Saint-Petersburg State University

ANASTASIA KLOPOVA

Final qualification paper
Strategic priorities of NATO in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia

Education level: Master
Direction 41.04.05 «International Relations»
Master program
BM.5566.2018 «Strategic and Arms Control Studies»

Academic Supervisor:
Dr. Pavlov A.Yu.
PhD in History
Associate Professor
Reviewer:
Potemkina E.V.

Saint-Petersburg
2020

Contents

INTRODUCTION

Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have always differed from other members of the North-Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), due to their past as former republics of the Soviet Union and limited military capabilities. These states are used to being considered together due to their historical experience and level of development, and we will do it as well in this research. Besides, some researchers consider NATO's experience of enlargement in the Baltic states as a unique case because of its controversial nature and debatable benefits for the Alliance. On the one hand, the inclusion of the Baltic states into the Euro-Atlantic community opened new opportunities for NATO in the region on political as well as on the military levels. On the other hand, the Baltic states would not reach a minimum rate of military capabilities without the financial and technical assistance of some NATO member states. Moreover, it seemed that the precedent of former Soviet Republics' membership in NATO would aggravate relations with Russia. Some allies emphasized the consequences of it and the existence of more suitable candidates among the European states. The fact that Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia obtained membership was a result of negotiations between the allies within NATO. After 2004 Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania found their niche within the Alliance, implementing the role of mediators between NATO and Near Abroad. In 2008, the Baltic states started to draw attention to their security concerns and lack of military presence of NATO on their territory. However, the period was distinguished for its steady development and involvement of the Baltic states into NATO structures and activity. If the period from 2004 to 2013 was a time of introduction of three states in NATO's structures and determination of their role within the organization, the events of 2014 have changed the place of the Baltic states within the Alliance's agenda, the perception of the threats and importance of assurance the member states in NATO's commitments to them.

NATO's activity in the Baltic states always caused internal and external discussions. The Soviet past and proximity to Russia distinguish Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania among other member states. The benefits and drawbacks of the Baltic states' membership and profit for the Alliance are still being examined. Also, due to the public discussions in recent years on the role of NATO in the security of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the discourse of the issue contains a large number of misinterpretations and disinformation. The overview of changes in the Alliance's purposes in these countries through the years has gained considerable importance.

The aim of this master thesis is to define the purposes of NATO's activity in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

The object of this analysis is NATO's activity in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

The subject is the changing of NATO strategic priorities in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania from 1992 to the present.

In accordance with the aim of this research, the following **tasks** have been formulated:

1. To define factors which influenced NATO's decision to accept three Baltic states as members;

2. To identify the place of the Baltic states' security on the agenda of the Alliance from 2004 to the present;

 3. To analyze the current perception of the threat to NATO on the Eastern flank and its strategy to handle it.

The timeline of this research includes three periods:

- First - from the collapse of the USSR to obtaining membership by the Baltic states,

- Second - from 2004 to the beginning of 2014

- Third - from 2014 to the present.

The analysis of the first period helped to reveal the factors, which influenced the final decision on the matter of Baltic membership and the perception of the threats. The second period threw light on NATO's vision on Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania's place within it and the importance of their security concerns. The study of the third period demonstrates the changes that NATO has made to enhance security in three Baltic states and a shift in the perception of the threats within the Alliance from the East.

In this research, we use the term "Baltic states" (B3) to name only Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. This definition includes only these three states, not all states of the Baltic coastline. It also relates to such terms as "Eastern border" and "Eastern flank". These definitions include only Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

This research relies on different sources that provided initial data for the analysis of NATO's activity in the Baltic states for almost thirty years. The list of official sources includes NATO Strategic Concepts, treaties, declarations, official statements of politicians, and information from NATO's and national governments' sites.[1] Some of the considered sources were not officially published or had questionable authenticity, due to circumstances of their release.[2] However, they contain valuable information, which has to be assessed in this research. Also, the study is based upon the information obtained from various types of literature: reports of think tanks, scientific articles from journals on

---

[1] Speech to North Atlantic Council at Turnberry // Margaret Thatcher Foundation : офиц. сайт. 1990. June. 07. URL: https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/108106 (accessed: 16.01.20);
Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security Between NATO And the Russian Federation Signed in Paris, France. NATO: офиц. сайт. 1997. May. 25. URL: https://www.nato.int/nrc-website/media/59451/1997_nato_russia_founding_act.pdf (accessed: 13.11.19);
London Declaration On A Transformed North Atlantic Alliance // NATO Online Library: офиц. сайт. 1990. 6 July. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c900706a.htm. (accessed: 13.11.19);
The Alliance's New Strategic Concept. NATO: офиц. сайт. 1991. Ноябрь. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_23847.htm (accessed: 30.10.19).
[2] What Georgia means to Latvia // Wikileaks: неофиц. сайт. 2010. URL: https://search.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08RIGA496_a.html (accessed: 05.03.20);
Document 04. Memorandum of Conversation between James Baker and Eduard Shevardnadze in Moscow // National Security Archive: неофиц. сайт. 1990. February, 09. URL: https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/dc.html?doc=4325678-Document-04-Memorandum-of-conversation-between (accessed: 13.11.19).

political and military issues, analytical notes of former officials, etc.[3] The study of the aforementioned sources and literature made understandable changes in NATO's strategic priorities in the Baltic states and the reasons behind their transformation.

Besides, the author of this research worked with the information from the news agencies and newspapers such as Kommersant, The New York Times, The Baltic Times, RIA Novosti, The Guardian and etc.[4] The analysis of media sources provided a picture of the perception and assessment of NATO's activity and conducted initiatives.

If we look at the researches of the 1990s and early 2000s, we will see that most of them are dedicated to debates on membership of the Baltic states and their ability to contribute. The United States' support of the Baltic aspiration for membership was named as a decisive factor. At that period, all authors highlighted common contradictions: Russia's objections against NATO enlargement; the absence of military forces in the Baltic states; lack of agreement within the Alliance; unclear borders between Russia and the three Baltic states. Another question concerning membership of the Baltic states was "how big is too big for NATO?". In other words, how far could NATO expand and would the Baltic states become a mediator between the Alliance and new aspirants from Near Abroad. [5] The most vocal proponents on the enlargement to the Baltic states were R. Asmus (U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Clinton Administration in 1997-2000) and M. Kramer (Davis Center in Harvard University). Their works are dedicated to the analysis of factors of the Baltic states' membership and the benefits from it for NATO. It needs to be mentioned that despite the criticism of military and strategic dimensions, the political field prevailed in the researches. As for Russian scholars, we can mention S. Zverev (Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University) and V. Vorotnikov (MGIMO). In their works, the scholars covered a wide range of issues, including NATO's activities in three Baltic states and the evolution of the Russian threat.

---

[3] Bergeron J. Back to the Future in Wales / Bergeron J. // The RUSI Journal. 2014. 159:3. P. 5. DOI: 10.1080/03071847.2014.927990 (accessed: 16.03.20);

Hooker R. How to defend the Baltic States / Hooker R. // The Jamestown Foundation. 2019. October. URL: https://jamestown.org/product/how-to-defend-the-baltic-states/ (accessed: 27.03.20);

Farrell T. NATO's Transformation Gaps: Transatlantic Differences and the War in Afghanistan / Farrell T., S. Rynning // The Journal of Strategic Studies.2010. 33:5. P. 676. DOI: 10.1080/01402390.2010.498247 (accessed: 06.03.20).

[4] Медведев ответил на ЕвроПРО // РИА Новости. 2011. Ноябрь. 23. URL: https://ria.ru/20111123/496002002.html (accessed: 06.03.20);

Westad O.A. The Cold War and America's Delusion of Victory / O.A. Westad // New York Times. 2017. August. 28. URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/28/opinion/cold-war-american-soviet-victory.html (accessed: 13.11.19);

Collier M. The Image Makers: Estonia / Collier M. // The Baltic Times. 2008. July. 16. URL: https://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/20839/ (accessed: 03.03.20);

WikiLeaks cables reveal secret Nato plans to defend Baltics from Russia // The Guardian. 2010. December. 06. URL: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/dec/06/wikileaks-cables-nato-russia-baltics (accessed: 08.03.20).

