with the common threat. Moreover, the NATO's

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[2] On the one hand, Vytautas Landsbergis, Lithuania's first head of state after its independence, compared Russia with a volcano. On the other hand, president V. Adamkus, who declared that the *"old policy of barricade building"* […] *"distances us from the principles of the Euro-Atlantic mainstream"*. According to him, *"Lithuania's Euro-Atlantic aspirations and good relations with Russia are compatible"* (Miniotaitė, 2003, p. 279).
[3] Morozov calls this "desecuritization" of national identity.

military significance was questioned since its operation in Afghanistan, which decreased its perceived threat in Russia (Vitkus, 2002a, pp. 37-38). Therefore, Russia's position towards Lithuania's accession to the NATO was quite moderate. In 2000, the Russian ambassador in Lithuania only declared that this would negatively influence the Lithuanian-Russian relations, but that Russia wouldn't object because Lithuania is a sovereign state and Russia didn't want to interfere in their internal affairs (Budrytė, 2001, pp. 76-77).

Some authors say that the Lithuanian-Russian relations are the most stable among the Baltic-Russian relations (André, 2003, p. 19). Ethnic disputes are less present than in the other Baltic States, and Lithuania was the first former Soviet Republic who signed a border treaty with Russia,[4] which was ratified by Russia in 2003 (Plasseraud, 2006, pp. 326-330; Miniotaitė, 2005, pp. 77-78; Vitkus, 2002a, p. 25). However, a more recent report claims that Lithuania takes – together with Poland – the most harsh position towards Russia among the EU members (Leonard & Popescu, 2007, pp. 48-50). They are called "new cold warriors", who want to shape an assertive EU policy towards Russia and try not to miss any opportunity to criticize Russia.

Indeed, the two countries are still no very good friends. Lithuania's 100% dependence on Russian gas (Leonard & Popescu, 2007, p. 49) and almost complete dependence on Russian oil[5] is still an important issue; it's considered a serious threat to the country's economical security (Janeliūnas & Molis, 2006, pp. 200-223; Paulauskas, 2005, p. 193; André, 2003, pp. 14-16). Besides, there are still some issues that hamper mutual trust. Russia's former President V. Putin stated in 2005 that the collapse of the Soviet Union is *"the greatest geopolitical catastrophe"* of the 20th century (Paulauskas, 2005, p. 183). Oil supplies by pipeline were cut in 2006, because of 'technical problems' in the Lithuanian branch of the Druzhba pipeline (Leonard & Popescu, 2007, p. 14). Lithuania offered to help repairing the pipeline, but there came *"no reasonable answer from Russia"* (D.J. Semaška, personal communication, 2009, March 30) and the pipeline is still not working. When the Lithuanian and the Estonian President refused to attend the 60th celebration of the end of the Second World War in Moscow in 2005 – it meant to them too much Russian imperial nostalgia – they were accused by some Russians of supporting fascism and disrespecting the fallen heroes (Paulauskas, 2005, p. 183). And of course, there is the Kaliningrad Oblast.

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[4] Latvia and Russia signed and ratified a border treaty only in 2007, and Estonia and Russia still have no border treaty (Van Elsuwege, 2008, pp. 452-453).
[5] Since 2006, the oil refinery company Mažeikių Nafta isn't controlled by the Russian Yukos anymore (ORLEN group, n.d., March 11, 2009). The Polish company PKN Orlen bought the Lithuanian governments' stake of 30,66% and Yukos' stake of 53,7% in May 2006 (Baran, 2006, pp. 14-15). However, virtually all crude oil still comes from Russia (D.J. Semaška, personal communication; Leonard & Popescu, 2007, p. 49).

1.2.3. Kaliningrad, a special issue in Lithuanian-Russian relations and CFSP avant la lettre

The Kaliningrad Oblast belongs to Russia since 1945 and is excluded from the mainland by Lithuania, Poland and the Baltic Sea. In the early 1990's, some Lithuanian nationalists claimed it was a part of their country (Michta, 2006, p. 78), but nowadays it is generally recognized as a part of Russia. Lithuania wants it to increase its economic development, because the stability of the region is in the interest of all surrounding countries. The Oblast is very poor and marginalized, and – compared to its surface – ultra-militarized (Plasseraud, 2006, pp. 323-324; Michta, 2006, pp. 78-81).

The 'Kaliningrad issue' dominates Lithuanian-Russian relations since the withdrawal of Russian troops in 1993 (Karabeshkin, 2007, p. 75; Gylys, 2004, p. 97). Because of the geographical position of the Oblast, Russia and Lithuania are 'doomed' to cooperate. However, the various ideas and initiatives to increase economic cooperation haven't been very successful until now (Paulauskas, 2005, p. 190-191; Miniotaitė, 2005, pp. 81-82). The region might cloud the relations between Russia and Lithuania, because the Oblast is overwhelmingly dependent on transit from and to Russia over Lithuanian territory (Smorodinskaya, 2007, p. 132).

From February 1995, there was a Provisional Agreement on transit of Russian citizens from and to the Kaliningrad Oblast: in exception of other foreigners, no visa was required for transit (Danilauskas & Stanytė-Toločkienė, 2005, pp. 352-353). However, this regulation conflicted with the Schengen *acquis*, so it had to change if Lithuania wanted to join the EU (Danilauskas & Stanytė-Toločkienė, 2005, p. 255). As the membership of Lithuania to the EU approached, Lithuanian-Russian relations became also a part of the EU's external relations – for example transit- and visa questions in the Kaliningrad issue. The establishment of a stricter transit-regime could increasingly isolate the Kaliningrad Oblast (Smorodinskaya, 2007, pp. 145-146) and the EU-Russian negotiations on this issue cooled down their relations for more than a year (Danilauskas & Stanytė-Toločkienė, 2005, p. 369-379). Finally they came to an agreement about transit of persons and customs in November 2002 (Van Elsuwege, 2008, p. 458; Plasseraud, 2006, p. 324; Nies, 2004, p. 164; André, 2003, p. 21), which entered into force in January 2003 (Danilauskas & Stanytė-Toločkienė, 2005, p. 353). In the agreement, a Facilitated Transit Document (FTD) for cars and buses and a Facilitated Rail Transit Document (FRTD) for railway passengers from the Kaliningrad Oblast to Russia[6] were introduced (Van Elsuwege, 2008, p. 458; Smorodinskaya, 2007, p. 179). Part of the negotiation results on these documents was that Russia was obliged to ratify the 1997 border treaty (Karabeshkin, 2007, p. 72; Miniotaitė, 2005, pp. 77-78).

The successful introduction of an FTD and FRTD, without harming the EU-Lithuanian-Russian relations, can be called a success. Since that agreement, the relations between the Kaliningrad Oblast and Lithuania improved and in 2003, a Lithuanian consulate was opened in Sovetsk (Danilauskas &

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[6] A FTD costs 5 euro and a FRTD is for free, and an international passport is required to obtain such a document (Danilauskas & Stanytė-Toločkienė, 2005, p. 388; Jacob, 2004, p. 328; ScadPlus, 2003, April 29, 2009).

Stanytė-Toločkienė, 2005, p. 389). According to Lithuanian officials, it was a unique example of constructive cooperation between the three actors, with a result that favored all parties involved (R. Martikonis, personal communication, 2009, March 6). It's called a practice of Lithuania in CFSP before it was an EU member state, it was a reason for Lithuanians to emphasize their special role as a 'carrier of Europe' in the region (Pavlovaitė, 2003, pp. 204-205).

The transit of military goods is more problematical. Russia insisted to sign a treaty regulating a free transit 'corridor' to the Kaliningrad Oblast. However, Lithuania rejected these proposals – they were afraid the sovereignty over their territory would be undermined – and adopted a unilateral domestic regulation in 1994 (Paulauskas, 2005, pp. 189-190). There is still no treaty on the issue of transit of military goods (Van Elsuwege, 2008, p. 454) and the transit is strictly regulated: Russian authorities have to inform the Lithuanian authorities about the size, purpose etc. of goods that are transported (R. Martikonis, personal communication). Except from this remaining problem, one can see a shift in the Lithuanian approach towards the Kaliningrad Oblast: the approach becomes more friendly.

This shift can also be identified in the different official security conceptualizations. In the Basics of National Security of Lithuania of 1996 (Miniotaitė, 2007, pp. 9-11; Miniotaitė, 2003, pp. 269-270), the near *"States of unstable democracy"* were the main threats to state security because the *"specific geopolitical environment [is] hardly predictable due to the existence of militarized territories"* (Miniotaitė, 2003, pp. 269-270), a description which clearly referred to Belarus and the Kaliningrad Oblast. The geographical space was divided in a 'we' and an 'other'. Something very different is to be noticed in the National Security Strategy of 2002, where it is stated that Lithuania doesn't fear direct military threats and thus doesn't see any state as an enemy. *"Global and regional stability"* became one of the primary interests, as well as *"freedom and democracy in Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic States"* (Miniotaitė, 2007, pp. 12-13; Baltic Defence College, 2002, pp. 1-2). Only the enormous dependence on energy supplies of one country (Russia is not literally mentioned) was considered a possible threat to Lithuania's state security. The 2005 version of the National Security Strategy maintains the same basic assumptions, and the conception of national security is extended: *"freedom and democracy in the neighboring regions of the EU"* is added to the main security policy interests. Lithuania seeks to develop friendly relations with all States in the region (Miniotaitė, 2007, p. 13; PRL, 2005, January 20). In short, the approach moved from a 'sovereignty discourse' to an 'integration discourse' (Miniotaitė, 2003, p. 279).

1.2.4. The Kaliningrad Oblast and Lithuania's energy security

Indirectly, Kaliningrad's dependence on energy from Russia, supplied in transit through Lithuania (Smorodinskaya, 2007, p. 173), influences the Lithuanian position in the EU's energy policy. As long as the Oblast is dependent on energy from Russia, Lithuania is 'safe' (R. Martikonis, personal communication). All gas for Lithuanian and Kaliningrad consumption comes from Russia and is

supplied by pipelines through Belarus. In cases of emergency or technical problems, (Russian) gas is available from a Latvian storage facility (D.J. Semaška, personal communication; Baran, 2006, pp. 24-25). Reductions or a cutoff of gas supplies to Lithuania would result in a crisis in Kaliningrad.

But this situation may change in the near future. Since the Russian Gazprom, the German BASF and E.ON, and the Dutch Gasunie agreed to build the Nord Stream pipeline (Nord Stream website, n.d., April 22, 2009), Lithuania is concerned about its energy security (RIA Novosti,[7] 2009, February 13; Paulauskas, 2005, p. 193-195). This pipeline will go through the Baltic Sea, without crossing the Baltic States. If there would be a link from the Nord Stream pipeline to Kaliningrad, Lithuania loses its transit 'trump' to that region, and will be completely excluded from the European energy infrastructure (R. Martikonis, personal communication). In general, Lithuania doesn't trust the project, because it's a pipeline to Western Europe that bypasses Eastern Europe so *"it can only become another way of manipulation for Russia"* (D.J. Semaška, personal communication). Besides, Lithuania is concerned about the environmental disaster that might be caused by the construction of the pipeline, because there are thousands of chemical weapons on the bottom of the Baltic Sea, thrown into the sea after the Second World War.

The EU considers the agreement a private business project, but Lithuanian President V. Adamkus declared that this illustrates the lack of solidarity and consensus between EU member States (Van Elsuwege, 2008, p. 473-474).

1.2.5. Relations with Poland

Soon after Lithuania's independence, there were some problems with Poland: the big Polish minority in the Vilnius region stated that minority rights weren't respected, Lithuanians were suspicious about Poland's intentions regarding the region (Lane, 2001, pp. 208-209). However, their relations improved when both governments realized that their joint foreign policy aims (NATO- and EU membership) could be best achieved when they cooperated constructively (Lane, 2001, pp. 210-211). Poland and Lithuania became close partners regarding most of their foreign policy issues. Local self government was granted to Poles in the South-East of Lithuania, a military agreement was concluded in June 1993, a free trade agreement in June 1996 (Lane, 2001, p. 210). In 1997, LITPOLBAT[8] was established – a joint peacekeeping unit for UN and NATO missions (Krivas, 2001, p. 1).

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[7] RIA Novosti is a state-run Russian news website. It's sometimes questionable whether its editorial board is politically independent, but the website is interesting for dates, meetings, quotes, etc., and in general the Russian point of view.
[8] LITPOLBAT was disbanded in 2007 (Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Lithuania, 2007, June 29).

1.2.6. Relations with Belarus

Since 1990, the relations with Belarus are pragmatic but not very friendly (Budrytė, 2001, p. 74). Vilnius' relationship with Minsk is called "pragmatic selective cooperation" (Lopata, 2003, pp. 199-200). Lithuania cooperates with Belarus only where it favors the state's and the region's security, political cooperation is minimal. Lithuanians don't really trust Belarus, a country where Lenin's statue is still standing in the capital. Due to some minor disagreements, final documents on the Lithuanian-Belarus border demarcation were signed only in 2007 (MFALT, 2009b, April 14, 2009).

As to the Kaliningrad Oblast, the policy towards Belarus is a part of Lithuania's identity building. It describes typical 'Eastern' threats, such as chaos, unpredictability, militarization, authoritarianism and restrictions of basic rights (Pavlovaitė, 2003, p. 203; Lopata, 2003, pp. 186-187, pp. 198-199). It's a trend in CEEs to portray their Eastern neighbors as very 'Eastern', to make themselves more 'Western' (Pavlovaitė, 2003, pp. 203-204). Lithuania proclaims itself as a source of 'European values', ready to spread them in Belarus, it's a 'teacher of European norms'. The attitude towards Belarus remains the same, but the way in which Lithuania tries to influence its politics changed somewhat; lately, Lithuania and the EU are trying to speak directly with the Belarus government (R. Martikonis, personal communication).

1.3. Lithuania and the EU

This part treats the relations between Lithuania and the EU. First, there is a brief description of Lithuania's EU accession process. Subsequently, and overview is made of what Lithuania wants to contribute to the EU in general and more specifically to the EU's external policy. Finally, the question is addressed what it means for Lithuanians to be a member of the EU. Motives for EU membership and internal debates about 'Europe' are discussed.

1.3.1. From cooperation to membership

A first approach between the European Community and Lithuania started when the former stopped the economic assistance to the USSR due to the bloodshed in Vilnius on January 13, 1991 – even though it didn't recognize Lithuania's independence yet (Vareikis, 2001, pp. 185-186). The Community's Ministers of Foreign Affairs recognized the Baltic States' independence in August 1991 (Martikonis & Žiukas, 1999, p. 211) and soon after they started to cooperate. The conclusion of the Agreements on Trade and Commercial and Economic Co-operation in 1992 with each of the Baltic States was a first confirmation of their (common) foreign policy goals, i.e. integration into the European structure (Van Elsuwege, 2008, p. 103; Ozolina, 1999, pp. 142-143).

At the Copenhagen Conference of 1993, where Lithuania participated, the EU declared that associated countries could become members as soon as the three criteria[9] were met (Vareikis, 2001, pp. 186-187). In July 1994, Free Trade Agreements were signed (Martikonis & Žiukas, 1999, pp. 217-218; Ozolina, 1999, p. 143). By negotiating and concluding these agreements, it was the first time the EU approached the Baltic States differently (Van Elsuwege, 2008, p. 125-128).

Signing a Europe Agreement (= association agreement) with the EU was a top priority of Lithuania's foreign policy from 1992 (Martikonis & Žiukas, 1999, p. 214-218). A Europe Agreement was signed in June 1995, and entered into force in February 1998.

On December 12, 1995, the Lithuanian President Brazauskas requested EU membership (Martikonis & Žiukas, 1999, pp. 219-220). The accession negotiations started in February 2000, and in December 2002 it was decided that Lithuania was ready to join the EU (Vilpišauskas, 2003, p. 119).

1.3.2. Lithuania in the EU

Until 2004, the year of accession to the EU, Lithuania's foreign policy was aimed at becoming an EU member. Once it achieved this goal, its foreign policy had to be reoriented (Maniokas, 2004, p. 439; D.J. Semaška, personal communication). The more the date of membership approached, the more ambitious Lithuania's foreign and security policy discourse became. The government wanted to show that it's not a 'pupil' anymore, but that the EU can learn something from them, especially about relations with the East (D.J. Semaška, personal communication; Miniotaitė, 2005, pp. 80-81; Nies, 2004, pp. 87-88). Indeed, the Eastern neighborhood is very important for Lithuania. It's difficult for a small country such as Lithuania to achieve ambitious goals in neighboring countries; therefore, cooperation with the EU is welcome. D.J. Semaška (personal communication, 2009, 30 March) formulates it as follows: *"we look to the East, but work in the West."* In the 2004 Parliamentary resolution on Lithuania's foreign policy orientations in EU and NATO, it was stated that the country can become *"a State, active and visible in the world, and influential in the region"* (LRS, 2004, May 1). In the same document, it was stated that Lithuania should *"expand the security and stability area in Europe and its neighborhood."* Paulauskas, acting President in 2004, made even mention of becoming a regional leader in the future.[10]

Lithuania wanted to be an attractive center of interregional cooperation, an advocate of the 'Civil Power Europe values' (Miniotaitė, 2006, pp. 10-12). Lithuania was already an active participant in the

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[9] These criteria are the well-known 'Copenhagen criteria', applicable to all countries who want to become an EU member: 1) the economical system has to be a market economy, 2) the political system has to be a liberal democracy, and 3) the country has to implement the *acquis communautaire* of the EU in national legislation.

[10] *"Aš regu Lietuvą – regiono lyderę per narystės Europos Sąjungos ir NATO kokybė, per aktyviai plėtojamus kaimyninius santykius. Matau Lietuvą, kaip savotišką regiono centrą, o Vilnių regiono sostinę"* ("I see Lithuania as a regional leader by its EU and NATO qualitative membership, and by active development of neighborly relations. I see Lithuania as a peculiar regional center, and Vilnius as a regional capital.") (Miniotaitė, 2006, p. 12).

CFSP dialogue before the accession negotiations between Lithuania and the EU started, and in most cases it aligned itself with the positions taken by the EU (R. Martikonis, personal communication; Vitkus, 2002b, p. 14). As discussed before, the negotiations on Kaliningrad transit were a 'practical exercise' of CFSP. Accession negotiations on foreign policy proceeded without problems: the negotiation chapters CFSP and External Relations were closed in May and November 2000, respectively 2 and 8 months after they were opened. Lithuania didn't request any transitional periods or other exceptions in both chapters (Vitkus, 2002b, p. 14; Van Elsuwege, 2008, p. 558).

Since the beginning of its membership, Lithuania tried to comply with the (perceived) necessity to be a 'good European' and to show a 'pro-European' policy (Maniokas, 2004, p. 458). 'Europe' was a model for Lithuania, regarding political, economical and social reforms. All progress that was made before EU accession was matched with the EU standards (Pavlovaitė, 2003, pp. 212-213).

After being criticized by some powerful EU members because of its position in the Iraq war (see later), the country gained new European support during its successful intervention after the Ukraine elections of 2004 (R. Martikonis, personal communication; Vitkus, 2005, pp. 156-159). The Lithuanian and Polish Presidents – V. Adamkus and A. Kwaśniewski – went on a joint mission to negotiate between the two opposing candidates for the Ukrainian Presidency. The mission was informally backed by the EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and the EU's High Representative for CFSP J. Solana was present at the meeting.

As discussed before, Lithuania tries to make the EU's policy towards Russia quite 'critical' and doesn't hesitate to express its opinions openly. For example, in a reaction to the cutoff of pipeline oil supplies from Russia through the Druzhba pipeline, it threatened to veto negotiations on a new EU-Russia agreement in 2007 (Leonard & Popescu, 2007, p. 50).

Lithuania has a very clear view on EU enlargement: each European state that expresses a will to become an EU member, and that is able to meet the requirements, should be given the possibility of membership. According to D.J. Semaška (personal communication) *"it's in the interest of the whole EU to expand the zone of stability and security"*, and he knows from his own experience that *"having a guarantee of future EU membership is extremely powerful in taking necessary and sometimes painful decisions,"* which can only have a positive effect on the Eastern neighborhood of the EU. This also illustrates Lithuania's view that the EU is much more than an economic union, it is a zone of stability and security and a means to 'export' the achievements to its neighbors.

1.3.3. The EU in Lithuania

According to the French National Geographical Institute, the geographical center of Europe is in Lithuania (Pavlovaitė, 2003, p. 199), and Lithuanians are very proud of it. Lithuania never developed an alternative official foreign policy strategy than becoming a member of the EU, although the

Commission issued a negative advice in September 1997 regarding the readiness of the country to become a member[11] (Budrytė, 2001, p. 72; Lane, 2001, p. 215).

The motives of Lithuania to become an EU member, and the willingness to do so many efforts in order to join the EU, were not only economic (Vilpišauskas, 2003, p. 120). Of course, economical benefit and the prospect of becoming a part of the common energy market of the EU were important (R. Martikonis, personal communication). However, there were two other goals: increasing state security, and a 'return to Europe': re-integration into the West and a closure of the – forced – chapter of belonging to Eastern Europe (Vilpišauskas, 2003, pp. 125-126; Vareikis, 2001, p. 185). Regarding the first main objective, the letter of the incumbent Minister of Foreign Affairs explaining the reasons for EU membership is clear: Lithuania wanted to become a member because this would *"guarantee that Lithuania's interests, which, in general and in many details, correspond to the common interests of the EU, can be raised and heard more effectively. Lithuania's membership in the EU is also a safeguard of security, stability, and prosperity"* (Ušackas, 2000, pp. 2-3). Lithuania wanted the EU to be a strong and cooperative, but state-based Union (Pavlovaitė, 2003, p. 208). The second objective to become an EU member was rather a discursive one, to legitimate the first objective. According to the majority of the Lithuanian political elite, 'Europe' – i.e. the EU – was considered the 'natural' place of Lithuania in the world, because they have a common cultural heritage and values, and share the same challenges (Pavlovaitė, 2003, pp. 199-201).

However, integration of Lithuania into the EU involved some internal discussions, and a decrease of public support for EU membership at the end of the 1990's (Pavlovaitė, 2003, pp. 205-207, pp. 210-212; Ehin, 2001, pp. 41-42; Miniotaitė, 1999, p. 31). On the one hand, the country has always emphasized its national identity and independence, which implies a certain exclusion of other States. On the other hand, its foreign policy seeks to integrate within the Western European economical and political structures, which means inclusion (Miniotaitė, 2005, p. 72). There is some tension between these two objectives. Lithuania has to combine somehow its strong national identity with EU membership and CFSP. Internally, the government has to be a 'good Lithuanian', externally a 'good European', which is difficult to combine (Pavlovaitė, 2003, pp. 209-210). This is called the 'integration dilemma': States try to increase their power through integration into the EU, but at the same time they need to transfer some of their competencies (Miniotaitė, 2006, p. 11; Maniokas, 2005, pp. 444-445). Of course, in this point of view, European policy of a State is seen as a part of foreign policy, which shows that European States still have a national identity rather than a 'European identity'. From this perspective, EU membership is considered a loss of sovereignty (Miniotaitė, 1999, pp. 33-34). In a more 'constructivist' approach, tensions between sovereignty and EU membership can

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[11] The reasons for the negative advice were: an underdeveloped market economy, an insufficiently coherent energy strategy, a lack of environmental protection and an old-fashioned agricultural sector (Lane, 2001, pp. 215-216). However, the Commission assured that the negotiations could start as soon as the necessary economic and political progress was made.

disappear. If a division is made between the 'unit of identification' – the national state – and the 'unit of political organization' – the EU, integration of a sovereign state into the EU becomes more acceptable (Lane, 2001, p. 220). From this point of view, membership of the EU can be seen as a complementary constitutive element of statehood, and the 'integration dilemma' appears to be artificial (Miniotaitė, 2006, p. 11; Miniotaitė, 1999, p. 34).

By 2003, due to a shift in perspective and an intensive information campaign, public support in Lithuania for EU membership increased enormously, as is shown by the results of the May 2003 referendum: 91,7% of the voters' turnout voted for EU accession (Auštrevičius, 2005, p. 434).

The willingness of Lithuania to participate actively in CFSP is also a part of its national identity building. The slogan of becoming a regional leader for example, is *"only for domestic consumption"* (D.J. Semaška, personal communication). Politicians felt a necessity to stimulate national pride and conquer awareness of the population and the media, in order to have a debate and finally to gain legitimate support in Lithuania for membership. Furthermore, involvement in the EU and its CFSP helps to identify the country as a democratic and civilized one, against the background of an unpredictable and unstable (Eastern) neighborhood (Miniotaitė, 2006, p. 12-13).

1.4. Lithuania's partnership with the 'transatlantic community'

EU-accession was one key objective of Lithuanian foreign policy, for its 'soft security' (Pavlovaitė, 2003, pp. 202-203). The other ('hard') security objective was to become a NATO member (Miniotaitė, 2005, pp. 80-81; Maniokas, 2004, p. 439; Lopata et al., 2002, p. 26; Šerkšnys, 2000, pp. 95). Lithuania might be a supporter of CFSP, but regarding ESDP, policy makers have been more careful. They agreed to join an EU that was able to cope with different threats, but they hoped the European defence project would be complementary to the NATO structures, and not a competitor (Vitkus, 2002b, p. 15). Today, participation in ESDP is considered *"an integral part of the Lithuanian security policy which is primarily based on NATO membership"* (MFALT, 2009a, March 18, 2009).

Lithuania joined as soon as possible (in December 1991) the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, a discussion forum of common security issues for NATO- and former Warsaw Pact members (Vitkus, 2002a, p. 12; NATO online library, 1991, November 8). Lithuania's accession to the NATO was rejected in the first enlargement round, but during the November 2002 summit in Prague, it was decided to adopt Lithuania and six other States (Morozov, 2004, p. 322). In March 2004, Lithuania became a NATO member.

Before its membership, Lithuania participated in several NATO and other international missions in the 1990's and the 21th century (USA Embassy in Vilnius, 2008, February 25, 2009; Miniotaitė, 2007, pp. 17-19; Lopata et al., 2002, pp. 38-39). The country did enormous efforts to join the NATO, the most and the fastest of the three Baltic States, because NATO membership was considered the only means to guarantee national security (Miniotaitė, 2005, p. 73; Gylys, 2004, pp. 99-100; Budrytė, 2001, p. 75;

Lane, 2001, p. 199; Šerkšnys, 2000, pp. 96-97). Lithuania never had another security strategy than accession to the NATO (Miniotaitė, 2003, pp. 274-279; Lopata et al., 2002, p. 15). Neither neutrality nor a partnership with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was an option. Apparently, dependence as such is not a problem; the kind of dependence is important, as well as the partners where Lithuania depends on.

The attention paid by Lithuania to NATO membership has something to do with the USA. Lithuania relies for hard security matters more on NATO and the USA than on the EU (Michta, 2006, p. 128). The USA never officially recognized Lithuania as a part of the USSR (Lopata et al., 2002, p. 5), and the two countries maintained close ties from the beginning of Lithuania's independence. The USA backed Lithuania during its negotiations of withdrawal of Russian troops in the early 1990's (Budrytė, 2005, p. 158). About 800.000 Lithuanians live in the USA, and do some intense lobbying (Plasseraud, 2006, pp. 373-375). During USA's President G.W. Bush' visit to Vilnius in November 2002, he didn't only bring the news that the Baltic States and four other EECs could join the NATO (Jacob, 2004, pp. 149-150), but he also declared that *"anyone who would choose Lithuania as an enemy has also made an enemy of the United States of America"* (USA Embassy in Vilnius, 2004, April 2; André, 2003, p. 17), a quote that is now hammered in on Vilnius' town hall in Lithuanian and English.

When Bush declared that the USA was ready to start a war in Iraq in 2003, he was supported by Lithuania and several other small and / or acceding CEEs to the EU. This war was an opportunity for them to show their loyalty to the USA (Jacob, 2004, pp. 154-155); moreover, there were (perceived) similarities between Stalin's and Hussein's regime (Jacob, 2004, pp. 158-159). In fact, Lithuania didn't really have a choice, if it didn't want to lose the unconditional support of the USA and its perspectives on NATO membership (Vitkus, 2005, p. 155). Lithuania gave its capital's name to the Vilnius Ten Group;[12] this group signed the Vilnius Letter of February 2003, where it showed its support for the plans of the USA and some EU member States. Lithuania sent about 100 soldiers to Iraq (Jacob, 2004, p. 155). This position was one of the causes why the EU couldn't formulate a common opinion on the issue (Vitkus, 2005, pp. 149-153). It reinforced the view of some Western European States that CEEs were just an American lobby in Europe, a 'Trojan horse' in the EU (Vitkus, 2005, p. 154; Jacob, 2004, p. 158).

These events made the bigger EU States France and Germany furious,[13] and showed once again how difficult it is to establish a CFSP with all big and small States of the EU. They also indicated that there

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[12] The Vilnius Ten Group is a group of ten CEEs (Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia) who organized their campaign to join NATO together (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, 2007, February 7).