[5] Kramer M. NATO, the Baltic States and Russia: A Framework for Sustainable Enlargement / Kramer M. // International Affairs. 2002. № 4. URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/3095754 (accessed: 03.03.20);

Meyer K. US Support for Baltic Membership in NATO: What Ends, What Risks? / Meyer K. // Parameters. 2000. Winter. URL: http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A74522166/ITOF?u=stpe&sid=ITOF&xid=8d9e1ee5. (accessed: 03.03.20);

Blank S. Russia, NATO Enlargement, and the Baltic States / Blank S // World Affairs. 1998. № 3. URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/20672519 (accessed: 03.03.20).

The second period is notable for the returning military issues military aspects of NATO's strategic vision of the Baltic states into the agenda. The absence of defense plans has become a serious security policy challenge for new members of the Alliance. Nevertheless, Gribanova G. highlighted the little interest of the Alliance in enhancing the security of the region, despite raised Baltic concerns after the Georgian conflict.[6] Lašas A. covered this issue and stated dissatisfaction of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania with Brussels' neglecting their apprehensions.[7]

Most of the recent studies is concentrated on NATO's perception of the Russian threat towards the Baltic states and the ability of the Alliance to estimate it. From this period of time, we can observe the precise polarization of views among scholars. Over the last six years, assumptions of a possible attack against NATO in the Baltic states raised significantly in researches of Baltic, American and Russian scholars. The military aspect has been brought to the forefront in discourse. The report, based on wargames for the RUSI, made by D. Shlapak and M. Johnson, demonstrated the inability of the Alliance to defend its member states in case of an attack.[8] Russian researchers, such as S. Zverev, S. Manoylo, G. Gribanova, and S. Trunov, are more concentrated on capabilities of NATO rather than possible strategy in case of attack.[9]

After the analyses of the literature, we came to the conclusion that none of the researchers analyzed the full period of NATO activity in the Baltic states since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. As the most investigated issues, we can underline the Russian factor in it and the military dimension of interactions between the Alliance and B3. However, the purposes of NATO's activity in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania do not condense to it. Thus, the academic novelty of this research is a comprehensive analysis of changes in the strategic priorities of the Alliance and defining its current position.

This thesis contains two levels of research: political and military, except for the first chapter. First, it allowed us to see how two branches within the Alliance interact and which one is decisive in the decision-making process. Second, this approach demonstrates NATO's actions in more arranged manner and gives a better understanding of conducted policy.

This master thesis consists of the introduction, three chapters, conclusion, and bibliography. In the first chapter, the author examines the development of relations between the North Atlantic Treaty

---

[6] Gribanova G. NATO policies in the Baltics: objectives and Priorities/ Gribanova G., Kosov Yu. // Baltic Region. 2018. №1. URL: https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/nato-policies-in-the-baltics-objectives-and-priorities (accessed: 03.04.2020).

[7] Lašas A. When History Matters: Baltic and Polish Reactions to the Russo-Georgian War / A. Lašas // Europe-Asia Studies. 2012. Vol. 64. DOI: 10.1080/09668136.2012.691724 (accessed: 04.03.20).

[8] Shlapak D. Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO's Eastern Flank: Wargaming the Defense of the Baltics / Shlapak D., M. Johnson // RAND Corporation. 2016. P. 6. URL: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1253.html. (accessed: 27.03.20).

[9] Трунов Ф.О. Наращивание присутствия НАТО в Восточной Европе: особенности и последствия // АПЕ. 2017. №3. С. 181. URL: https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/naraschivanie-prisutstviya-nato-v-vostochnoy-evrope-osobennosti-i-posledstviya (accessed: 23.04.2020);

Манойло А. В Военно-политическая деятельность НАТО в странах Балтии на современном этапе / Манойло А.В , Ф.О. Трунов // Проблемы европейской безопасности. 2018. №3. С. 161. URL: https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/voenno-politicheskaya-deyatelnost-nato-v-stranah-baltii-na-sovremennom-etape (accessed: 10.04.2020);

Зверев Ю. М. Вооруженные Силы И Инфраструктура НАТО В Странах Прибалтики // Прибалтийские исследования в России. 2016. С. 112.

Organization and the three Baltic states before the second round of the post-Cold War enlargement of the Alliance. The second chapter is devoted to NATO's attention to Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania as member states and the view of NATO upon their security concerns. The third chapter determines the current political perception of the threat for Estonia, Latvia and, Lithuania by NATO and its military readiness to defend the Baltic states.

Chapter 1. Establishment of the relations between NATO and Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia: the preparation for admission.

In this chapter, the author of this master thesis examines the development of relations between NATO and the three Baltic states before the second round of the post-Cold War enlargement of the Alliance. At the beginning of the 1990s, the Alliance faced the existential crisis, which caused a new inclination for constant transformation. It had to revise its purposes, seeking to demonstrate a willingness to be up-to-date with a new environment and its challenges. Meanwhile, the newly independent Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia were searching for recognition as democratic countries from the international community. In order to catch-up with NATO members, military-advanced states assisted the Baltic states to build and develop the military forces. Despite bitter external and internal debates and contradictory views on Baltic membership in NATO, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia were invited to the Alliance on the Prague Summit in 2002.

The main research tasks of this chapter are to determine the initial plans of NATO on Baltic membership and the convergence of their interests. One of the key aspects of this period is the public discourse around Baltic membership and a variety of opinions. Considering all information presented in this chapter, we will receive an overview of the period and sources of later raised problems.

1.1 The convergence of NATO and the Baltic states' interests in the early 1990s

This part of our analysis considers the initial state of affairs of NATO and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in the early 1990s.

The end of the Cold War created a new world, where the so-called "Stalin line" across Europe disappeared and gave NATO access to Central and Eastern Europe. Since 1990, the Alliance promoted the idea of "the hand of friendship to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union".[10] The collapse of the Warsaw Pact Organization gave rise to NATO's ambitions to spread its influence and freed it from the constraints imposed by the existence of any threat from a powerful rival. Such goals were also advanced by the United States, an undoubted hegemon and leader among NATO members, which were interested in a safe environment in Europe. As O. Westad wrote, "Most Americans still believed that they could only be safe if the world looked more like their own country and if the world's governments abided by the will of the United States".[11] The inclusion of the former communist states was perceived as a guarantee of stability since it would equalize all states of the European continent. Besides, most of the

---

[10] London Declaration On A Transformed North Atlantic Alliance.
[11] Westad O.A. The Cold War and America's Delusion of Victory.

member states were not prepared for the abrupt disappearance of the Alliance. Therefore, NATO was seeking a new purpose of existence.

We start our research from the end of the Cold War and NATO's attempt to adapt to the new environment since it will have subsequently led to the approval of the Baltic membership. In the 1990s NATO initiated the transformation, which caused a fundamental revision of its previous purposes since it became hard to "hold the allies together without the dominant Soviet threat as the glue".[12] At the beginning of the 1990s, the member states started questioning the necessity of American military presence in Europe and the need in the close connection between North America and Europe in general. In NATO's official documents, we do not see any indication of this process, but the repetition of the same idea from one event to another demonstrates us that there were discussions behind closed doors. The London Declaration emphasized that "the significant presence of North American conventional and US nuclear forces in Europe demonstrated the underlying political compact that binds North America's fate to Europe's democracies".[13] Almost the same wording was used in the Rome Declaration and New Strategic Concept 1991, where the presence of US forces in Europe was stated as a link across Atlantic, which remains vital to the security of Europe.[14] An unstable geopolitical configuration and inability of any European state to lead were used by the U.S. as a pretext to not withdraw their troops. It is not the only one existing hypothesis.

The next reasons indicate what stood behind the American military presence in Europe. First, there was concern that after the withdrawal of American troops and missiles, Congress would not permit deployment against new threats in the future. Second, unlike France, most of the European states preferred to counterweight military power of Russia's nuclear capabilities by American military presence in the Old World and supported a concept of "new Atlantism".[15] Without the US, Europeans assumed that they would not have enough capabilities to defend themselves, and Washington provided military guarantees for almost fifty years. As M. Thatcher said, "You do not cancel your home insurance policy just because there have been fewer burglaries on your street in the last 12 months".[16] Europe still needed American troops, because no one could anticipate new threats and it was better to use proven means of defense.[17] Nevertheless, France and Germany attempted to equalize powers in the Atlantic Alliance by the creation a stronger European identity and new defense projects, such as Franco-German

[12] Shea J. Transcript of the lecture "How did NATO survive the Cold War? / J. Shea // NATO's transformation after the Cold War from 1989 to the present". NATO: офиц. сайт. 2003. November. 06. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_20526.htm?selectedLocale=en (accessed: 20.12.19).
[13] London Declaration.
[14] Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation // NATO: офиц. сайт. 1991. November. 08. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c911108a.htm (accessed: 20.12.19);
The Alliance's New Strategic Concept.
[15] Shea J. Transcript of the lecture "How did NATO survive the Cold War?
[16] Speech to North Atlantic Council at Turnberry.
[17] Duffied J. NATO's Functions after the Cold War / J. Duffied // Political Science Quarterly. Vol. 109. No. 5. Winter, 1994-1995. P. 769.

EUROCORPS a multinational crisis unit within NATO's command.[18] Paris tried to be a leader among European states, support 'real' Europeanisation of military forces inside Europe, and even get involved in military committees and NATO operations in Bosnia and Kosovo. However, it would take time and resources to create solid forces equal to the Americans, which most Europeans did not want to spend.

The uncertainty in the future was revealed in the published in open access New Strategic Concept of 1990.[19] For the first time in the history of the Alliance, it was available to the general public and adopted by the North-Atlantic Council (the NAC) and instead of the Military Committee. The Alliance declared its commitment to pursue dialogue and cooperation with the Soviet Union and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe as equal partners, which in the future was reflected in the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program. The Alliance proclaimed the commitment to create a security environment, which would be based on the growth of democratic institutions, economic and social development, thus it referenced to the Article 2 of the Washington Treaty, so-called "Canadian clause". It expanded the definition of security and connected officially not only to military capabilities. Moreover, NATO took an active role in crisis management, conflict prevention, and cooperation with the United Nations in it.[20] As M. Kramer assumed, the military raison d'être of NATO after the end of the Cold War disappeared, but political ties were still topical.[21]

Nevertheless, NATO's tasks were formulated in a vague manner because "[threats were] multi-faceted in nature and multi-directional, which made it hard to predict and assess".[22] However, to overcome it, the Alliance launched reforms inside the organization, searched for new purposes and means to correspond to the hazards (there was no distinction between risks and threats in NATO strategic concepts).[23] As J. Duffield wrote, "it [NATO] has not become moribund […] It continued to perform valuable security functions for its members, notwithstanding the precipitous decline of the Soviet threat."[24]

It is important to note that the discussions within NATO about German reunification in 1990 had consequences on NATO enlargement to the East and the Baltic states. According to unclassified archives, one of the conditions imposed by the Soviet Union to the Alliance was remaining in its borders and declining the idea of enlargement to the East. J. Baker, White House Chief of Staff, in conversation with E. Shevardnadze, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, about the future of Germany in NATO, said that "there would, of course, have to be iron-clad guarantees that NATO's jurisdiction or forces would

---

[18] Vaïsse M. France and NATO: An History / M. Vaïsse // Politique étrangère. 2009. 5. DOI : 10.3917/pe.hs3.0139. URL : https://www.cairn.info/revue-politique-etrangere-2009-5-page-139.htm
[19] The Alliance's New Strategic Concept.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Kramer M. NATO, the Baltic states and Russia: a framework for sustainable enlargement / M. Kramer // International Affairs. № 78. P. 736. doi:10.1111/1468-2346.00277 (accessed: 30.10.19).
[22] Ibid.
[23] Kriz Z. NATO after the End of the Cold War / Z. Kriz. MUNI Press: Brno, 2015. P. 10. URL: https://munispace.muni.cz/library/catalog/book/801 (accessed: 13.11.19).
[24] Duffield J. NATO's Functions after the Cold War. P. 764.

not move eastward".[25] There were also meetings with other western officials (H. Kohl, J. Bush, M. Thatcher), who pressured M. Gorbachev to support the reunification of Germany, without any kind of written promise from the Alliance. The unsteady position of the Soviet leader and crisis in the USSR allowed them to not put assurances into legally-binding declaration or agreement. Later, the "gentlemen agreement" was forgotten by NATO, and it played an important role in the Baltic states' application on joining NATO.

Turning now to the question of Baltic's source of eagerness to become NATO member states, it seems that they had several motives for it. First, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia desired to become a part of a prosperous and peaceful Western community and to have what other European states have been enjoyed for almost fifty years. In other words, these former Soviet Republics needed hard and soft security. In order to persuade NATO's member states that Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia were capable of joining the Euro-Atlantic community, they had to conduct 'four-d' transition: de-militarization, de-Sovietization, de-Russification, and de-socialization.[26] To eliminate any doubts, the Soviet past had to be forgotten.[27] Their focus on memberships in the EU, OSCE, Council of Europe, and NATO had to demonstrate the Baltic commitment to democracy, international law, and human rights.[28] For instance, the status of Russian-speaking minority in Estonia and Latvia was unclear and in order to dot on this issue, OSCE missions in Latvia and Estonia were established in 1992 and lasted till 2001.[29] In other words, through admission to these organizations, they demonstrated wiliness and readiness to change and cooperate with the international community.

Second, membership in NATO would enable three Baltic states to strengthen their positions as equal members of international relations and promote their interests. On the one hand, they would obtain backup from the international community in bilateral relations with Russia, for example in negotiations about energy supplies. In the 1990s three Baltic states (B3) chose a way of bandwagoning with the West. In other words, they wanted to become a part of the stronger side, which could deter possible threats, in exchange for full support of any NATO's actions.[30] On the other hand, they would influence decisions within the Alliance's position on vital for the Baltic states' issues. In any case, they would be in the best position.

Third, after the dissolution of the USSR, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania became a frontier, which was in direct contact with Russia.[31] Three Baltic states found themselves on the border between two

[25] Document 04. Memorandum of Conversation between James Baker and Eduard Shevardnadze in Moscow.

[26] Silova, I. From Sites of Occupation to Symbols of Multiculturalism: Re-conceptualizing Minority Education in Post-Soviet Latvia. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

[27] Mälksoo M. Enabling NATO enlargement: changing constructions of the Baltic States / M. Mälksoo // Trames. 2004. T. 8. №. 3. C. 289. URL: https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=37010 (accessed: 23.03.20).

[28] Lamoreaux J. The Baltic States As 'Small States': Negotiating The 'East' By Engaging The West' / J Lamoreaux, Galbreath D. // Journal of Baltic Studies. Vol. 39. № 1 (March 2008). P. 1-7. URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/43212804 (accessed: 04.12.2019)

[29] Kramer M. NATO, the Baltic states and Russia: a framework for sustainable enlargement. P.734.

[30] Lamoreaux J. The Baltic States As 'Small States': Negotiating The 'East' By Engaging The West'. P. 1-7.