[13] The French president Chirac declared that the CEEs *"ont manqué une bonne occasion de se taire"* ("missed a good opportunity to shut up") (Présidence de la République France, 2003, February 17).

is not always a united 'Euro-Atlantic' or 'transatlantic community', where Lithuania considers itself a member of.[14]

1.5. Discussion: Lithuania in the EU and in the world

In all government programs of Lithuania as well as in research about its foreign policy, it's clear what Lithuania wants to mean in the world, in the EU, and more specifically in CFSP. Stated in beautiful terms, *"Lithuania wants to be an active and constructive partner of the EU. We always seek to serve the interests of all parties involved – Lithuania, the EU, and third parties"* (R. Martikonis, personal communication). In the eyes of Lithuania's policy makers, being an active and constructive partner means several things. They want the EU to strengthen and maintain very good relations with the USA. They want to develop good relations with the Eastern neighbors of the EU, and spread 'European values' to the East. They want the EU to open its doors for every (Eastern European) country willing and able to join the Union.

The reasons for these positions are not always compatible and can be summarized into three main points.

First, Lithuanians consider their country to be an integral part of the community of European nations (Miniotaitė, 2003, p. 269). They set up for an expert regarding relations with Eastern neighbors of the EU. Lithuania wants to participate actively in the EU's CFSP, fulfilling its role as an advocate of 'European values'.

The second reason for Lithuania's enthusiasm about the EU (and the NATO) is that the country is located in an unsafe environment for small States (Vitkus, 2002b, p. 18). This is not difficult to prove; one only has to refer to its long history of occupations in the past centuries. Nowadays, relations with its non-EU neighbors are more or less normalized, but several issues could destabilize the vulnerable equilibrium. Especially with Russia, Lithuania is still searching a mutually acceptable *modus vivendi* (Karabeshkin, 2007, pp. 66-67; Paulauskas, 2005, p. 179). Lithuanian governments have emphasized their State's sovereignty, and have tried to strengthen its national security since 1990. Until 2004, the main foreign policy aims were to integrate Lithuania into the main 'Western' political and military structures, EU and NATO. Membership of these organizations was considered the only guarantee to help the country to strengthen its independence. The EU is *"the best place to be for Lithuania"* (R. Martikonis, personal communication).

These first two reasons bring us to a third point. Governmental statements make mention of Lithuania's commitment to the 'Euro-Atlantic' or 'transatlantic' community. Indeed, Lithuania has excellent and flourishing relations with the USA. Therefore, the country often aligns itself with the

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[14] In other cases, Lithuania complies more with the European external policy position. For example – at the instance of the EU – it didn't sign a text issued by the USA that all American citizens are precluded from prosecution before the International Criminal Court (Jacob, 2004, p. 160).

USA's foreign policy positions, and wishes to strengthen the EU-USA partnership. However, it is sometimes difficult to see the unity between the EU and the USA, and Lithuania doesn't always agree with the opinions of the 'old' EU members regarding CFSP. The Iraq war is a good example of such a case.

Miniotaitė (1999, pp. 30-31, pp. 269-279) summarized the evolution of Lithuania's orientations towards East and West as a shift from 'anti-East' to 'pro-West'. Lithuania considers the Baltic-European space an increasingly stable and stabilizing region (Lopata et al., 2002, p. 1; Vitkus, 2002a, p. 5), and its politicians emphasize that the security of the Baltic States is in the interest of the whole Europe.

Therefore, integration into the 'West' is more productive than turning away from the 'East'. This is not an easy task and faces two problems. First, there is the problem of 'dual loyalty' – towards the EU on the one hand and the USA on the other hand – which was a subject of discussion in the Lithuanian Parliament in 2003 (Budrytė, 2005, p. 158). Since 2004, combining membership in EU and NATO, and a strategic partnership with the USA is an important foreign policy challenge for Lithuania (Budrytė, 2005; pp. 151-172; Paulauskas & Gričius, 2004). The second problem is the Eastern neighborhood; on the one hand, Lithuania wants to spread 'European values', on the other hand it needs Russian energy and wants to cooperate economically, so it has to be a good neighbor, not too pro-American. Lithuanians have to refrain from being too condescending towards their neighbors. In short, Lithuania is in a fascinating but difficult position in the (geographical) middle of Europe, between East and West.

Part 2: Contributions of Lithuania to CFSP
in two recent cases

The foreign policy positions described above will be put into the context of two recent cases of EU external policy: the war in South Ossetia and Abkhazia of August 2008, and the gas crisis in Ukraine of 2008-2009. Throughout these case studies, contributions of Lithuania to CFSP are examined, taking into account the country's peculiarities. These peculiarities are related to its energy market, its relations with Russia, Georgia (in the first case) and Ukraine (in the second case), and general national security issues.

The first research question of this part is about Lithuania's positions in CFSP in these two concrete cases, in order to disentangle if policy makers are acting according to their stated principles and aims of foreign policy. In order to answer this question, some hypotheses are made about the conduct of Lithuania for each case. They are based on the first part of this thesis – statements, government programs and previous positions in foreign policy – and on the peculiarities of the cases. Subsequently, a description is made of the EU's policy in both cases, and Lithuania's involvement. In this way, it will become clear if the hypotheses can be confirmed or not, or if no clear 'yes' or 'no' is possible.

Throughout this part, also another research question is discussed: what did Lithuania contribute to CFSP, to what extent do its foreign policy positions correspond with the actual EU external policy?

For each case, a brief overview of the events is made. Subsequently, hypotheses about Lithuania's behavior are made. Finally, the main parts of each case are devoted to a discussion of the two central research questions.

2.1. Case study: the war in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, August 2008

2.1.1. Background

The conflict of August 2008 started in South Ossetia, and a few days later it expanded to Abkhazia. Both are provinces of Georgia[15] that are claiming independence since several years (Holliway & Coleman, 2008, March 20, 2009).

The regions are small and little populated; for example, South Ossetia has about 80000 inhabitants, a majority of them is ethnically Ossetian but there are also a lot of Georgians (GlobalSecurity.org, 2008a, March 19, 2009). Abkhazia has about 200.000 inhabitants, a majority of them are ethnic Abkhaz people (Kay, 2008, August 21).

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[15] The geographical position of Abkhazia and South Ossetia is shown on map 1.

Map 1: Georgia and its two breakaway regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia

Source: Lepoint.fr, 2008, August 22.

The division between North and South Ossetia was made in the 1920's: the Northern part came to belong to Russia, the Southern part to Georgia. However, both countries were a members of the USSR, so these borders were not very important at that time. During the Soviet era, the region was granted some autonomy, but there have been continuous tensions between Georgia and South Ossetia. In 1989, the Popular Front, which had come to power in South Ossetia, demanded to make the region an independent republic. The Georgian government rejected this claim, and all regional political parties were banned during the elections of 1990. The autonomous status of the region was abolished by the government in December 1990. The Georgian forces invaded the region when the local authorities took steps to create a union with the North Ossetia Autonomous Republic of Russia. In 1992, an (internationally unrecognized) referendum was held in South Ossetia (Civil.ge,[16] 2006, September 11). The armed conflict ended with the Sochi Agreement of June 1992: a cease-fire was established, a security zone was established around the South Ossetian capital Tskhinvali and the borders of the territory, and two bodies were created: a Joint Control Commission, in charge with the demilitarization of the security zone, and a Joint Peacekeeping Forces group, consisting of Georgians, Ossetians and Russians, under Russian command (GlobalSecurity.org, 2008a). The former CSCE agreed to monitor the cease-fire and to facilitate the negotiations (Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE], 1992, March 19, 2009; OSCE, 2009, March 19, 2009).

Tensions remained, and in 2001 the South Ossetians elected their own President, E. Kokoity (GlobalSecurity.org, 2008b, March 19, 2009). There were no large-scale fights between Georgians and South Ossetians until 2004. In that year, M. Saakashvili was elected President of Georgia, and he soon expressed his will to reintegrate the separatist regions South Ossetia and Abkhazia[17] into the Georgian

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[16] Civil.ge is an online news website, providing news about Georgia. It is editorially and politically independent.
[17] In Abkhazia, there are similar problems as in South Ossetia (Petersen, 2008, pp. 189-197; European Centre for Minority Issues, 2004, March 23, 2009; Coppieters, 1999, March 23, 2009). The region also has a self-elected

territory. There was a peak in hostilities in August 2004, but a cease-fire made an end to it. The South Ossetian and Georgian authorities agreed to try to find a peaceful solution. M. Saakashvili proposed to grant South Ossetia an autonomous status within the borders of Georgia, but the local authorities showed little interest in such a regulation. The Georgian Minister of Internal Affairs accused E. Kokoity of hosting criminal groups, and Russian peacekeepers of providing arms to the South Ossetian fighters.

In autumn 2006 and summer 2007, there were new fights (Blank, 2008, pp. 25-26). In November 2006, presidential elections were held for South Ossetia, organized by both the South Ossetian and the Georgian authorities, which led to the election of two Presidents: E. Kokoity, who wanted an independent South Ossetia, and I.V. Sanakoyev, advocate of an autonomous South Ossetia within Georgian borders. On the same day, two parallel referenda were held in South Ossetia (Corso, M & Owen, E., 2006, November 13). The first, consulting the population in the separatist-controlled part, was about the question whether the people wanted to preserve the current status as an independent state. The turnout was about 95%, and 99% voted yes. The 'alternative' referendum, held in a Georgia-controlled part of South Ossetia, was about the question whether they wanted to start negotiations with Tbilisi about a federal system of government. the result was not very clear, and both referenda were (again) not recognized by the international community. The Georgian government appointed I.V. Sanakoyev as the head of the Provisional Administrative Unit for South Ossetia. E. Kokoity reacted that he would use all necessary means to *"remove this self declared government"* (GlobalSecurity.org, 2008b).

Russia is strongly involved in both South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and it is said that Russian policy makers try to enlarge the conflict, in order to prevent Georgia from becoming a NATO- or EU member (Blank, 2008, pp. 25-34). North Ossetia, where the other big Ossetian community lives, is a part of the Russian Federation. Several officials of E. Kokoity's government are former officials of Russian authorities or secret services (GlobalSecurity.org, 2008b). Both Russian and Georgian forces undertook actions intended to provoke the other side. Since 1991, about 85% of the South Ossetians have been issued with Russian passports, though not more than 2,5% of the inhabitants of the region are ethnic Russians (RIA Novosti, 2008, September 17). The Russian government offered Russian citizenship to the inhabitants of Abkhazia as well; nowadays, about 80% of the Abkhazian population has Russian passports (Kay, 2008, August 21; Fuller, 2004, June 11).

Also the EU has some interests in Georgia. Stability in the region is important for the EU, for example to safeguard its energy supply. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, crossing Georgian territory and passing only 55 km south of the border with South Ossetia, reduces the EU's dependence on Russian and Middle Eastern energy (Pagnamenta, 2008, August 8; German, 2008, pp. 68-71). An instable

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president who is not recognized by the Georgian government, a Sochi Agreement with a similar content was signed in 1993, followed by several other agreements, and there are also persisting tensions.

climate could deter future investment in energy infrastructure. In general, instabilities or crises in the Black Sea region easily calls the European order into question (Blank, 2008, pp. 23-25).

Georgia (and Ukraine) would like to join the NATO, but in April 2008 it was decided to postpone a membership invitation to these countries. Georgia first had to solve its 'frozen conflicts' in South Ossetia and Abkhazia (GlobalSecurity.org, 2008c, March 19, 2009). Lithuania insisted on the Bucharest summit to start Membership Action Plans with the two countries, a step towards full membership, but it couldn't convince powerful members such as France and Germany, because they didn't want to antagonize Russia. Russia is strongly opposed to NATO membership of Ukraine and Georgia. The Russian envoy to the NATO calls the NATO-Georgian approach an *"aggressive policy of NATO systems around Russia"* (GlobalSecurity.org, 2008f, March 23, 2009).

2.1.2. The events of August 2008 and after

In spring of 2008, tensions rose again in the region (GlobalSecurity.org, 2008c; BBC News, 2008, April 29; Ditrych, 2008, pp. 3-6). Both Russia and Georgia accused each other of preparing a war and of building up their military forces around Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The Russian government strengthened its cooperation with the two regions and announced to increase the number of troops in the peacekeeping forces. In July 2008, Georgian and American troops started military exercises near Tbilisi, and the Russian army near the Northern Caucasus region.

In the beginning of August, Georgian forces shelled Tskhinvali, which lead to the death of several South Ossetians (GlobalSecurity.org, 2008c). The South Ossetian government started to evacuate families to North Ossetia. In the night of August 7-8, a real armed conflict started between Georgian and South Ossetian forces. Both parties blamed for the start of the fighting. The Georgian army tried to gain control over the region to *"restore constitutional order in the entire region of South Ossetia"* (Civil.ge, 2008, August 8).

The Russian government immediately reacted with a counterattack, to *"protect Russian Federation citizens living in South Ossetia"* and to *"enforce peace on the Georgian leadership"* (President of Russia [PRUS], 2008, August 12). M. Saakashvili announced on August 10 that Georgia was ready for a cease-fire, but the Russian military actions continued. According to the President of Russia, this was necessary to achieve both above-mentioned goals. The Russian army gained control over South Ossetia very quickly (GlobalSecurity.org, 2008c). The violence also expanded to Abkhazia. Russian air attacks were reported on Gori, a Georgian city, Poti, a Georgian port, and two Georgian military bases as well. Also ground forces entered the Georgian territory.

August 12, the Russian President D. Medvedev declared that the military action was finished; on the same day, M. Saakashvili announced that Georgia was to leave CIS, and he called on other countries to do the same (GlobalSecurity.org, 2008e, March 23, 2009).

D. Medvedev agreed with the French President N. Sarkozy, who held the Presidency of the European Council at that time, on a six-point peace plan (PRUS, 2008, August 12; Civil.ge, 2008, August 12). The articles of the plan were the following:

1. No resort to the use of force

2. Absolute cessation of all hostilities

3. Free access to humanitarian assistance

4. Withdrawal of the Georgian Armed Forces to their permanent positions

5. Withdrawal of the Russian Armed Forces to the line where they were stationed prior to the beginning of hostilities. Prior to the establishment of international mechanisms, the Russian peacekeeping forces will take additional security measures.

6. An international debate on the future status of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and ways to ensure their lasting security will take place.

The Russian President emphasized his respect for Georgia's sovereignty (Civil.ge, 2008, August 12). However, 'territorial integrity' was not mentioned in the peace plan. D. Medvedev declared that it's up to the inhabitants of the respective territories to decide whether they want to live in the same state or not. N. Sarkozy didn't insist on a provision of Georgia's territorial integrity, because the most urgent at that time was to stop hostilities.

In the early morning of August 13, M. Saakashvili and N. Sarkozy agreed about the plan, with some little adjustments on article 6 (PRUS, 2009, August 14; Kramer, 2008, August 13). D. Medvedev met the Abkhazian and South Ossetian Presidents on August 14; both Presidents agreed on the plan (PRUS, 2009, August 14). E. Kokoity declared that he wouldn't allow Georgian peacekeepers in South Ossetian territory anymore (GlobalSecurity.org, 2008e).