[31] Kiknadze V. G The military and political situation in the Baltic region in the late 20th - early 21st centuries: the prospects of 'uneasy peace' / V. G. Kiknadze, D. A. Mironyuk, G. V. Kretinin // Baltic Region. 2019. Vol. 11. №1. P. 65. URL:

civilizations – Western and Eastern. Moreover, it allowed politicians to present the B3 as an outpost for NATO and stress their defenseless status without external support. In light of it, NATO membership coincided with the opinions of political elites and public consciousness on security.[32] On the one hand, it was a risk for NATO as an organization, where each member state had to contribute in common security. It was evidently from the beginning that the Baltic states would provide a limited contribution to the Alliance. On the other hand, it gave an eminent opportunity for the Atlantic Alliance's military structures not to lose its meaning and find a new goal for existence.

In other words, at the beginning of the 1990s, NATO was adapting to the sharp changes in the security environment which were caused by the dissolution of the Soviet Union. From the member states' point of view, it was more secure to preserve it as a collective defense organization. Moreover, new states appeared on the map of Europe, which were unattainable before for the Alliance, and Brussels had to draw up a plan on how to build relations with them and include them into its sphere of influence. Meanwhile, the primary motives of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia's aspirations for NATO membership were in seeking security, identity, and legitimization of their existence as independent states. NATO could provide security and recognition to Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania, and, for their part, they could justify the Alliance's military presence in Europe, tie together uncoordinated Euro-Atlantic community and expand NATO's influence on Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, even if the interests of NATO and the Baltic states concurred at that time, they have not formed a concrete vision of the future.

1.2 The discourse on NATO enlargement in three Baltic states

This part of our analysis indicates the discussion in the 1990s-early 2000s on NATO membership of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The author analyzes arguments and counterarguments of the Baltic membership, which were enunciated by politicians and scholars.

The necessity of three Baltic states membership in NATO was a controversial issue and was discussed by the member states as well as by non-members. On the one hand, the Alliance in the mid-1990s was interested in strengthening its position through the admission of new member states, which was a tempting window of opportunity in the post-Cold War environment. Back in 1991, in the article for NATO Review then Secretary-General M. Wörner wrote that "… [our] Rome Summit invited these nations [Central and Eastern European], including the three newly independent Baltic states, to join the Allies in an institutionalized framework of consultations".[33] The statement did not give hope on NATO membership for new democracies, nevertheless, it left the window of opportunity for the Alliance to use

https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/the-military-and-political-situation-in-the-baltic-region-in-the-late-20th-early-21st-centuries-the-prospects-of-uneasy-peace (accessed: 04.03.2020).

[32] Воротников В.В. Страны Балтии в НАТО: итоги десятилетия / В.В.Воротников // Вестник МГИМО-Университета. 2014. №6. С. 10.

[33] Wörner M. NATO Transformed: the significance of the Rome Summit. NATO Review. 1991. Vol. 39. No. 6. December. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/review/1991/9106-1.htm (accessed: 13.11.19).

an "open door" policy card at a more opportune moment. On the other hand, the goals and challenges of that period were perfectly clear for NATO. As former NATO Spokesman, J. Shea told about NATO purposes to exist "better to keep it [NATO] and adapt it, and wait for the new threats and challenges to come along, to give it a meaning, than to do without it".[34]

If we consider the enlargement as a mean to overcome the internal crisis within the Atlantic Alliance, we can find several incentives for it. First, it would bring personnel for the organization's executive office, as well as new budgets and targeted projects, and new instruments of exerting administrative pressure on old members. Second, the legal frameworks, which were laid by Article 10 of the Washington treaty on "open door policy" for any European states, would not place restrictions on enlargement. Third, new member states would open new markets for US and European defense producers, which allowed them new contracts and political influence on the military industry. Fourth, it would give an explanation for NATO's existence as a collective defense organization. Even if the threats of the new reality were not recognized, it was better to use old methods to fight it.[35]

If future enlargement became a reality in 1997, the possibility of the Baltic states' admission was still illusory, even for Latvia, Lithuania and, Estonia themselves. There was no common view on the prospects of their membership, neither among member states nor among scholars. The arguments against Baltic states' membership had solid ground. We will present drawbacks with counterarguments. Then, we will present what advantages NATO obtained from Baltic membership. It will assist us in creating a more concrete picture of debates at that time.

First, the military capability and resources of Baltic states were limited. The lack of "hard" security was obvious and "it had to be developed as an indispensable complement of overall security in the event of external crises and conflict".[36] Proponents of NATO enlargement in the Baltic states argued that deterrence can exist at different levels and that the Baltic states may be no less defensible, for example, than Denmark was at the height of the Cold War. Nevertheless, this dimly reinforced Western reluctance about, if not opposition to, the Baltic membership in NATO, especially among military officials.[37] It was clear that the geographical peculiarities, the limited size of territories, and a small number of populations of three Baltic states, accompanied by the proximity of Russia, underscored the problems that would appear in extending a credible security guarantee to these countries. These characteristics affected the identity of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, and their focus to build solid national defense forces and sustain cooperation in the region. Meantime, P. Holtom linked the problem

[34] Shea J. Transcript of the lecture "How did NATO survive the Cold War?
[35] Kortinov A. How to stop NATO? / A. Kortinov // Russia in Global Affairs. 2019. December. 04. URL: https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/article/How-to-Stop-NATO-20268 (accessed: 16.02.20).
[36] Zájedová I. The Baltic States' Security and NATO Enlargement / I. Zájedová // Perspectives. № 13. Special issue: The Balkans, NATO and European Security after the Kosovo War. Winter 1999/2000. P. 83. URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/23615944 (accessed: 10.07.19).
[37] Ronald D. A. Robert NATO Enlargement and the Baltic States / Ronald D.A., Nurick C // Survival. 1996. P. 124. DOI: 10.1080/00396339608442849 (accessed: 13.11.19).

of military capabilities and defensibility with the vulnerability of Baltic borders and illegal trafficking of arms and humans in the region.[38]

Nevertheless, some scholars stressed the advantages of limited military ability of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia at the beginning of the 2000s. As experts of the Center for Strategic Studies claimed, three Baltic states did not have the burden of a large amount of obsolete arms and equipment caused by difference between existing and NATO procedures. In comparison with other aspirants and new member states, such as Poland and Bulgaria, they have successfully adopted and applied standard operation procedures of the Alliance from the beginning of military reforms. Training officers in official NATO languages was a significant advantage for these states. Nevertheless, the authors admitted that the three Baltic states would not contribute considerably to NATO's military forces even after enhancing security, taking niche of surveillance of the Eastern border of the Alliance, and mediating with other former Soviet Republics.[39]

To reinforce their capability in a short period, the governments of Baltic states applied the experience of Scandinavian states. The main idea of the "total/territorial defense" is to involve whole state in its defense, which means participation of business, industry, local government, etc. The guerrilla warfare and other activities, which can involve civilians, also included into the concept of total defense. This idea was reflected in J. Trapans' work, where he stressed the distinctions between great powers and small states in waging wars and how the last can be in advantageous position.[40] Between the end of the Cold War and the time the Baltic states joined NATO in 2004, the use of concepts of total and territorial defense helped the three countries build modern defense forces.

A clear answer to the question of the three Baltic states' defensibility was given by L. Walling and B. Andresson. They highlighted that "small or medium-sized countries can defend themselves against a neighboring, vastly-superior power which is free to use all its military might without restriction". However, it is not a question of the capability to protect, "whether it is how and against which contingencies the Baltics can be defended".[41] In other words, the Baltic states had to be ready for everything. During this period several large projects for enhancing security were launched, most of them in association with Western states, not only NATO members (Baltic Defense College (BALDEFCOL), Baltic Challenge Exercises, Baltic Command and Control Informational System (BALTCCIS), Baltic Security Assistance Forces (BALTSEA), etc). Not all programs demonstrated their effectiveness,

---

[38] Holtom P. Arms transit trade in the Baltic region / P. Holtom // Safer World. 2003. September. URL: https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/58-arms-transit-trade-in-the-baltic-region (accessed: 02.02.20).

[39] Gorenburg S. The expansion of NATO into the Baltic sea region: Prague 2002 and beyond / S. Gorenburg, M. Henton, Whiteneck D. // Center of Strategic Studies. 2002. May. P. 9-13. URL: https://www.cna.org/CNA_files/PDF/D0006161.A2.pdf (accessed: 02.02.20).