Russia continued bombing several Georgian cities after August 12 (Kramer, 2008, August 13). In point 5 of the peace plan, there was neither a time limit for the additional security measures – unless Georgia had insisted on such a limit – nor an exact description of these measures. Russian tanks took position around the strategically important town Gori, located on the main East-West highway of Georgia, on August 13. Russian officials told they wanted to protect local inhabitants against South Ossetians bent on revenge. In other words, they considered their task to be extended outside of South Ossetian territory.

Russian troops remained present in buffer zones around South Ossetia and Abkhazia (J.N.S., 2008, August 23). They also appeared to be still in Poti and around Senaki, a Georgian military base, on August 23.

On August 26, 2008, the Russian government recognized the independence of both Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which led to indignation among European and American politicians (S.V.H., 2008, August 26).

September 8, Russia agreed to withdraw its troops from Georgian territory, as soon as EU monitors were present there in October (Agence Europe, 2008, September 9, p. 4; S.V.H. & K.L.D., 2008,

September 8). D. Medvedev also announced a peace conference about the conflict in the region, to start in Geneva on October 15.

Russia established diplomatic relations with Abkhazia and South Osssetia on September 9 (Agence Europe, 2008, September 10, p. 5) and a few days later, the Russian Defence Minister announced that Abkhazia and South Ossetia asked Russia for military support; Russia planned to build up military bases and to leave about 8000 soldiers in the regions ("Rusland stuurt 7.600 militairen naar Georgië", 2008, September 10; Gorst & Wagstyl, 2008, October 1).

8 October, all Russian troops were pulled out of the security zones in what they called Georgian territory (Gorst, 2008, October 8).

In January 2009, the Kremlin made public its plans to build a significant military base in Abkhazia, and to deploy its air force there (Gorst & Blitz, 2009, January 30).

Currently, one can say that the security situation in the region drastically changed compared to 2008. The war weakened Georgia's possibilities to give effect to its claims on the two regions; it's not likely that it will regain control over them in the foreseeable future.

The war gave rise to numerous international reactions. In general, the international community urged the belligerent parties to stop the violence immediately (GlobalSecurity.org, 2008e). Russia and Georgia accused each other of atrocities and the killing of innocent civilians. The Ukrainian President V. Yushchenko declared in August 2008 to start negotiations with Russia about increasing the rent of their military base near Sebastopol (Kramer, 2008, August 27). The USA provided a lot of humanitarian aid through military airplanes and vessels, which raised concern among Russians about USA's intentions. During the whole period of the crisis and after, the USA and NATO strongly supported Georgia and its territorial integrity (BBC News, 2008, September 4). A discussion of the EU's and Lithuania's policy follows.

2.1.3. Hypotheses about Lithuania's policy

The expectations about Lithuania's position towards the South Ossetia war are determined by several facts that are discussed before.

First, it is obvious that Lithuania aligns itself with the USA and NATO regarding its foreign policy. From 1990 until today, Lithuania policy makers have emphasized their commitment to 'Western' States and organizations. Also the Georgian President is 'Western oriented'. Lithuania doesn't only want to internalize and strengthen the 'European values' and norms internally, but also wants to spread them actively to the East.

Furthermore, Lithuania has had its own experiences with Russian military presence in its territory, to put it mildly. During the first years of the establishment of an independent state, Lithuania insisted on a rapid withdrawal of Russian troops and on the quick signature of a border treaty. Also recently, there were some disputes or tensions, for example regarding transit to Kaliningrad. In general, Lithuanian-

Russian relations remain problematic; as we have seen, some researchers called Lithuanians "new cold warriors". This characterization might be exaggerated, but indeed they are no best friends. Given the foreign policy positions taken towards Russia, it's clear that Lithuania is quite 'suspicious' and maintains a no-compromise attitude concerning territorial integrity.

The Lithuanian opinion about EU enlargement is important in this case. Since 2005, the country is providing technical assistance to Georgia on EU integration (EC, 2007a, p. 38). According to the government, Georgia clearly belongs to Europe if one looks at the country's history, culture and political values (D.J. Semaška, personal communication). As a result, Georgia is a 'future member' of the EU if it's up to Lithuania, which influences its view on the case. Lithuania regrets that the EU didn't give the country a prospect of membership yet; for this reason, Georgia operates in a much more difficult environment to pass reforms than candidate States.

A reference is made to the government's support of Georgia's territorial integrity in the last Lithuanian government program. And Georgia calls Lithuania an important partner among the EU States (Civil.ge, 2009, March 10; Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs [MFAGE], 2006, April 3, 2009, p. 22), because it supports Georgia's future EU and NATO membership (de Espona, 2009, pp. 59-64).

Based on the background information outlined above, some hypotheses can be formulated:

1. Lithuania will support Georgia's position and will criticize Russia. Russia will be depicted as guilty for having started or at least provoked the war.

2. Lithuania will try to force Russia to 'give back' South Ossetia and Abkhazia to Georgia, and will try to influence the EU's policy in this direction.

3. Lithuania will try to use the occasion to urge the EU once again to establish closer ties with Georgia.

2.1.4. Unilateral and joint actions of Lithuania

Apart from trying to influence the EU policy towards the events in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Lithuania undertook several steps, sometimes alone but mostly together with other States.

During about one year before the war started, it was Lithuania's conviction that the EU should show Georgia that it didn't stand alone, that it had to continue on the path of democratization and that it was backed by the EU.[18] Lithuania is among the most vocal critics of Russian policies in the Caucasus (Ditrych, 2008, p. 5). April 24, 2008, the Lithuanian Foreign Affairs Minister vetoed a resumption of talks on a new EU-Russian Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA)[19] (RIA Novosti, 2008,

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[18] For example, in April 2008, M. Saakashvili called the Lithuanian president V. Adamkus to discuss the *"actions undertaken by Russia"* that *"[do] not fit in the frames of international law"* and *"cause destabilization in the whole region"* (Press Office of the President of Georgia [PGE], 2008, April 17). V. Adamkus agreed with M. Saakashvili and thought that the international society should react.
[19] The PCA between the EU and Russia was signed in 1997 and expired after 10 years. It would be renewed year per year from 2007, unless one of the parties didn't wish to do so anymore (EUR-Lex, 1997, Article 106).

April 29). The veto was withdrawn three weeks later, after the EU Presidency guaranteed to consider Lithuania's complaints during the talks (RIA Novosti, 2008, May 12), *inter alia* a solution of frozen conflicts in Moldova and Georgia. Apparently, problems in Georgia were important enough to block talks with Russia.

The Lithuanian representative to the Political and Security Committee of the EU insisted several times that there was a threat in the region and that the EU should 'do something' (D.J. Semaška, personal communication). The Lithuanian position is that Russia built a trap, that M. Saakashvili made a mistake and fell into that trap, because he was not enough encouraged by the EU to make steady democratic progress. The EU also failed to *"talk very seriously"* to Russia about its military build-up at the borders. By sending such signals, the EU could *"most likely"* have prevented a war (D.J. Semaška, personal communication).

On the evening of August 7, V. Adamkus received a phone-call from M. Saakashvili (Office of the President of the Republic of Lithuania [PLT], 2008, August 7). V. Adamkus assured him that he would inform the EU about the situation in Georgia, and investigate the possibilities to help. The next day, the Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs was sent to Tbilisi in order to fulfill these promises (Delfi.lt,[20] 2008, August 8). V. Adamkus also called J. Solana, to discuss the situation. He expressed his regret about Russia's reaction to the military actions of Georgia, said that their assertion didn't fit into their task as peacekeepers, and called upon the international community to intervene.

August 9, the Presidents of the three Baltic States and the Polish President issued a joint declaration, where they questioned Russia as an adequate strategic partner for the EU, because it used *"heavy military armour against an independent country"* (Ilves et al., 2008, August 9). They wanted these actions to influence future talks on a new EU-Russian PCA. They asked the EU and the NATO to stand up against *"the spread of imperialist and revisionist policy in the East of Europe"* and to establish a new peacekeeping force, in order to prove members and aspirant countries that it's worth being an EU member. Furthermore, they condemned Russia's claim that they protected citizens abroad, because they had abused the visa facilitation program by issuing Russian passports to foreigners and subsequently to claim intervention rights. The 10th of August, the Presidents of the three Parliaments of the Baltic States also issued a joint declaration, with a similar content. The fact that the Russian government wanted to protect Russian citizens raised *"concerns about the future in every state with Russian citizens living on its territory"* (Parliament of Estonia, 2008, August 10), clearly referring to the Baltic States.

Negotiations on a new agreement were blocked by Poland until the end of 2007 because of a 'meat dispute' with Russia; the veto was lifted when the dispute was resolved (RIA Novosti, 2008, May 23).
[20] Delfi.lt is an independent Lithuanian news website, providing news about Lithuania and its neighborhood.

The country sent humanitarian aid materials to Georgia from August 11 to 14, with a total value about 450.000 LTL,[21] the Lithuanian embassy in Georgia provided consular assistance, and 76 persons were evacuated by Lithuanian air planes (Civil.ge, 2008, August 18; Delfi.lt, 2008, August 8).

August 12, V. Adamkus visited Tbilisi, together with his Estonian, Polish and Ukrainian colleagues and Latvia's Prime Minister (PGE, 2008, August 12). In the evening, they gave a joint press conference with the Georgian President, confirming their partnership once again. M. Saakashvili showed his gratitude towards the P. Vaitiekūnas, because he had said that he *"will come to Tbilisi and stand where they are throwing bombs, just for them to know, that they are bombing a building where an EU Foreign Minister is in"*. During the same press conference, V. Adamkus said that everyone should remember what followed the appeasement of Hitler (Civil.ge, 2008, August 13). On the same day, the Baltic and Polish leaders made a joint statement, expressing their support for Georgia, regretting that a special provision for its internationally recognized territorial integrity was not included in the 6-point peace plan (Civil.ge, 2008, August 19; PLT, 2008, August 13). They also urged to give Georgia (and Ukraine) a NATO Membership Action Plan, in order to prevent *"similar acts of aggression and occupation against Georgia in the future"* (PLT, 2008, August 13).

On August 19, Lithuania fully agreed with the statement of the NATO Secretary General that the NATO-Russian relations would be placed on hold until Russia adheres to the cease-fire (NATO news, 2008, August 19).

2.1.5. The EU's policy and Lithuania's involvement

Lithuanian policy makers took an explicit pro-Georgia position, and tried to draw international- and EU attention to the case. They contacted their Eastern European neighbors Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Ukraine, and expressed their joint support. In August, the Lithuanian President and his colleagues openly complained that the peace plan, agreed on the initiative of N. Sarkozy, was not extensive enough. However, not all EU countries took the same position ("EU stelt beslissing over partnerschap met Rusland uit", 2008, October 13); in general, there is not always a consensus in the EU on which policy towards the Southern Caucasus to conduct (Simão & Freire, 2008, pp. 232-233).

One thing the whole EU agreed upon was the need of an immediate cessation of hostilities (Europa NU, 2008, August 12; Raad van de Europese Unie [REU], 2008, August 11).

External policy of the EU is conducted through statements and talks with the involved parties, and by actions 'on the spot'. In what follows, a chronological overview of the EU policy and Lithuania's involvement is made.

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[21] 450.000 LTL is +/- 130.000 EUR.

2.1.6. The peace plan and EU-Russian relations

The intervention of N. Sarkozy and the signature of the peace plan has been discussed before. On August 13, there was an extraordinary meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) (REU, 2008, August 13). The EU Foreign Ministers expressed their anxiety about the escalation of the conflict, their support for the peace plan, and they announced that the EU would be involved in the establishment of sustainable peace and rebuilding of the infrastructure, in cooperation with the UN and OSCE.

The 1st of September, there was an extraordinary European Council (REU, 2008, September 1; Agence Europe, 2008, September 2, p. 2). The conclusions were quite severe towards Russia: the EU condemned Russia's decision to recognize the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, reminded that a peaceful resolution was to be founded on the independence and the territorial integrity of Georgia, which is internationally recognized. The EU called upon the parties to the peace plan of August 12 to implement it completely, and urged to put article 5 and 6 into practice. The EU's willingness to participate in the peace process and to provide humanitarian assistance was reconfirmed, as well as the necessity to search for new supply routes of energy. Towards Russia in particular, it was stated that there was no desirable alternative than to establish a strong relation, based on partnership. However, these relations were on a crucial turning point now, and had to be reconsidered with a view to the planned EU-Russia summit of November 14 in Nice, France. As long as Russian troops were not withdrawn to their positions prior to August 7, negotiations with Russia on a new PCA were postponed.

September 8, European Commission President J.M. Barroso, N. Sarkozy and J. Solana went to Moscow to talk with D. Medvedev about the implementation of the peace plan (BBC News, 2008, September 8). The Russian President assured the EU delegation that all necessary efforts were done to comply with the peace plan. They agreed on the deployment of an EU mission in Georgia of at least 200 monitors by October 1, and Russian troops would be withdrawn to the line agreed in the peace plan, maximum 10 days after the arrival of the mission (EUMM Georgia, n.d.a, March 24, 2009; REU, 2008, September 15-16, pp. 8-9). During the GAERC meeting of September 15-16, decisions were taken about the size and mandate of the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM Georgia), a civilian and unarmed mission under CFSP. The support for Georgia's territorial integrity was reconfirmed, but it was not explicitly mentioned that the mission would cover the 'entire Georgian territory', which was widely criticized (B.B., 2008, September 16).

Although Russia had announced to leave 4000 troops in South Ossetia and 4000 in Abkhazia, which was in conflict with the peace plan according to the EU member States (S.V.H., 2008, October 8), the GAERC of October 13 was not as severe for Russia as the September 1 European Council (REU, 2008, October 13, p. 11; Agence Europe, 2008, October 11, p. 4). The Council noted with 'satisfaction' that the Russian troops were withdrawn from their positions around South Ossetia and

Abkhazia, and called upon the parties to continue implementing the peace plan. The Council still supported the territorial integrity of Georgia and wanted to strengthen the EU-Georgian relations. Furthermore, the Council expressed the EU's willingness to contribute to the implementation of article 5 and 6 of the agreements of August 12 and September 8. The French Presidency had tried to find a compromise[22] on resuming negotiations about an EU-Russian PCA, backed by the German and Italian delegations. But a re-start was opposed by the UK, Poland, the Baltic States and Sweden (Agence Europe, 2008, November 5, p. 5; "EU stelt beslissing over partnerschap met Rusland uit", 2008, October 13; Agence Europe, 2008, October 14, p. 6).