[40] Trapans J.A. The Baltic states: Defence and geopolitics // European Security. 1998. 7:3. P. 93. DOI: 10.1080/09662839808407374 (accessed: 13.11.19).

[41] Wallin L (2001) A defsnce model for the Baltic states / L. Wallin, B.Andersson // European Security. 2001. P 96. DOI: 10.1080/09662830108407484 (accessed: 13.11.19).

nevertheless, it boosted the creation of armed forces in three Baltic states, at least their ground component.[42]

There were several strong arguments on the military capabilities of three Baltic states, which were transformed into benefits: proximity to Russia which allowed to put North-East Russia under surveillance; absence of military equipment and personnel as an opportunity for quicker creation of the potential, in accordance with NATO procedure and standards; remoteness from allies as a chance to develop close connections within states of the Baltic region.

Second, the "Russian factor" raised concerns among NATO members. Russian negative reaction to enlargement was obvious since the enlargement would include former Soviet republics and come closer to the borders. Before 1994, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia were officially neutral. It gave an opportunity for three Baltic states to create at least basic state institutions and not draw the attention of Russia. Earlier this year NATO launched the PfP, the precursor of the enlargement. Until the last moment, The Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs A. Kozyrev considered this project as an alternative to NATO enlargement, even though US State Secretary S. Talbott tried to make clear that "enlargement was still very much on agenda". US president W. Clinton tried to dot the issue and stress that "the question is no longer whether NATO will take on new members, but when and how" . However, A. Kozyrev still thought that PfP would be the substitution of actual expansion.[43] On the threshold of Russian troops' withdrawal from Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, W. Clinton visited Riga in July 1994 and demonstrated support to new democratic states. Three Baltic states were among the first participants of this initiative, thus demonstrating the end of the policy of neutrality.

A new page in NATO-Russia dialogue on the enlargement began after Y. Primakov took up the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1996. Russia set more confident and pragmatic relations with the West. At the Berlin meeting of NACC (North Atlantic Cooperation Council) in 1996, Primakov indicated the unacceptable military part of NATO's expansion and its less objectionable political enlargement In his memoirs, Y. Primakov wrote about "red lines" of enlargement, which were drawn: "vertical: threatening movement of infrastructure closer to Russia's borders as part of enlargement; horizontal: NATO membership of Baltic states and former Soviet republics is unacceptable for Russia".[44]. It reflected in signing in 1997 NATO and Russia the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security, where the Alliance on its behalf stressed that "they have no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members, nor any need to change any aspect of NATO's nuclear posture or nuclear policy - and do not foresee any future need to do soon". The Alliance had its own "five no's" towards Russia: no Russian expectation of a delay in the process

[42] Zaccor A.V. Problems in the Baltic armed forces / A.V. Zaccor // The Journal of Slavic Military Studies. P. 53-72. DOI: 10.1080/13518049508430177 (accessed: 13.11.19).

[43] Marten, K. Reconsidering NATO expansion: A counterfactual analysis of Russia and the West in the 1990s. European Journal of International Security. 2018. 3(2). Doi:10.1017/eis.2017.16 (accessed: 13.11.19).

[44] Примаков Е. М. Годы в большой политике : [Воспоминания] / Е. М. Примаков. М. : Коллекция "Совершенно секретно", 1999. С. 228.

of enlargement; no Russian veto on any natters; no exclusion of any state over the longer term from the process of enlargement; no second-class membership for the new members; and no interference into the decision-making process of NATO. The Founding Act was not legally, but only politically binding document.[45] However, in times of crisis, both sides did not withdraw from the Act and avoided even mentioning of such possibility.

In the end of the 1990's, Russia completely comprehended that it did not have enough political and military capacity to keep the Baltic states as a buffer zone on the border with NATO. In this situation, the Alliance won over Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, at least aspirants for the future membership in the 1990s, and took a favorable position without much damage, which was expected.

The third factor which was raised in the discussion about NATO expansion was minority issues, not only Russian-speaking but also Polish in Lithuanian. Both Russian and foreign scholars stated it as an obstacle towards Baltic membership.[46] Protecting Russian minorities' rights in the Baltic states was and still is a long-term issue in relation with Moscow. Russia insisted on obtaining by Russian minorities citizenship of Estonia and Latvia by Russian-speaking non-citizens of these states. After the collapse of the USSR, Latvia and Estonia adopted laws which provided the rights and obligations of citizens not for all Latvian and Estonian populations. In accordance with the Russian point of view, there were still several reasons for Latvian minorities not to apply for the citizenship: belief that the official status is the right of these people, lack of knowledge in Latvian language, complex exam on the history of Latvia, cheap visa to Russia, the high price of state duty.[47] Russia expressed its doubts in achieving the goals of, ended in 2001, OSCE Missions in Latvia and Estonia.[48] At that time, it has not been an important obstacle for the Baltic states on the route towards NATO membership, but it has become a problem in 2014 and caused panic in Latvia and Estonia, due to the new status of Russia as a Defender of Russian-speaking minorities.

The fourth factor was territorial disputes. In accordance to the Study on NATO Enlargement, "new members, at the time that they join, must commit themselves, as all current Allies do on the basis of the Washington Treaty, to: […] settle any international disputes in which they may be involved by peaceful means". However, it was not an issue during the accession process neither to NATO nor into the EU. The progress on treaties delimiting Russo-Baltic borders was partly solved only in the XXI century. There was still an unsolved case between Latvia and Lithuania about their sea border. The two neighboring countries signed a maritime boundary and economic zone treaty back in 1999, but it has

---

[45] Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security Between NATO And the Russian Federation Signed in Paris, France.
[46] Asmus R.D. NATO Enlargement and the Baltic States. P. 124;
Blank S. Russia, NATO Enlargement, and the Baltic States. P. 118;
Kramer M. NATO, the Baltic states and Russia: a framework for sustainable enlargement. P. 735;
Вахрамеев А. В. Страны Балтии у ворот НАТО // Современная Европа. 2000. №. 4 (4). С. 89.
[47] Правовое положение национальных меньшинств в Латвии и Эстонии: исследование МГИМО // МГИМО: офиц. сайт. 2011. Ноябрь. 09. URL: https://mgimo.ru/about/news/inno/212723/ (accessed: 14.11.19).
[48] 374-е Пленарное Заседание Совета // ОБСЕ: офиц. сайт. 2001. Декабрь. 18. URL: https://www.osce.org/ru/pc/18160?download=true(accessed: 14.11.19).

only been ratified by the Lithuanian parliament. The Latvian parliament has not endorsed it yet[49]. There was an opinion that the absence of progress in solving territorial disputes and intentional delay of negotiations would cause problems for Baltic membership in NATO and the EU. However, it turned out that this issue did not play an important role in the acceptance process.

Fifth, the Kaliningrad enclave is a strategic importance to Russia and a source of danger for the Baltic states. There were two features connected with region after the dissolution of the USSR, which were under consideration at the end of the 1990s: economic (energy supply, transport, and economic involvement) and military (withdrawal of nuclear weapons, reduction of personnel). After the accession of Poland to NATO and the prospects of the Baltic states' membership, the Kaliningrad region became even more vulnerable. Russia, as well as three Baltic states, would become targets for blackmailing and blocking maritime, air, and land connections to the region. To prevent this scenario, B. Yeltsin offered security guarantees and cooperative projects to the Baltic states during the Helsinki Summit, and then in writing form as letters to three Baltic capitals.[50] The security of the region on the sea would be implemented by the Russian Baltic Navy and, eventually, Baltic states were not satisfied with it at all, since they waited for security assurance from the USA. Back in 1993 Russia and Lithuania signed an agreement on international road transport to regulate the transportation of passengers and goods between Lithuania and Kaliningrad region.[51] However, it did not assure a regular direct connection between Russia and enclave. The talks about transport issues changed with construction of a Grodno-Kaliningrad corridor. Today, the Suwalki gap between Poland and Lithuania has strategic importance since it is the only land route to the Baltic states.

If we look at the benefits from the Baltic membership in NATO, we will see why mentioned above drawback did not prevent enlargement in the Baltic states. First, it was an important pretext of NATO's existence and US military involvement in Europe. During the Cold War, the Alliance had two main responsibilities: confronting the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty Organization and implemented military-political functions of its members.[52] As we mentioned before, in the 1990's NATO was in the process of adaptation to the new strategic environment and it demonstrated the enormous intentions to do so. Although NATO's Secretary-General M. Worner, once said that "the Treaty of Washington of 1949 [which created NATO] nowhere mentions the Soviet Union", the purposes of NATO existence before 1990 were obvious. In the part "Security challenges and risks" of the Alliance's New Strategic Concept of 1990 there was only one idea – the challenges are different in nature now from what they have been before, and that is why we do not know what to expect. It stressed

[49] Lithuanian, Latvian leaders hope to resolve sea border dispute within 4 years // The Baltic Course. 2019. October. 03. URL: http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/baltic_states/?doc=151774&output=d (accessed: 14.11.19).
[50] Knudsen O. Cooperative security in the Baltic Sea region / O. Knudsen // Institute for Security Studies of WEU. 1998. November. URL: https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/cp033e.pdf (accessed: 14.11.19).
[51] Agreement concerning international road transport (with protocols). // OOH: офиц. сайт. 1993. October. 18. URL: https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%201831/volume-1831-I-31342-English.pdf accessed: 14.02.20).
[52] Eide V. The military dimension in the transformed alliance / V. Eide// NATO Review. 1992. No. 4. Vol. 40. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/review/1992/9204-4.htm (accessed: 11.11.19).

the significant role of "achieving Alliance objectives through political means" and the importance of political, economic, social, and environmental elements as well as the indispensable defense dimension in security and stability.[53]

The perception of the threat transformed during the 1990s and it can be seen in the next Strategic Concept of 1999, where challenges for the Alliance and its tasks stated more clearly. First, security was perceived as a cornerstone of a stable Euro-Atlantic environment, with devotion to democracy and international law. Second, the consultations between member states about their interests became vital for the organization. Third, deterrence and defense were still evaluated as a guarantee of allies' security. These tasks had to be implemented by crisis management (which was new) and partnership with non-member states.[54]

Also, during this period NATO officials started highlighting "the West's moral authority" to transmit democratic values through NATO institutions by practical guidance and expertise as well as political support and encouragement, in reapportioning the equipment entitlement of the former Soviet Union and clarifying rights and obligations under the Treaty. H. Waterman urged in his article that "NATO enlargement may not spread democracy, but it would strengthen it" and "promote reform, contribute to regional political order, and co-opt younger generations into Western norms and perspectives".[55] The shift from the military-political to the political-military organization has occurred exactly in this period. NATO has increasingly begun to emphasize its political and diplomatic functions, rather than the hard force of arms.

To adapt the military dimension, the Alliance launched military revision in 1989, which involved "NATO's military strategy; its force structures; the military command structure; operational concepts and plans, and associated support arrangements". In addition, it has planned substantial reductions in active force levels to increase mobility, flexibility, and versatility in military resources. Joint weapons programs, annual military exercises, readiness, nuclear alert status, and training have been sharply reduced. In addition, the Alliance has switched its attention to "peripheries which were characterized by great uncertainties and risks of conflict that could impact on Allied security".[56] It expressed itself in terms of a vision of a "Europe whole and free": a cooperative, peaceful, post-Cold War European order".[57]

As for the US's military presence in Europe, it would not disappear right away, and it could not since there was a pretext not to do so. The Bush's Grand Strategy included tackling ancillary efforts,

---

[53] The Alliance's New Strategic.

[54] The Alliance's Strategic Concept NATO: офиц. сайт. 1999. April. 24. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm (accessed: 11.11.19).

[55] Waterman H. NATO and Democracy / H.Waterman, D. Zagorcheva, D. Reiter // International Security. Vol. 26. No. 3 (Winter, 2001-2002). pp. 226-227. URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/3092095 (accessed: 11.11.19).

[56] Eide V. The military dimension in the transformed alliance.

[57] Díaz-Plaja R. Projecting Stability: an agenda for action / R.Díaz-Plaja // NATO Review. 2018. March. 13. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2018/03/13/projecting-stability-an-agenda-for-action/index.html (accessed: 11.11.19).

which included shifting the primary orientation of post-reduction NATO militaries in Europe from the east to Balkans. After 1993, the USA found another pretext – helping the militaries of non-NATO PfP members adapt to NATO methodology and create military capabilities able to function within NATO. Moreover, when the EU states gave to the aspirant's opportunity of joining economic programs, the US provided security guarantee, which Central and Eastern Europe wanted the most. As former US ambassador to the Alliance R. Hunter wrote, "between having a U.S. security guarantee without NATO and membership in NATO where the United States did not give a guarantee, they would all choose the former".[58] In 1998 US and three Baltic states signed the U.S.-Baltic Charter, which expressed American intentions to support their admission to NATO, involvement in security programs in the region and further development of defense initiatives, using the established Bilateral Working Group on Defense and Military Relations.[59] We will consider the US's involvement in the Baltic joining process in the next section of a chapter.

The enlargement, associated with its subsidiary projects, such as the Membership Action Plan (MAP), and implementation of other requirements for applicants created work for NATO. It motivated Central and Eastern European countries for the reforms and democratization and, consequently, it also caused necessity in providing guidance from the Alliance for these states. At the same time, the United States privately entertained great ambitions for dominating post–Cold War Europe and started projecting its military power and influence into the most complaisant part – Eastern Europe.

Second, the identity of Baltic states and their focus on becoming part of Europe and European institutions played an encouraging role in the admission process. Three Baltic states after secession faced the uncertainty of their identity. In Soviet times, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia were notable among other republics: in the lifestyle, culture and attitude. At the beginning of the 1990s, all the Baltic States found themselves located on the frontline of democratic and free market thinking prevalent amongst states on the coastline of Baltic sea. The B3 always stressed its European identity and used it to affect emotions and duty of the Western states to defend them. At the meeting of the NAC, the President of Estonia L. Meri ended his speech with these words: "I am trying to raise a coldly calculated, rational point and ask: in what circumstances would the accession of European democracies to democratic organizations influence European security negatively? I fail to see such circumstances".[60] The Baltic diplomats and Scandinavian proponents of Baltic membership in NATO raised awareness of this issue the in US' newspapers right before the announcement of the first round of enlargement in 1997. For example, the International Herald Tribune published the article "Will They Sacrifice the Baltic Peoples

[58] Chapter 14. Hunter R. Toward NATO Enlargement: The Role of USNATO // Open Door: NATO and Euro- Atlantic Security After the Cold War / D. S. Hamilton, K. Spohr, eds.Washington, 2019. School of Advanced International Studies Johns Hopkins University. P. 300. URL: https://transatlanticrelations.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/14-Hunter.pdf (accessed: 11.11.19).
[59] U.S. Baltic Charter // Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Estonia: офиц. сайт. 1998. January. 16. URL: https://vm.ee/en/us-baltic-charter (accessed: 11.11.19).
[60] Address of the President of the Republic of Estonia, Mr. Lennart Meri // NATO: офиц. сайт. 1998.November. 04. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1998/s981104a.htm (accessed: 11.11.19).

Again?" written by V. Krastins, Latvia's ambassador to the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Turkey. The name of it reflects the main message. "We in the Baltics cannot cope with the consequences of 50 years of occupation without a stability shield. It is essential for the rebuilding our societies along Euro-Atlantic lines, and for reintegration in Europe".[61]

The admission of the former communist states was presented as a return of the Baltic States to the Western world. 'European' or 'Western' identities were associated with a certain level of life, cultural achievement, social welfare, and prosperity. It was the continuation of the de-Sovetization trend. The close relations with the Nordic states allowed the Baltic states to learn from them and implement best practices.