2.1.7. The 'Geneva processus'

Talks between Georgia and Russia on security in the Caucasus had to start on October 15 in Geneva, under the auspices of the EU, OSCE and UN, but on that day they were suspended because of 'procedural difficulties' (BBC News, 2008, October 15). Both parties blamed each other of having blocked the talks. Russians wanted to involve South Ossetian and Abkhazian delegations in the talks, Georgia refused this because they don't consider them as independent States. P. Morel, the Special Representative of the EU called it *"a problem of format"* (REU, 2008, September 25, p. 14). Despite this blow, representatives of the UN and the OSCE were optimistic and emphasized that it was already not bad that all parties were there and expressed their opinion (UNifeed,[23] 2008, October 15).

November 19, talks could finally start. South Ossetian and Abkhazian delegations were also present (BBC News, 2008, November 19). The talks were rather 'exploratory' and no official decisions were taken. The 'third round' of the Geneva talks had the same outcome: the parties were continuing to talk, but still no decisions were taken (Présidence française de l'Union européenne, 2008, December 19) and a next round was scheduled February 17-18 (RIA Novosti, 2008, December 18 - a). During this February meeting, a first agreement was reached, on an 'incident prevention mechanism'[24] – a mechanism to improve protection of citizens near the administrative borders (Civil.ge, 2009, March 2). It was decided to organize a next meeting in 'spring' 2009, but no date was fixed. Two months later, a new meeting was scheduled on May 18-19 (Civil.ge, 2009, April 16).

March 4, the Georgian and Lithuanian Parliamentary Chairmen complained during a joint press conference that neither Russia nor its 'proxy regime' in Tskhinvali showed any intention to put the

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[22] A consensus was not required to resume talks, as on September 1 it was not decided to 'stop' negotiations with Russia, only to 'postpone' them (Riccardi, 2008, November 18, p. 3). However, the Presidency of the EU tried to reach a certain consensus among the EU member States, in order to have a stronger mandate. N. Sarkozy didn't succeed (yet) on October 13.

[23] UNifeed is a news agency run by the UN, providing video news from all over the world.

[24] This mechanism should consist of talks between Georgian, South Ossetian and Russian representatives. However, until today there were no results of these talks, and meetings were repeatedly postponed (Civil.ge, 2009, May 7; EUMM Georgia, 2009, May 7).

February agreement into practice, and accused South Ossetian militants of having taken hostage two Georgian citizens (Civil.ge, 2009, March 4).

The talks will continue after this thesis is printed; it's not likely that a solution satisfactory for all parties will be found in the foreseeable future, given the contradictory interests.

2.1.8. The EU and Russia: to talk or not to talk

November 14, an EU-Russia summit was to take place in Nice. In the weeks before the summit, intensive negotiations were going on within the EU, about the question: shall negotiations on a new PCA be resumed or not? Most of the former opponents seemed to have changed their mind. But November 3, V. Adamkus and his Polish colleague L. Kaczynski stated that it was too early (Civil.ge, 2008, November 4); Russian troops were withdrawn from around South Ossetia and Abkhazia, but the Russian government was keeping troops inside these two regions. Moreover, EU- and OSCE observers were not allowed to enter their territories, which was in conflict with the 12 August agreement and was called 'occupation of Georgian territory'. N. Sarkozy, EU-President, had another point of view, followed by the overwhelming majority of EU member States and J.M. Barroso (Civil.ge, 2008, November 8). They didn't want to create another EU-Russian crisis and pleaded for a united European position.

The GAERC of November 10-11 decided to resume the negotiations with Russia (Civil.ge, 2008, November 11). It was emphasized that the Council conclusions of September 1 remained relevant, that the EU expected Russia to behave 'responsible', that the EU supported Georgia's territorial integrity, and that Russia had to comply with the promises it made. Dialogue and negotiations are seen as the most appropriate instruments of the EU to promote their principles, values and interests. The re-start of the dialogue didn't mean that the EU agreed with the *status quo* in Georgia, nor with *"Russian action contrary to our principles"* (REU, 2008, November 10-11, p. 11).

In the end, Lithuania was the only EU member who was still opposed to a resumption of the talks with Russia; their last ally, Poland, dropped its objections just before the GAERC of November 10-11 (D.J. Semaška, personal communication; R. Martikonis, personal communication; Civil.ge, 2008, November 21; Agence Europe, 2008, November 13, p. 4). The GAERC decision is deeply regretted by the Lithuanian permanent representatives to the EU. It was their opinion that *"if we want our word to be worth anything, we should be consistent"* (i.e. maintain the position taken on the 1st of September, B.V.); they are afraid that *"in the future, when we say something, Russia will simply ignore it"* (D.J. Semaška, personal communication).

On the EU-Russia summit in Nice, November 14, the EU agreed with Russia to resume negotiations on December 2 ("EU en Rusland op 2 December weer rond de tafel", 2008, November 14). The EU noted that Russia *"had fulfilled a very large part of its commitments"* and had participated in international talks in Geneva, but *"emphasized the need for making progress with regard to the*

withdrawal of Russian forces", while the Russian President was grateful to the EU for *"their participation in finding solutions for resolving the conflict"* (European Commission's Delegation to Russia [ECDR], 2008, November 14).

2.1.9. The EU, Russia and Georgia since November 14, 2008

From November 2008, the 'Georgia-issue' and EU-Russian relations became somewhat disconnected. In December, the EU urged Russia once again to meet its obligations and to undertake the necessary actions in order to restore mutual trust (REU, 2008, December 11, p. 10). Furthermore, the necessity to develop an Eastern Partnership with – among others – Georgia is underlined (REU, 2009, March 19-20, p. 12) and discussions were held in the EU-Georgia Council on December 8-9. The EU-Georgian partnership was reconfirmed and the increased involvement of the EU in the conflict settlement was emphasized (Council of the European Union [CEU], 2008, December 8-9).

In December, the Council appointed H. Tagliavini as the head of an international independent mission to investigate the mutual allegations of Georgia and Russia, including those about war crimes (REU, 2008, December 2, p. 24). She has to submit a report to the European Council, the OSCE and the UN by July 31, 2009.

Renewed EU-Russian talks were held on December 2 in Brussels (RIA Novosti, 2008, December 2). They included a wide range of subjects, but the conflict in the Southern Caucasus was to be discussed in Geneva later that month. The Russian envoy to the EU, V. Chizhov, said that some EU members had tried to use the PCA-talks to bring pressure on Russia, but that progress was made. The talks are *"tough"* and Lithuania is *"following them"* (D.J. Semaška, personal communication). The Lithuanian delegation is still very reluctant to establish close relations with Russia, and during the discussions about the EU negotiation mandate, it was again a 'troublemaker'.[25] Probably it will take a long time before a new PCA is agreed; 2 or 3 years according to V. Chizhov (RIA Novosti, 2008, December 18 - b).

April 3, the talks were continued in Moscow. The parties were still making 'progress' in the shaping of the format and content of the PCA, but there was *"no complete mutual understanding on all aspects of the deal"* according to M. Franco, EU-envoy to Russia (RIA Novosti, 2009, April 3 - a). A next round of talks will take place in the beginning of June 2009 (RIA Novosti, 2009, April 3 - b).

In February, Russia announced that it would increase its military presence in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, as provided in the Friendship and Cooperation treaties of November 2008 with the two 'independent republics' (RIA Novosti, 2009, February 8). The EU Presidency reacted that the EU was *"seriously concerned"* about these plans (REU, 2009, February 6), that it expected Russia to comply with the agreements made, and it urged Russia to use all international forums involved in the conflict.

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[25] By the way, it was also very difficult to convince Lithuania to intensify cooperation between the NATO and Russia (Barber, 2009, March 6; N.C., 2009, March 5).

April 30, 2009, Russia signed border protection agreements with South Ossetia and Abkhazia; both regions delegated the authority for guarding their state borders to Russia for a renewable term of 5 years, until they have built their own border guard forces (Civil.ge, 2009, April 30; RIA Novosti, 2009, April 30). The EU Presidency in a reaction (again) referred to Georgia's territorial integrity, the peace plan and the Geneva talks, and said to be *"deeply concerned"* (Czech Presidency of the European Union [CPEU], 2009, May 1).

In both cases, the EU-Russian relations were not reconsidered, as it was the case in September 2008.

The crisis and especially its aftermath are far from finished. There are still tensions in the region; April 23 for example, Georgian and South Ossetian sides reported shooting near Tskhinvali and accused each other of having opened fire (Civil.ge, 2009, April 23). In the near future, several talks are planned that might possibly cause a breakthrough – or a further worsening? – in the conflict. May 18-19, the Geneva talks will continue, and there will be a GAERC meeting (CPEU, 2009a). May 21-22, there will be an EU-Russia summit (RIA Novosti, 2009, February 27). In June 2009, the next round of EU-Russia talks on a PCA will be held, and June 18-19 a European Council is planned (CPEU, 2009b).

2.1.10 EU Actions on the spot

The European Commission, Lithuania and 10 other member States provided a considerable amount of humanitarian aid to Georgia (Europa Press Releases [EPR], 2008, August 21). There are also several representatives and EU missions in Georgia on several issues (EUMM Georgia, n.d.e, March 24, 2009). October 1, the EUMM Georgia of 249 monitors started, it was the fastest deployment of an EU mission ever. The mission has to work in close coordination with the OSCE – or at least with the leftovers of its mission in Georgia[26] – and the UN mission in Georgia-Abkhazia, UNOMIG (EUMM Georgia, n.d.a). The EUMM Georgia mandate (EUMM Georgia, n.d.c, March 24, 2009; A.V.B., 2008, October 1) is to monitor the implementation of the August 12 peace plan and the EU-Russian agreement of September 8, namely withdrawal of troops. Furthermore, the mission has to contribute to the stabilization and normalization of the areas affected by the war and to inform the EU member States about the situation in Georgia. The mandate covers the entire territory of Georgia, which means that it includes Abkhazia and South Ossetia, as they are not recognized as independent States by the EU. However, none of the Field Offices of the mission is stationed in one of the two regions (EUMM Georgia, n.d.b, March 24, 2009), and the mission doesn't seem to carry out activities in one of the two regions (EUMM Georgia, n.d.d, March 24, 2009). It is the position of the breakaway regions' and

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[26] In 2009, the OSCE mission to Georgia – which was involved in monitoring, facilitating negotiations for a peaceful settlement of the conflict, training etc. (OSCE, 2009a) – decreased dramatically. December 22, 2008, Russia vetoed against an extension of the OSCE mandate in Georgia, which meant that the personnel had to start to withdraw from January 1, 2009 (Parfitt, 2008, December 22). The Russian government explained that a prolongation of the current mandate was impossible, as now it concerned two independent States (Parfitt, 2008, December 22; B.B., 2008, September 4). Only the mandate of the unarmed OSCE military monitors has been extended until the end of June 2009 (OSCE, 2009, February 12).

Russia's authorities that the EU has nothing to do there (Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty,[27] 2008, November 4).

Lithuania has 10 participants in EUMM Georgia (EUMM Georgia, n.d.d, March 24, 2009), which is quite a lot compared with other EU member States in terms of population or surface. It shows that Lithuania considers this mission very important, although it regrets the fact that the mission is not operating on the whole territory (D.J. Semaška, personal communication). At least, the mission stabilized the situation.

2.2. Discussion: the war in South Ossetia

Summarizing Lithuania's position, the country's overall support for Georgia and critics on Russia are obvious. During the whole period of the war and after, Lithuania assured the Georgian government that they were partners. The war was seen as an aggressive act of Russia towards the democratically elected Georgian leader and the country's internationally recognized territory.

The position taken by Lithuanian policy makers is not surprising. The first hypothesis, about criticizing Russia, was confirmed. Indeed, there was made not a single criticism on Georgia's behavior. In several statements and documents, Lithuania's support for the Georgian position was emphasized. All blame was put on Russia; Lithuanians said that Russians tried to push through their imperialist agenda.

The second hypothesis, about trying to restore Georgia's territory recognized by the whole international community except Russia and Nicaragua (BBC News, 2009, April 23), was also confirmed. In the beginning, its strategy to achieve this was completely the same as the EU strategy: establishing a monitoring mission and postponing talks with Russia about a PCA. All member States agreed at that time and hoped that Russia would change its position due to the tough position of the EU. All members States were ready to defend the stability in the region, sent a voluminous mission, and EU bodies stated several times that the EU wanted to be involved in the resolution of the conflict. After 6 weeks, 26 EU members agreed to change the strategy somewhat, and to resume negotiations. The stage for discussions about a lasting solution for the Southern Caucasus conflict was 'moved' to 'Geneva processus'. The Lithuanian government didn't put up with it and tried to block negotiations, but not successfully. Maybe it was not the most effective method to achieve its goals, but in a way Lithuania called the loudest among the EU members for a restitution of Georgia's territorial integrity.

Contrary to what was expected in the third hypothesis, there was no strong call for closer ties between the EU and Georgia, at least not in public. Lithuania, like many others, only urged the international community to intervene and to stop hostilities. However, behind closed doors, Lithuania is continuing

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[27] Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty is a news company, providing news from 20 countries where a free press is banned by the government or not fully established.

to try to gain support for accession of Georgia and other States to the EU. D.J. Semaška is optimistic: *"this unfortunate event* (the Georgia war and the EU's policy, B.V.) *increased the support for those who said that Lithuania should be listened to* (regarding EU partnership with Georgia, B.V.)*"* (D.J. Semaška, personal communication).

2.3. Case study: the gas crisis in Ukraine, 2008-2009

2.3.1. Background

In the early 1990's, Russia provided cheap gas to Ukraine and other former Soviet Republics (Pirani, 2007, p. 18, pp. 99-102). Both Russia and Ukraine suffered from an economic decline; they were dependent on each other, for gas supplies (Ukraine) and revenues (Russia) (Pirani, Stern & Yafimava, 2009, p 5). In that time, it was impossible for both sides to request or to pay higher prices.

Each year, bilateral governmental negotiations were held about gas prices, transit tariffs and transit volumes (Pirani, et al., 2009, pp. 5-7). In the course of the past two decades, several problems accumulated: large-scale deliveries of Russian gas at very low prices, Ukrainian debts, theft from the transit system in Ukraine, and Russian pressure to take over the Ukrainian infrastructure. Several intermediary companies were established to supply and transport gas to and in Ukraine.

The Russian government declared in November 2006 that by 2011 European and domestic gas prices should be equivalent. In the last few years, Gazprom the Russian state-controlled gas company, insisted that CIS countries – where Ukraine is a member of – should pay prices equal to the EU gas price (Pirani et al., 2009, p. 7, p. 10). However, this principle was applied unevenly; countries that were willing to share the ownership of their pipeline infrastructure, such as Belarus and Armenia, negotiated much slower import price increases than countries that were moving away from Russia politically, for example Georgia and Ukraine.