Third, the membership of the Baltic states allowed NATO to create stability and democracy in the north of Eastern Europe and secure the gains of the Cold War's ending. It was the motive of the active involvement of Scandinavian states (including non-members states of NATO) into enhancing the security of Latvia, Lithuania, and, Estonia, since they were highly interested in stable neighboring states. It was in Nordic states' interests to defend their national interests by effective border controls and coastguards, which might prevent them from becoming transit stations for smuggling, refugees, laundered money, and drugs, as well as safeguard nuclear power safety. Some states in the region, such as Denmark, were the most active advocates of Baltic military cooperation, due to connection between this issue and their national security.[62] However, Scandinavian states initially avoided 'selling arms' to their neighbors, mainly because of the hostile effect on the relations between the Nordic area and Russia.[63]

The risks of NATO enlargement in the Baltic states have not prevented or stopped the process. NATO's member states have done a lot to assist three Baltic states in their aspiration for membership and meeting of military and political requirements. Over this period, we can see that the later trends in the Baltic region was outlined in the discussions. The drawbacks, which were listed above, did not play a significant role in the final decision as it was expected, however, they sowed the seeds of the future lack of trust between NATO and Russia and the following complications. At that time, NATO was guided more by political, than military reasons, such as spreading democratic values and creating of the like-minded community of states in Europe on the remains of former communists' states and republics. It did not see the Baltic states as military-strong contributors to the common security of the Alliance and did not expect that Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia would need it on their territory for the foreseeable future.

---

[61] Krastins V. Will They Sacrifice the Baltic Peoples Again? // International Herald Tribune. 1996. December. 06. URL: https://www.nytimes.com/1996/12/06/opinion/IHT-will-they-sacrifice-the-baltic-peoples-again.html?searchResultPosition=13 (accessed: 11.11.19).
[62] Molis A. et al. Baltic military cooperation: past, pres,ent and the future // Lithuanian foreign policy review. 2009. №. 22. C. 31. URL: http://lfpr.lt/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/LFPR-22-Molis.pdf (accessed: 11.11.19).
[63] Archer C. Nordic involvement in the Baltic states security: Needs, response and success // European Security. 1998. P. 50. DOI: 10.1080/09662839808407372 (accessed: 11.11.19).

1.3 Positions of member states in regards to accepting Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia in the Alliance

This part of the research defines the discussion within NATO on the Baltic states' membership. The author examines the variety of opinions of member states and the division of their views.

NATO's enlargement itself was controversial not only for non-members but also inside the Alliance. There were proponents and opponents of Baltic membership. Sixteen (after 1999 – nineteen) member states had to find a consensus about the status of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia in the organization. The first mention of the possibility of enlargement was announced at the Brussels Summit in January 1994: " We have agreed [...] to reaffirm that the Alliance remains open to the membership of other European countries".[64] Here we consider the positions of NATO member states regarding Baltic membership.

Since the independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the Nordic states have played an important role in their recognition and involvement in the international community. Iceland was the first country which recognized the newly independent Baltic states.[65] From the very beginning, Denmark and Norway, together with non-members – Sweden and Finland, – assisted and sponsored projects in these former Soviet Republics to conduct reforms in the economy, government, education, and military. Even for NATO partners in the region, the membership of the Baltic states was vital to create the so-called "NATO lake" from the Baltic sea, where each state shared the same values and became a part of the cooperative security community[66]. It was the reason why the Nordic states accelerated the admission process as much as they could by the influence of the EU upon members of both communities.

One of the most effective projects, which was created by the assistance of NATO states, was the Baltic Defense College (BALTDEFCOL), established in 1999. The main initial goals of BALTDEFCOL were to train a new generation of officers and staff and to prepare them for interoperability inside NATO. The language of study was English and most of the instructors were from the USA, Germany, Denmark, and Norway. The use of NATO official language increased the efficiency of the training since three Baltic states did not have to spend time translating documentation to their national languages[67]. The USA also provided training and educational programs for Baltic troops at West Point, the U.S. Military Academy, and Annapolis, its Naval counterpart. Estonia had a link with Maryland, Latvia – with

---

[64] Declaration of the Heads of State and Government // NATO: офиц. сайт. 1994. January. 11. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_24470.htm?mode=pressrelease (accessed: 11.11.19).
[65] 25 years ago today: Iceland recogises Estonia and Latvia // Iceland Monitor. 2016. August. 22. URL: https://icelandmonitor.mbl.is/news/politics_and_society/2016/08/22/25_years_ago_today_iceland_recognises_estonia_and_l/ (accessed: 11.11.19).
[66] Gorenburg S. The expansion of NATO into the Baltic sea region: Prague 2002 and beyond. P. 22.
[67] Ibid.. P.10.

Michigan, and Lithuania – with Pennsylvania.[68] The BALTDEFCOL is still functioning and producing research on Baltic region security and preparing officers for the service.

Baltic Air Surveillance Network (BALTNET) was another Baltic military cooperation project encouraged by the security needs. The Baltic States had and still have poor-equipped Air Forces. They did not have aircrafts to perform air policing tasks or equipment to carry out air surveillance. Therefore, the joint project with sharing costs was the most appropriate decision. As well as BALTDEFCOL, it was instituted by Nordic states, but France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom also participated in it. In 2004, BALTNET was linked to the Alliance's air defense system.[69]

If we look at the proponents of Baltic membership, the most notable of them was Denmark. Its interests were directly connected with developments around the Baltic littoral. It has aimed to create security community in the region by involving newly independent states into the existing structures in Europe. Besides, the Baltic states could be a "transmitter" within NATO in promotion of controversial ideas which larger states preferred not to support, but still had an interest in their implementation. Moreover, small states could play the role of counterbalance to more influential European states, such as Germany and France. Therefore, Denmark's furtherance of the Baltic states in NATO had its objective purposes, although they had a lack of capabilities to meet the requirements of the MAP.[70]

Danish officials have repeatedly stressed their full support for Baltic membership in NATO. In accordance with R. Asmus, "the Baltic issue has been seen as a critical test of the success of NATO's oft-repeated pledge that enlargement would enhance stability in Europe as a whole, not only for those states to which Alliance membership would be extended".[71] Denmark saw the stability of the region sustained only in case of NATO being a guarantee of 'hard security', while the EU's contribution was perceived in terms of 'soft', non-military-combat security.[72] Moreover, Danish, Norwegian, and the British governments took the initiative in military training and the establishment of the BALTBAT (Baltic Batallion), which served in Bosnia on a peacekeeping mission in 1994-2003. It was a demonstration of the fact that even small states could contribute to the large operations and they would not be a burden.

The US' position fluctuated over the years. If we look at the dynamics in the triangle of the USA-Baltic states-Russia and efforts, which were undertaken, we can see that the United States tried to keep a balance between two sides. There were no intentions to aggravate relations with Russia, but at the same time, the membership of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania would send a clear message to Moscow that it did not have veto power over NATO decisions.[73] As we can see, every step towards cooperation

---

[68] Davis M. An Historical and Political View of the Reserve and Guard Forces of the Baltic States at the Beginning of the Twenty-first Century / Davis M. // Journal of Baltic Studies. 2006. Winter. Vol. 37. No. 4. P. 380. URL: www.jstor.org/stable/43212738 (accessed: 11.11.19).
[69] Molis A. et al. Baltic military cooperation: past, present, and the future. P. 36.
[70] Gorenburg S. The expansion of NATO into the Baltic sea region: Prague 2002 and beyond. P.25-26.
[71] Asmus R.D. NATO Enlargement and the Baltic States. P. 128.
[72] Archer C. Nordic involvement in the Baltic states security: Needs, response and success. P. 53.
[73] Gorenburg S. The expansion of NATO into the Baltic sea region: Prague 2002 and beyond. P.19.

with the Baltic states was reflected with a new initiative for dialogue with Russia. Therefore, Washington acted indirectly and did not officially declare its position on NATO enlargement in the Baltic states straight away. An example of the support of the Baltic membership aspiration was the US Military Liason Team initiative, which included representatives from security forces, who assisted local personnel and arranged visits of US experts.[74]

On a political level, Clinton's administration in 1994-2000 balanced between pressure from the Congress on continuing enlargement in Eastern Europe and intentions to improve relations with Russia. After the announcement of the PfP and the start of negotiations within NATO, it became clear that the Baltic states would not be in the first enlargement wave. USA's politicians and experts started working on a siding plan and some kind of consolation for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. They created the "Baltic Action Plan" in 1996 to foster the integration of the Baltic republics into the transatlantic mainstream. There were three fields of development. The first direction was aimed to strengthen Baltic sovereignty and democracy for future integration into the Euro-Atlantic community. The second direction should have improved dialogue with Russia. The third track was meant to demonstrate the USA's commitment to the well-being of the Baltic states in all spheres.