Disputes about Ukrainian debts and import prices between Russia and Ukraine led to several gas crises in the 1990's and in the beginning of the 21st century, leading to a temporary decrease or cut of gas supplies to Ukraine (Pirani, 2007, pp. 19-20; Stern, 2006, pp. 2-7; Nichol, Woehrel & Gelb, 2006, p. 4). Major crises took place in 2005-2006 (BBC News, 2006, January 4; Stern, 2006, pp. 7-10) and 2007-2008 ("Chronologie des crises du gaz entre la Russie et l'Ukraine", 2009, January 1), which were solved by compromises including higher gas prices and higher transit fees – however, still far under the European prices.[28]

In March and October 2008, the Ukrainian and Russian governments and the two national gas companies concluded several agreements on the position of Naftogaz, the Ukrainian state-controlled gas company, and Gazprom on the Ukrainian market, regarding transit to the EU. They also agreed

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[28] The differential between prices for CIS prices and European netback prices (i.e. European border prices minus transportation charges) was even dramatically growing until 2008 (Stern, 2006, pp. 7-10).

that price negotiations for 2009 would be 'based on' the European netback prices (Pirani et al., 2009, pp. 12-14).

It seemed like the relations were improving and a future crisis would be avoided. However, in the fall of 2008, it appeared that Naftogaz failed to pay a huge debt to Gazprom, followed by a statement of the latter that in that case no new supply contract could be signed for 2009 (Pirani et al., 2009, pp. 15-18). The Russian Prime Minister V. Putin also stated that supplies to Ukraine would be cut off if there was any interference with transit gas. These warnings were repeated throughout December. Naftogaz made several payments at the end of December, but Gazprom claimed that Naftogaz owed still $614 million, which was denied by the latter. This debt dispute was one of the immediate causes for the crisis.

It's clear that Russian-Ukrainian relations in the gas sphere are not very stable. This is a big problem for the Ukrainian population, but also for the EU, who has a big stake in a smooth gas supply to and transit through Ukraine. About 25% of the EU's gas consumption comes from Russia, of which 80% is transported through Ukraine (RIA Novosti, 2009, January 29; EC, 2007c, April 23, 2009, p. 11).

2.3.2. The gas crisis of 2008-2009 and its solution[29]

The gas crisis of 2008-2009 between Russia and Ukraine, a result of the above-mentioned problems, was the most serious of its kind; it was the first time the Russian supplies to EU countries were completely cut off (Pirani et al., 2009, p. 8, pp. 21-22, p. 35).

The crisis (Pirani et al., 2009, pp. 19-25; RIA Novosti, 2009, January 19; BBC News, 2009, January 2) lasted 20 days. January 1, 2009, all supplies for Ukrainian consumption were cut. January 5, Gazprom accused Ukraine of having 'stolen' 65.3 mmcm of fuel gas, which means that Ukraine used gas for domestic consumption that was meant for other European countries. Naftogaz responded that it had the right to take this fuel gas, because there was no transit contract about this type of gas. This 'theft' dispute was another reason for the (protracted) crisis. January 6, supplies to Europe were reduced; Gazprom said that Ukraine had closed 3 of the 4 transit pipelines and that it reduced the supply by 65.3 mmcm that day, the amount of 'stolen' gas of the previous days. January 7, deliveries to Europe completely stopped. Gazprom said that Ukraine closed its pipelines, Naftogaz responded that it had done so because Gazprom stopped all gas supplies in the morning. During 13 days, there were no supplies to Europe. Naftogaz reversed the flow in the pipelines, and transported in this way gas from Ukrainian storage facilities in the West of the country to the East. Gazprom stated that the transit system couldn't transport Russian gas to Europe; Naftogaz reacted that it couldn't receive Russian gas, as there was no supply and transit contract.[30]

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[29] A timeline of the crisis – from the Gazprom point of view – is to be found on the website of Gazprom (2009).

[30] According to Naftogaz, the transit contract expired on December 31, 2008 (Pirani et al., 2009, p. 43-44).

During the crisis, the Russian and Ukrainian governments and gas companies expressed mutual allegations; both parties had a part in starting and prolonging the crisis (Pirani et al., 2009, pp. 31-39; Gazprom, 2009, January 17; Gazprom, 2009, January 15; PRUS, 2009, January 14). Gazprom and the Russian government said that the crisis was caused by the political struggle between President V. Yushchenko and Prime Minister J. Timoshenko – where both wanted to gain credit in Ukraine by making a good deal – and the closure of the pipeline on January 6-7; according to the Russian side, Ukraine refused to transit gas. However, at the end of 2008 it asked more than a double import price for 2009 than for 2008, which made negotiations more difficult. Ukraine from its part accused Gazprom of having shut down the gas supply, so there just was no gas to transit to Europe. By announcing that transit to Europe would be reduced if Russian gas was cut off,[31] was also an obstruction to a rapid settlement of the dispute, as well as a very late payment of its bills.

January 15, Putin announced the idea to establish a consortium of gas companies, which could provide the finance required to buy the necessary amount of gas in order to restart the transit system (Pirani et al., 2009, pp. 47-49). This consortium was built in 36 hours, and consisted of 7 EU gas companies and Gazprom. January 19, Ukraine and Russia came to a new agreement (Pirani et al., 2009, pp. 26-28; Gazprom, 2009, January 20; RIA Novosti, 2009, January 19). January 20, gas flows to the EU restarted, and reached normal levels on January 22. The supply- and transit agreements, concluded by V. Putin, Ukraine's Prime Minister J. Timoshenko and both Gazprom and Naftogaz, are valid from 2009 to 2019. The annual quantity of supply and transit is defined, as well as the transit tariffs. Gazprom will sell gas directly to Naftogaz, and the 100% Gazprom-owned Gazprom-Sbyt will market at least 25% of the imported gas to Ukrainian industrial customers. In 2009, the gas price will be 80% of the European netback price, and from 2010 it will be 100%. There are also strict payment rules for every delivery month.

2.3.3. After the 2009-2019 agreement

When the agreement was signed, and deliveries and transit to Europe restarted, the crisis was officially finished. However, the strict payment rules will be difficult to comply with for Naftogaz (Pirani et al., 2009, pp. 28-30). Payments have always been a problem for Ukraine, and this won't become easier in today's political and economical context: gas prices rise, the international price for steel – Ukraine's main export product – decreases, there is an intense political struggle in Ukraine,[32] and the general economic crisis also has its effect. There is still a 'crisis atmosphere' around the gas transit of Russian

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[31] Some sources say that Naftogaz CEO O. Dubyna sent such a message to Gazprom CEO A. Miller on December 31, and he never denied it (Pirani et al., 2009, p. 17).

[32] Indeed, there is some disagreement in Kiev about the new contract. Yushchenko declared after his meeting with Polish president Kaczynski and Czech prime Minister Topolanek that the Ukrainian-Russian agreement is *"uneasy"*, that *"cannot be called partnership"* (Press Office of President Victor Yushchenko, 2009, January 28). This is seen as another example of disagreement between the two main political actors in Ukraine (Pirani, Stern & Yafimava, 2009, p. 30).

gas through Ukraine. Apart from huge economic losses for both parties due to the crisis, the reputation of both Russia as a supplier and Ukraine as a transit country were jeopardized (EU-Russia Centre,[33] 2009, February 13; Pirani et al., 2009, pp. 57-59). Both the EU as a customer and Russia as a supplier[34] are interested in (re-)establishing normal energy relations.

In March, there were already problems to pay for gas supplied in February (RIA Novosti, 2009, March 5; Novinite.com,[35] 2009, March 5). V. Putin reacted that Russia might reduce or cut the supplies to Ukraine and Europe again. Because of these payment problems and a threat of a new cutoff only 6 weeks after the conclusion of a new agreement, it's not likely that there will be no new gas crises before 2019.

2.3.4. Hypotheses about Lithuania's policy

Several facts, related to issues of the crisis, Lithuania's foreign policy, and to the country's particular energy situation, have an influence on Lithuania's position in this crisis.

First of all, it's a good question whether a (EU) policy towards this crisis is considered a subject of Common *Foreign and Security* Policy, or rather of 'normal' energy policy of the EU. According to recent government programs and the National Security Strategy, energy security is a part of Lithuania's foreign policy and an integral part of the country's security. Lithuania doesn't view energy as a purely 'commercial' issue, it has a 'political' connotation.

100% of Lithuania's gas comes from Russia; in relative terms this is more than Ukraine. Unlike 17 other European countries, Lithuania was not affected by the 2008-2009 gas crisis (Pirani et al., 2009, pp. 54-55), but this doesn't mean that Lithuanians feel very secure concerning energy. Gas from Russia, a country they don't really trust (Karabeshkin, 2007, p. 81) is supplied by pipeline through Belarus, a country they don't trust either. In cases of technical problems it can be supplied through Latvia. Lithuania is no gas transit country to other EU member States (see map 2), but it is the only way of gas supply to the Kaliningrad Oblast. As discussed before, this is seen as a trump in its energy security. However, if the EU will consider Ukraine and not Russia as the biggest problem in gas supplies to the EU, other transit ways to the EU – for example the Nord Stream pipeline – will be prioritized in the EU to prevent future Russian-Ukrainian gas disputes to have an impact on EU countries (Pirani et al., 2009, p. 59). Russia from its part might be reasonably expected to insist on a quick start of the Nord Stream project and other pipelines, either because of political or only commercial interests. In any case, it is in Russia's interest to build alternative supply routes to EU member States. And in any case, Lithuania is strongly opposed to the project.

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[33] EU-Russia Centre is a Belgium-registered international non-profit organization, providing information about relations between the EU and Russia.
[34] 60-70% of Gazprom's revenues come from the EU (EPR, 2009, March 9; EC, 2007c, April 23, 2009, p. 11, p. 35).
[35] Novinite.com is a Bulgarian English-language news website.

Map 2: Main gas pipelines in Europe

Source: BBC News, n.d.

In general, Lithuania knows how it feels to be dependent on Russian energy, which can be uncomfortable, for example when the Druzhba pipeline was closed. In that case there was an alternative, the Mažeikių Nafta oil terminal, but the country is much less prepared to switch to alternative gas supply routes (D.J. Semaška, personal communication). Gazprom is a quite powerful shareholder[36] of Lithuania's national gas company Lietuvos Dujos. Since Gazprom brings pressure on all former USSR countries in order to control their gas infrastructure, Lithuania has another reason to fear the company's policy and dependence on Russian gas in general. Lithuania and the other Baltic States are still very isolated from the EU energy infrastructure (Permanent Representation of Lithuania to the European Union [PRLEU], 2009; Krupavičius, 2008, pp. 1054-1056).

An important issue in the Ukraine gas crisis was the gas price for 2009. For several years, prices of Russian gas for Lithuania have been lower than for other European countries (Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations Office in Geneva, 2009, January 9; Bruce, 2005, p. 20). However, from 2005 Russia claimed that these countries should pay 'European' prices (Stern, 2006, p. 5), and prices increased gradually. In 2008, it was expected that the Baltic States would pay $280 per tcm, which is still $70 less than the other EU countries (Energy Information Administration, 2009, April 16). Though, at the end of the year it appeared that Lithuania paid more than the EU average and more than countries further from Russia than Lithuania, for example $515 in August (Marketnews.lt,[37] 2009, February 9; Nacionalinė Dujų, Elektros ir Šilumos vartotujų gynimo Lyga,[38] 2009, January 23). It is already 'too late' for Lithuania, a preferential price regime for Russian gas doesn't exist anymore.

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[36] In 2004, Gazprom obtained a 34% stake in Lietuvos Dujos (Gazprom, 2004, March 24), and currently its stake is 37,1% (Gnedina & Emerson, 2009, p. 12).
[37] Marketnews.lt is a Lithuanian website, providing independent financial news of Lithuania and the world.
[38] Nacionalinė Dujų, Elektros ir Šilumos vartotujų gynimo Lyga is the Lithuanian customers' organization of gas, electricity and heating clients.

Therefore, the country can't fear a similar gas crisis in Lithuania because of price disputes; the gas import prices already reached EU levels, and even more, without big problems. But the fact that Lithuania paid such a high price last year, doesn't favor the country's attitude towards Russia (D.J. Semaška, personal communication).

As it was the case for the war in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Lithuania's opinion about EU (and NATO) enlargement is also important here: Lithuania wants Ukraine to become an EU member as soon as the conditions are met. This entails a general positive approach towards Ukraine, the country is considered a 'future member', a partner.

In line with the facts described above, the following hypotheses about Lithuania's policy can be made:

1. Lithuania will view this crisis as a 'political' foreign policy issue.

2. Lithuania will blame Russia for the crisis, and try to influence CFSP in a 'critical' way towards Russia.

3. Lithuania views Ukraine as a partner of the EU, and will emphasize once again the need of closer cooperation between the EU and Ukraine.

4. Lithuania will increase its call upon the EU for an enhanced common energy policy and will seek to incorporate Lithuania in a European energy / gas infrastructure.

2.3.5. (No) unilateral or joint actions of Lithuania

Compared with the Georgia-case, there were no real visible unilateral or joint interventions of Lithuania in the crisis. January 15, V. Adamkus had a telephone conversation with the Ukrainian and Polish Presidents, where they requested Lithuania's support for Ukraine's position (PLT, 2009, January 15).

2.3.6. The EU's policy and Lithuania's involvement

As discussed before, it were European gas companies who provided financial means to restart the transit system, and it were Ukrainian and Russian negotiators who came to a new agreement.

Indeed, before and during the early stage of the crisis, the contributions of the EU to find a solution were not very extensive. The Commission and the Czech EU Presidency issued some declarations to remind the parties that there is such a thing as a transit contract and a principle of uninterrupted transit, and urged them to restore full gas supplies to the EU (Pirani et al., 2009, p. 16, pp. 46-49; EPR, 2009, January 6 - a; EPR, 2009, January 6 - b). Prior to the crisis, the Secretary General of the Energy Charter Secretariat[39] also stated that Ukraine had to ensure gas transit (Pirani et al., 2009, p. 49), but furthermore didn't play a decisive role in the solution of the crisis.

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[39] One of the tasks of the Energy Charter Secretariat is to monitor the implementation of the Energy Charter Treaty, a multilateral treaty between energy exporters and importers on an efficient energy cooperation. Both

There was some solidarity between EU members: gas was transited from some States who had considerable gas stocks at their disposal to affected countries (Pirani et al., 2009, pp. 55-56). Obviously, Lithuania was not among those countries, as there is no gas pipeline connection.

Soon after the cut of gas supplies to the EU, negotiations started about a monitoring mission (Interfax-Ukraine,[40] 2009, January 9). January 10, the European Commission and the EU Presidency defined the terms of reference of a mission, consisting of experts from both sides of the dispute and representatives from major European gas companies – no Lithuanians were member of this mission (Pirani et al., 2009, pp. 22-23; Agence Europe, 2009, January 11, p. 4; Gazprom, 2009, January 10). The mission was deployed on January 11 and 12 (EPR, 2009, January 11). After intensive negotiations between all parties, the agreement was signed by the Russian and Ukrainian governments and gas companies, and the European Commission. The main task of the mission was to monitor gas flow on certain locations in Russia, Ukraine and the EU (Gazprom, 2009, January 12; EC, 2009, January 9). However, the mission had nothing to monitor, as there was no gas flowing until January 20 (Pirani et al., 2009, p. 47; EC, 2009, January 15).

When the Russian-Ukrainian agreement was reached on January 20, Gazprom's Deputy CEO A. Medvedev announced that *"there is no need for the monitoring system to continue"* (Gazprom, 2009, January 20). Indeed, the monitoring mission didn't get (semi-)permanent status (Pirani et al., 2009, p. 51) and its mandate seems to be finished.

In short, during the first days of the crisis, the EU institutions were not so strongly involved in the resolution of the dispute. Only after more than a week, when the crisis fully affected EU member States, concrete plans for a monitoring mission were made public.

2.3.7. Who caused the crisis?

In the absence of a mission in the beginning, it was impossible to know whether Ukraine was blocking transit or Russia failed to deliver gas to the Ukrainian pipeline system (Pirani et al., 2009, p. 50). When the mission arrived, the members could only notice that no gas was flowing; they couldn't point a guilty party. Anyhow, J.M. Barroso stated on January 7 that *"If [Ukraine] wants to be closer [to the EU], it should not create any problems for gas to come to the EU"* (Runner, 2009, January 7), which means that he attributed the responsibility for the crisis – at least partly – to Ukraine.

Lithuania had another position. The President and the Prime Minister supported Ukraine, blamed Russia, and denounced the latter's attitude (Wagstyl, Gorst, Olearchyk & Chaffin, 2009, January 15; Bayou, 2009, January 9). V. Adamkus stated in an interview on January 15 that the crisis affected the whole EU. He emphasized the need to reduce the EU's dependence on Russian gas, the diversification

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Ukraine and Russia are party to the treaty, but Russia didn't ratify it yet (Energy Charter website, n.d., April 21, 2009).

[40] Interfax-Ukraine is part of the international Interfax Information Services, a company providing political and economical news.

of energy routes, and the development of energy links to vulnerable countries. Furthermore, he said that *"Russia wants to send a signal to Ukrainians that they are not at liberty to decide their own political future, including the questions of joining the EU, the trans-Atlantic alliance or NATO"* (Wagstyl, 2009, January 15). He considered this dispute a politically motivated one, he wanted to prevent Russia from re-establishing itself as a superpower in the region, and therefore open the EU's doors to Ukraine (Wagstyl, 2009, January 16). Lithuania views (the aftermath of) this crisis as a zero sum game: the stronger Russia gets in the region, the weaker becomes the EU.

These statements of Lithuania's highest political representatives are the country's position in a nutshell. They seem to confirm the three hypotheses about the nature of the crisis, the EU-Ukrainian partnership, and preventative measures for future gas crises, outlined under title 2.3.4. However, a closer examination of the EU's policy and Lithuania's involvement *during* and *after* the crisis has to be made in order to get a more complete view.

2.3.8. The crisis and the extent of 'political' motives

In V. Adamkus' statements, it is clear that Lithuania considered this gas dispute a political one. Also other Lithuanian officials declared that Russia attempted to bear pressure on Ukraine, to show that it's not a reliable partner, and to convince Western Europe that other supply routes – such as the Nord Stream pipeline – are essential alternatives (Europos Informacijos Centrai Lietuvoje,[41] 2009, January 5). Ukraine is a close partner and in Lithuania's eyes a future EU member (PLT, n.d.), thus an 'attack' to Ukraine's political system makes the issue a European one. Consequently, an EU intervention in this crisis should be a CFSP intervention, as it clearly involves foreign policy matters.

Does this Lithuanian point of view match with the EU position? The answer is not very clear, but it tends to be negative. The EU declarations of January 2 and 8, urging both parties to find a solution for the crisis and to respect their contractual obligations towards the EU, is categorized under the chapter 'CFSP statements' (CPEU, 2009, January 8; CPEU, 2009, January 2). Furthermore, it was the Commissioner for External Relations who gave some comments on the gas crisis and how to avoid such crises in the future (EPR, 2009, March 9). In general, the Council considers energy security a vital aspect of the EU's external policy. This seems to indicate the 'foreign policy' nature of the crisis. However, this doesn't imply that the crisis is given a 'political' connotation. The EU Presidency called on January 2 for *"an urgent resolution to the underline commercial (underlined by B.V.) gas dispute"* (ECDR, 2009, January 2). The monitoring mission sent to Ukraine and Russia was no CFSP mission. It was the Transport, Telecommunication and Energy Council (TTEC) – and not the GAERC – who urged the parties to restart supplies on January 12, and expressed the EU's support for the monitoring mission (CEU, 2009, January 12). It were the Czech Minister of Industry and Trade and the EU Commissioner for Energy who wrote a joint letter to Russia's and Ukraine's Energy Ministers, with a similar content

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[41] Europos Informacijos Centrai Lietuvoje is a Lithuanian information website on EU-matters.

(CPEU, 2009, January 12). Apparently, the EU views the problem rather a commercial energy-dispute than a political problem, contrary to Lithuania's position.

2.3.9. Preventative measures against future crises

Obviously, the EU wants to avoid a future gas crisis, if any, to have such an impact on its member States as it was the case in January 2009. There are several possibilities with a varying degree of sustainability, such as improving the transparency of Ukraine's transit system, diversifying of transit routes of Russian gas, searching other gas suppliers than Russia, developing a pipeline infrastructure in the EU connecting all its member States, increasing investments in alternative energy resources (EPR, 2009, March 9).

Efforts in the EU to increase its energy security are of course not new. Recent measures, linked to the 2008-2009 gas crisis, are discussed here.

The TTEC of February 19 adopted some important conclusions about the EU's future energy strategy (REU, 2009, February 19, pp. 7-15). Interesting for this thesis is that no mention was made of prioritizing the Nord Stream pipeline – contrary to other (Southern) supply routes, the electricity interconnection of the Baltic States[42] is prioritized, cooperation with Russia on energy issues has to be strengthened, and Moldova and Ukraine are invited to join the Energy Community Treaty[43] – which was acclaimed by V. Yushchenko (RIA Novosti, 2009, March 23). This contradicts several expectations. Apparently, it's still not clear if, how and where exactly the Nord Stream pipeline will be built (PRLEU, 2009, April 20; Gnedina & Emerson, 2009, pp. 2-3); though, support within the EU for the project is increasing (Vaitkutė, 2009, April 9). There are plans for an electricity connection between EU countries, which are highly welcomed by Lithuanian policy makers (PRLEU, 2009, March 23; Bayou, 2009, January 9), but no concrete plans for *gas* interconnection. Lithuania's Minister of Foreign Affairs asks the EU to incorporate 'energy security' in the new PCA with Russia (PRLEU, 2009, January 30), but gas is not specifically mentioned.

However, careful steps are being taken to increase energy/gas security of the whole EU. In the Second Strategic Energy Review of the European Parliament (2009, February 3), the need for the development of a Baltic gas and electricity interconnection plan in case of emergency is underlined, but still no

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[42] One of the conditions for Lithuania to join the EU, was the closure of the Ignalina power plant in 2009. It is its only nuclear power plant, of the 'Chernobyl type'. When this power plant will be closed, Lithuania will have to import electricity from Russia, at least until a new power plant is ready, between 2015 and 2018 (Agence Europe, 2008, December 2, pp. 5-6; Adomaitis, 2008, June 5). Advanced plans exist from before the crisis to establish a common electricity market in the Baltic States and to build an 'electricity bridge' with Sweden, however it is not clear yet whether the link will go to Latvia or Lithuania (Vaida, 2009, March 20; Europa NU, 2009, January 28; Vaida, 2009, January 8; Agence Europe, 2008, September 18, p. 4). There are also ideas for gas links, but still no concrete initiatives.
[43] The Energy Community Treaty was set up to provide a framework in which the South East European region could (re)build its energy network and create a stable energy market, vital for investment (Energy Community website, 2009, April 22, 2009). Up till now, Ukraine and Moldova are among the observers to the Treaty.

concrete measures exist. During the European Council of March 19-20, it was decided that Commission proposals with respect to crisis mechanisms in case of gas supply cuts have to be discussed before the end of the year (REU, 2009, March 19-20, p. 9). To decrease Lithuania's dependence on Russian gas, a feasibility study of building an LNG[44] import terminal is being made (United States Trade and Development Agency, 2009; D.J. Semaška, personal communication).

March 23, the European Commission and Ukraine agreed to cooperate in the modernization of the Ukrainian gas pipeline infrastructure (RIA Novosti, 2009, March 25; EC, 2009, March 23). The transit system capacity is to be increased with 60 bcm / year. The project will be financed by the Commission, the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the European Investment Bank. In return, Ukraine has to create a more transparent gas market. Ukraine will gradually integrate into the European single energy market,[45] and will accede to the Energy Charter Treaty. Apparently, there were no problems anymore in the EU-Ukrainian relationship; J.M. Barroso declared on the occasion of the signature of the agreement that *"our relations with Ukraine are closer than they have ever been"* (EPR, 2009, March 23).

Not surprisingly, Russia's reaction to the initiative was not enthusiastic. The Foreign Ministry said it was an *"unfriendly act"* to exclude Russia from the agreement (RIA Novosti, 2009, March 26), suspended intergovernmental talks with Ukraine until the issue was resolved, and warned that the energy relations with the EU might be reviewed. Russia was displeased because nobody asked them if they could transport such an amount of gas, and because Russia's legitimate interests were disregarded (RIA Novosti, 2009, March 25). J. Timoshenko reacted that Russia could play a full role in the modernization (RIA Novosti, 2009, March 26). At the end of March, the German Chancellor A. Merkel stated on a joint press conference with the Russian President that Russia should be involved in the project; after all, it is Russia who supplies the gas to be transited (RIA Novosti, 2009, March 31).

Contrary to Russia's position, and consistent with the expectations, Lithuania was very happy about the reinforced EU-partnership with Ukraine. The EU *"made a significant step towards creating a situation where we act as one actor with Ukraine. (...) In this way, the Nord Stream pipeline will become less necessary for Europe; we will have a good working relationship with Ukraine, it won't be a factor of risk anymore"* (D.J. Semaška, personal communication). Also the recent concretizations of the Nabucco pipeline[46] project (CEU, 2009, February 12) are welcomed, although there are still questions about the profitability of the project (Giuli, 2008), and how it will be funded (EU-Russia Centre, 2009, January 28). *"It's the first time the political world undertakes concrete actions and looks for alternative gas resources"* (D.J. Semaška, personal communication).

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[44] LNG is liquefied natural gas and could be imported from other suppliers than Russia.
[45] Plans to integrate the EU's and Ukraine's energy markets date back to a 2005 EU-Ukraine Memorandum of Understanding (EC, 2007b, p. 8).
[46] The Nabucco pipeline will connect the Caspian region through Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria, thus bypassing Russia (Nabucco website, n.d., April 22, 2009).

April 24-25, an Energy Summit "Natural Gas for Europe: Security and Partnership" took place in Sofia (Novinite.com, 2009, April 25). The 28 participants – Lithuania was not represented but Russia and Ukraine were – agreed on several principles about interconnectivity, transparency, diversity, unhindered gas transit etc., but no concrete measures were discussed. They said it is *"necessary to support all major infrastructure projects that contribute to the import of significant gas volumes to Europe"* (MFAGE, 2009, April 25, p. 2) but no concrete projects were named.

The same kind of talks was held on April 30 during the EU-Russian Permanent Partnership Council meeting (Europa NU, 2009, April 30). The participants – most EU members and also Lithuania were not represented – exchanged views on the future energy relations and *"continued rebuilding confidence and trust"* (EPR, 2009, April 30), but no concrete decisions were taken.

During the recent Eastern Partnership Summit[47] of May 7 in Prague (CPEU, 2009, May 7), the energy interdependence of the EU and its Eastern neighborhood was stressed once again, as well as the necessity of secure energy transit and more use of renewable resources.

In general, talks are continuing and all parties realize how interdependent they are, how important transparency and mutual trust is, etc. From time to time, mention is made of alternative energy resources. However, the EU, Lithuania included, seems to continue relying heavily on gas and other fossil fuels, which isn't sustainable on the long term. Future (gas) crises are not impossible, despite all agreements made and dialogues established. Apart from the plans to integrate Ukraine in the Energy Community, there are no reasons to presume that the energy security of the EU and Ukraine substantially increased since January 2009.

2.4. Discussion: the Ukraine gas crisis, 2008-2009

As it was the case in the Georgia war, the position taken by Lithuania is not very surprising.

Along with the expectations of the first hypothesis, the gas dispute was considered a political dispute by the Lithuanian government, and had little to do with commercial issues. This position is linked to the second and third hypotheses about Lithuania's behavior.

Indeed, Ukraine was not considered (even partly) responsible for the crisis, Russia was the only guilty party. The crisis was seen as concerted by Russians, in order to show Ukraine and the EU who is the most powerful. However, this position was expressed only in interviews and statements; there were no attempts to influence the EU's policy in the case, at least not openly. Maybe because the results of the EU's policy – especially incorporating Ukraine in the Energy Community – already serve Lithuania's

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[47] This summit was aimed to strengthen the cooperation between the EU and its Eastern neighborhood in several policy areas. Representatives of the EU and its member States, Armenia, Azerbeidjan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine were present.

interests. Maybe because individual member States didn't play such a visible role in the EU policy towards the crisis.

The third hypothesis was about Lithuania's instance on an enhanced EU-Ukraine approach. Indeed, it was the President's opinion that the EU should reinforce its partnership with Ukraine, in order to 'be the first' in the Eastern neighborhood and to prevent Russia from becoming more powerful. But Lithuania took no distinct position in this, compared with the EU policy. Again, its policy makers agree with the EU policy and the plans about enlarging the Energy Community. It's an important first step (D.J. Semaška, personal communication). Probably the Lithuanian government realizes that today it's not the appropriate time to call for EU enlargement; it restricts itself to some declarations about partnership with Ukraine.

Contrary to what was expected in the fourth hypothesis, Lithuania didn't increase its call for a better integration of the EU energy infrastructure, again at least not publicly. The EU already does efforts and provides funds to improve energy interconnections. So far, these interconnections are mostly for electricity. There are no loud calls on behalf of Lithuania for better *gas* links. Policy makers are very happy about the efforts now (D.J. Semaška, personal communication), the electricity link with Sweden will already reduce Lithuania's dependence on Russian electricity after the shutdown of the Ignalina power plant; maybe it would be counterproductive to ask for more now.

Making a summary about Lithuania's opinions in the crisis, all hypotheses are confirmed. The dispute was considered a political struggle, Russia was guilty, the EU should strengthen its partnership with Ukraine, and Lithuania wants the EU to build an energy infrastructure connecting all members States. However, the actual (public) behavior didn't always reflect this position, even when this position didn't fit with the EU position. Lithuania didn't behave like a 'rebel', as it was the case in the Georgia war, it agreed with all steps taken by the EU.

In the near future, meetings of several important actors on energy issues will take place. On these meetings, significant decisions can be taken about the energy market and the prevention of future gas crises, although no revolutions are to be expected. The TTEC will meet June 12 (CPEU, 2009c, May 2, 2009). May 16, the Cooperation Council EU-Ukraine will meet (CPEU, 2009d, May 2, 2009). The next EU-Russia summits and talks on a PCA can also be important.

Part 3: Lessons and new questions

In this part, new questions that arise from the cases studies are considered. They can be summarized as follows: what is the relevance of what was discussed before? Yet, it's hardly possible to give clear answers to questions about the influence of individual States on CFSP, about CFSP positions in the future, and about the importance of history and geopolitics, which is linked to the possibilities to integrate the foreign policies of member States within the EU. In this part, reflections are made about more general issues of CFSP, which could be interesting topics for further research.

3.1. Positions and strategies in the two cases: the influence of individual States

Lithuania and the EU had different opinions in the two cases. This was very obvious in the EU policy towards Georgia war, but also towards the gas crisis, Lithuania's and the EU's approach were not the same.

In both cases, there was not much disagreement about which position to take. The EU and Lithuania support Georgia's territorial integrity, condemn the use of force, they want the Russian army to withdraw to its positions taken prior to the war. The EU and Lithuania want to avoid gas crises in the future, and they are increasingly searching for alternative gas supply routes.

However, there was much more disagreement about who was 'guilty', and which strategy was to follow. Lithuania blamed Russia in both cases, and supported Georgia and Ukraine unconditionally. The EU took a more moderate position and urged all parties to find a solution. In both cases, Lithuania didn't really succeed to make its approach an EU approach. Apart from the positions of other member States and possible 'allies' for Lithuania, it was technically impossible to have a big influence on the EU policy.

In the case of the Georgia war, Lithuania was the only country (in the end) who was opposed to softening the approach to Russia. Maybe, if the decision about the talks on a PCA with Russia still had to be taken, the Lithuanian delegation would have vetoed resumption. However, this was not possible, as talks had been only postponed on September 1, and a consensus was not necessary to resume them.

In the case of gas crisis, Lithuania was simply not involved in the EU policy and the solutions of the crisis. There was a general tendency in the EU to view the problem as an economic one, not a political one. The Commission assumed the competency to negotiate about a monitoring mission. Big gas companies (Lietuvos Dujos was no member of this consortium) provided money to buy the necessary amount of gas from Gazprom to re-start the Ukrainian transit system. Fortunately for Lithuania, the EU energy policy is quite favorable for the Baltic States. Probably, Lithuania and others are lobbying for a common energy infrastructure within the EU. According to political scientist L. Kasčiūnas (MFALT, 2009, January 8), this is much more effective than intervening directly in crises.

Maybe Lithuania has a certain influence on EU decision-making, just because it exists and because it's an EU member. But apparently the ability of one (small) country to alter the EU's policy in a concrete case can be very little. A bigger influence for Lithuania was prevented by a lack of allies (Georgia war), the impossibility to veto (Georgia war), and a lack of competency for individual member States (gas crisis).

A future research topic could focus on the influence of one State on CFSP in more cases and the reasons why influence is big or little. This would provide a better understanding of the determinants of one State's power within the EU: formal and informal interactions between representatives, size, history, knowledge of the decision-making processes, 'allies' etc. seem to be important. This subject is so far not often researched (Vitkus & Novagrockienė, 2008).

3.2. The EU and CFSP in the future

Before 2004, the EU had only 15 member States, since 2007 there are 27 members. The 12 'new' members are mostly CEEs. Because CFSP is a policy field where decisions are taken only by consensus, it's not impossible that these CEEs will influence the EU's external policy in the future, especially towards the Eastern neighborhood and Russia. What if Lithuania – already preparing its EU Presidency of the second half of 2013 (MFALT, 2008, August 29) – would have been EU President during the Georgia war, or during the gas crisis? Would its position have been more influential? Maybe negotiations on a new PCA with Russia would be still blocked. Or maybe Lithuania would have organized an extraordinary European Council on the occasion of the gas crisis, which could politicize the EU's intervention. Lithuania would like to make progress in the accession of candidate members during its Presidency of 2013 (R. Martikonis, personal communication). What if a new crisis occurs in Ukraine, Georgia or somewhere else in 2013, and the approach between the EU and this country is indeed advanced?

One assumption about the future CFSP could be that the EU policy will become more 'Eastern European'. According to Leonard & Popescu (2007, pp. 27-50), there are five kinds of positions towards Russia.[48] There are only two "new cold warriors" (Poland and Lithuania), but also nine "frosty pragmatists". They consistently draw attention to human rights, and don't hesitate to challenge Russia when commercial interests are violated. The more powerful these categories of States become within the EU, the more their concerns about Russia could influence the EU's Russia-policy.

Leonard & Popescu (2007, pp. 51-52) discuss another possibility. If CEEs continue to take a harsh position towards Russia, for example by blocking EU-Russian agreements, supporting anti-Russian governments, trying to exclude Russia from talks on energy security, etc., this could have a

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[48] These categories of countries are: "Trojan horses", "strategic partners", "friendly pragmatists", "frosty pragmatists" and "new cold warriors".

counterproductive effect. More and more EU member States could become willing to conclude bilateral agreements with Russia, which would undermine the effectiveness of CFSP.

Today, we cannot answer to the question about the future CFSP. However, the development of CFSP towards Russia in the following years is an interesting research subject.

3.3. The importance of history and geopolitics, and the achievability of *Common* FSP

"When we see Russian tanks advancing in Georgia, it's much closer to us than to Brussels or Madrid." (R. Martikonis, personal communication). Maybe this is the essence of the problem discussed in the two cases, especially the first one. Both the history and the geographical / geopolitical position of Lithuania are of great importance in defining its foreign policy position. After the events in Georgia, discussions started in Lithuania about what would happen if Russia occupies the Baltic States (Volovoj, 2008, December 19). V. Adamkus recognized it would take very little time for the Russian army to gain control over their territory. Apparently, a real fear of 'the Russians' is still present in Lithuania. The country is only independent since 19 years, and it is (geographically) very close to Russia. According to Leonard & Popescu, (2007, p. 48), historical grievances are the reasons for the harsh positions of the "new cold warriors".

Most EU members don't have such a collective memory, and are (much) more remote from Russia. Inevitably, different member States make different analyses of foreign policy issues (Vilpišauskas, 2004, pp. 150-152).

In consequence of the case studies in this thesis, and perhaps it could have been any case of foreign policy, an old question (Vilpišauskas, 2004, pp. 151-152) arises again: will it ever be possible to conduct a European external policy that really 'satisfies' all member States? An interesting research subject could be about which CFSP subjects entail much disunity, and which ones few, and why. It's likely that mainly the EU policy towards geographically close regions might be a source of disunity, because adjacent countries have different interests than remote countries.

Also another question arises, which would be interesting to address in future research: what are the reasons for Lithuania to be an advocate of EU enlargement, why does it wants to open the EU's doors to Georgia and Ukraine? A hypothesis to explore could be that one of the main objectives of EU enlargement for Lithuania is strengthening its own State security. Enlargement can occur only towards the East; on the one hand it could create a 'buffer' for Lithuania in the East against Russia – in a geographical and political way, on the other hand it would increase the number of 'allies' for Lithuania within the EU regarding Russia-policy. In the case of the Georgia war, where individual members States had a big say in the EU policy, Lithuania sought support for its position among like-minded countries, especially Poland and the other Baltic States. It would be in Lithuania's interest to increase the number of such members.

Conclusion

In this thesis, an overview was made of two concrete external policy issues of the EU and the involvement of one country in particular. Lithuania was chosen because of its interesting geographical position and its history.

The first part focused on the role Lithuania wants to play in CFSP, and the reasons for this position. In the second part, the positions and policies of Lithuania in two recent cases were discussed: the war in Georgia of August 2008, and the gas crisis in Ukraine of 2008-2009. Throughout these two case studies, it was checked if Lithuania behaves like it was expected, and to what extent it has an influence on EU policy. The aftermath of the cases is still evolving and it's very fascinating to discuss them. However, the conclusions of this thesis might be outdated in a few weeks or months, and they give rise to even more (general) questions. These new questions were discussed in the third part.

Regarding the role Lithuania wants to play in CFSP, the first research question of this thesis, its position in the world and recently in the EU are determining. All governments' foreign policy statements about this subject have been very clear and constant since the country re-established its independence in 1990: Lithuania naturally belongs to Europe, and it shares the 'European values' such as freedom and democracy. This attitude is important for Lithuania's bilateral relations. Before it became an EU member, relations with Nordic and Baltic States and CEEs were strengthened in order to come closer to EU membership. This aim of improving relations with friendly surrounding States was no secret; it was mentioned in government programs. Relations with the USA have always been very good, sometimes even closer than with the EU. The Eastern neighborhood is seen as a region that still has a lot to learn from Europe.

In CFSP, Lithuania wants to achieve several goals. One of these goals is to reinforce the EU's partnership with the USA. Actually, Lithuania views a transatlantic community as 'given', something that only has to be maintained and strengthened; however, not all EU members agree with this point of view. The other main CFSP-goal of Lithuania is to conduct an active EU policy towards its Eastern neighborhood. This means three things. First, spreading European values. Lithuania would like to act as an expert in this region; for the EU because Lithuanian policy makers feel that they have an expertise about Eastern Europe, for the Eastern neighborhood because Lithuania recently joined the EU and can provide these countries some advice. Second, an active EU policy towards the Eastern neighborhood means enlargement. Lithuania supports any enlargement, provided that the necessary requirements are met. Third, Lithuania wants to increase its energy security, and thus an active energy policy towards the East.

The reasons for these general CFSP-positions – the subject of the second question – are discussed extensively under title 1.5. of this thesis. Since many decades, long before 1990, Lithuanian-American relations have been very good. The country relies more on the USA than on the EU concerning 'hard security' matters. The USA supported Lithuania's independence and all its foreign policy goals such as joining EU and NATO. It's not surprising that Lithuania is interested in a strong partnership between the EU and the USA. Sometimes, this foreign policy aim conflicts with aims of several other ('old') EU members. The emphasis put on the Eastern policy of the EU is connected with Lithuania's history, its geopolitical situation and its national identity building. Lithuania doesn't have very good relations with Russia and Belarus, because of memories of occupations, energy dependence, and an unsafe environment of the country. A stable Eastern neighborhood contributes to Lithuania's security. Claiming that Lithuania wants to spread 'European values' in the East contributes to its national identity as a democratic and stable country. The more 'Eastern' its neighborhood is, the more 'Western' Lithuania becomes.

The third question addressed was which policy Lithuania conducted towards two recent events, and if this corresponds with the role it wants to play in CFSP. Hypotheses about Lithuania's behavior were made for each case. Subsequently, Lithuania's involvement in the EU's policy was discussed. In both cases, the position taken by the Lithuanian government was not surprising and confirmed the hypotheses made. Lithuania supported respectively Georgia's and Ukraine's position, and Russia was strongly criticized. The war in Georgia was seen as at least provoked by Russia and as a grave breach of Georgia's territorial integrity. The gas crisis was considered a Russian action in order to restore its status as a superpower in the region; in other words, it was a political and no commercial dispute. Approach of the EU to Georgia and Ukraine is strongly supported. And indeed, Lithuania is still an advocate of a common European energy infrastructure.

According to Lithuanian policy makers themselves, they played the role they claim to play in Europe: they tried to spread the EU's values to the East, supported countries politically close to the EU, and took a severe position towards those who threatened these countries in their eyes – Russia.

While the *positions* of Lithuania confirmed the hypotheses, its real *actions* didn't always do so.

During and after the war in Georgia, Lithuania was very active and tried to press through its point of view, by unilateral and joint actions as well as within an EU context. Humanitarian aid was sent to Georgia, a relatively big amount of officials was contributed to the EU mission in Georgia, several policy makers visited Tbilisi and expressed their support for M. Saakashvili. When the EU altered its strategy towards Russia, Lithuania didn't put up with it and tried to use all the available means to maintain a severe EU policy. But, contrary to the expectations, the Lithuanian call for EU membership of Georgia didn't become louder due to the war.

In the case of the gas crisis, Lithuanian policy makers did much less (public) efforts to push through their point of view. Although they still want Ukraine to become an EU member in the future, there are

no increased efforts to promote enlargement since the crisis. There are also no renewed attempts to build gas pipelines connecting Lithuania with the rest of the EU. This can be explained because recent EU initiatives already favor the Baltic States and Lithuania's position. There are plans and EU funding for electricity interconnections, and plans to integrate Ukraine (and Moldova) in the Energy Community Treaty. Another reason for the 'taciturnity' of Lithuania is that individual member States don't have a very big competency in the EU's external energy policy.

It's not easy to answer the fourth question, to what extent Lithuania succeeded to make its policy an EU policy.

If one looks at the facts, the answer is: to a very little extent. Regarding the EU policy towards the Georgia war, there were of course no problems as long as all member States agreed on the strategy to follow. But when this strategy changed, Lithuania couldn't stop it on its own. The EU policy towards the gas crisis is definitely not detrimental for Lithuania, but apparently Lithuania didn't influence the decisions taken, neither in a 'positive' nor in a 'negative' way. Its government didn't visibly contribute to finding a solution, providing gas to affected member States (this was technically impossible), taking preventative measures or deploying a monitoring mission. All steps were mainly initiated by the European Commission, the Russian government, and gas companies. Lithuania didn't have the technical possibilities to have a bigger influence because of its geographical position, and because of the nature of the crisis – the Commission, Presidency and the majority labeled it as a commercial dispute. However, measuring the influence of one State is maybe not so easy.

Considerations about the influence of one State within the EU were made in the third part. It was argued that numerous issues can play a role in determining the power of one member; this subject seems to be slightly researched so far.

Three other 'new' questions that appeared throughout this thesis were discussed. They are interesting subjects for future research, and they are derived from the central problem of this part: what is the relevance of the discussion of the two cases and Lithuania's involvement?

One of these questions is how the future CFSP (towards Russia) will look like, given the big amount of CEEs in the EU since 2004. One possibility is that 'Eastern European' concerns will become more important. Another possibility is that, as a result of diverging positions within the EU, bilateral relations of member States (with Russia) will prevail over a common policy.

The second question was about the importance of history and geopolitics in foreign policy positions. In the light of this thesis, both seem to be crucial elements. This is linked to the third question: is a *common* foreign policy of the EU achievable? As different members have their own – sometimes very different – history and geographical position, integration in the CFSP-domain still has a long way to go.

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