After signing the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation, and Security in 1997 between Russia and the Alliance, the Baltic states demanded the USA to provide reassurance that they would become NATO members in the future. For that purpose, the Baltic American Charter of Partnership of 1998 was signed, which promised crisis consultation, military assistance and, possible backing for NATO membership of the Baltic States.[75] By this step, the USA demonstrated its intentions and made Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia loyal proponents of American initiatives in frameworks of NATO, such as Kosovo, and later, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.[76] The uncertainty came to an end in January 2001, when G. Bush announced that "All of Europe's new democracies, from the Baltic to the Black Sea and all that lie between, should have the same chance for security and freedom and the same chance to join the institutions of Europe as Europe's old democracies have. I believe in NATO membership for all of Europe's democracies that seek it and are ready to share the responsibility that NATO brings".[77]

As for the German position, NATO enlargement in the Baltic region perfectly suited to its post-unification strategy of presenting a supportive image for Berlin in Europe. The former Soviet republics would fill the political and security vacuum between Germany and Russia and place Berlin in the center of the new Europe. To accelerate the process of obtaining membership by Baltic states, it assisted the them and launched various projects. For example, Germany established on its territory BALTCCIS

---

[74] Davis M. Overview of the Guard and Reserve Forces of the Baltic Sea Countries at the Beginning of the Twenty-first. P. 383

[75] Zájedová I. Baltic states' Security and NATO Enlargement. P. 88-89.

[76] Killick J. Small is beautiful: The case against the enlargement of NATO / J. Killick // The RUSI Journal. 141:4. P. 58. DOI: 10.1080/03071849608446052 (accessed: 11.11.19).

[77] Transcript: President Bush speech in Warsaw // Inside Politics: неофиц. сайт. 2001. June. 15. URL: http://edition.cnn.com/2001/ALLPOLITICS/06/15/bush.warsaw.trans/ (accessed: 21.01.20).

project designed by the German Air Force Information Center in Birkenfeld, Germany, and it plays an important role in the development of professional staff at the national level of all three Baltic states.[78] The extremely flexible system consisted of several modules that monitored the status units.[79]

At the same time, other states of Europe did not share the enthusiasm for admission "indefeasible" states. Moreover, the war in Yugoslavia caused concerns about the southern border of Europe. France, Hungary, and Italy were more interested in promoting Romania and Slovenia's application for membership in NATO, to prevent deterioration of the situation on the Balkans. Paris even announced its possible return to the integrated military structure of NATO in exchange for the membership of Romania and Slovenia'.[80] Other south European states supported Slovenia's and Romania's cases along with the French.[81] Since 1990 Paris made attempts with the "security identity" approach in Europe to weaken and counterbalance the USA by strengthening Western European unity. Greece, Spain, Belgium, and Italy were in favor and stood up for the same views, but their common efforts failed. [82] Thus, in the 1990s Paris and like-minded states promoted opposite to Washington's ideas. In the end, the struggle inside NATO caused its expansion.

The internal debate on enlargement into three Baltic states took thirteen years to find consensus between member states. NATO was divided into several parties, with their reasons to assist or oppose the Baltic states' membership. For example, Norway was the most active proponent of the B3 and provided financial and political support to Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. For it, the inclusion of the Baltic states into the Alliance was a guarantee of peace and stability in the Baltic region. Meanwhile, being not the most active proponent, but the most influential, the USA gained full support and trust from Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia to its action. At the same time, unified Germany provided cautious affirmation in prop since its position fluctuated through the concerned period due to the Russian factor. Besides, Western Europe (France, Belgium, Italy) recognized a dangerous shift in power in the world after the end of the Cold War and tried to reduce the negative consequences of hegemonic steps of Washington and prevent the joining of new proponents of the USA's actions. It laid the foundation for later differences of opinion within NATO.

To sum up, our work discovered that in the period from 1991 to 2004 NATO aimed to include into its sphere of influence as many states of former communist block as it could, including Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. Member states saw the potential benefits as well as drawbacks of of the Baltic states' presence in the Alliance. The debates within the Alliance included political, economic and social

---

[78] Davis M. Overview of the Guard and Reserve Forces of the Baltic Sea Countries at the Beginning of the Twenty-first Century. P. 365.

[79] Ibid. P. 379.

[80] Ivkina N. Evolution of the position of France in NATO / N. Ivkina // Центр стратегических оценок и прогнозов. 2013. Январю 13. URL: http://csef.ru/en/politica-i-geopolitika/500/evolyucziya-poziczii-franczii-po-nato-3949 (accessed: 16.02.20).

[81] Frydrych E.The Debate on NATO Expansion / Frydrych E. // Connections. Vol. 7. No. 4 (Fall 2008). P. 18. URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26323362 (accessed: 11.11.19).

[82] Уткин А.И. Два берега Атлантики / А.И. Уткин // Институт США и Канады. 1999. № 2. URL: http://www.iskran.ru/russ/mag/utkin.html (accessed: 16.02.20).

problems of three Baltic states. Some member states, such as Norway and Germany, supported them, to the possible extent, in overcoming the drawbacks since the admission of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia served their national interests. Other allies (France, Belgium) did not express support due to the polar view of Europe in comparison with the advocates of Baltic membership and the existence of more convenient candidates for the admission. The internal dispute was resolved by mutual concessions of member states.

Nevertheless, the stress on the promotion of Western institutes and advancement of military capabilities, with assistance from NATO, paid off and allowed three Baltic states to integrate easily into the community. Moreover, it allowed the Alliance to expand its sphere of influence to the border with Russia. In the end, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia became member states of NATO in March 2004.

Chapter II. Activity of NATO in the Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia in 2004-2013

In this chapter, the author of this master thesis considers NATO's attention to Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania as member states and the view of NATO upon their security concerns.

After the receiving of the official invitation, the Baltic states with support from some NATO allies started the preparation for the membership. It coincided with division inside the Alliance, a new transformation agenda, and a shift in focus to out-of-area operations. It reflected in the subsequent events and preparedness of Brussels to the consequences of the Ukrainian crisis. After 2004, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania became a part of the "New Europe" and mostly relied on the United States' presence in Europe as a guarantee of security. However, they developed niche capabilities in the field of new threats and means to confront them. The Baltic states' concerns after the Georgian conflict did not cause significant changes in NATO's attitude towards Russia and rooted doubts in the Alliance's commitments in case of an attack.

The main research task of this chapter is to study the purpose of the NATO's activity in the Baltic states and its evaluation of the threats that could appear to their territory during the considered period.

2.1 NATO's vision of the Baltic states as members

This part of the analysis is aimed at the political overview of internal affairs of NATO, three Baltic states' roles within the Alliance, and the importance of their security concerns to the Alliance.

The Prague Conference, the first after the beginning of the war in Afghanistan, demonstrated NATO's adherence to the unification of Europe, from the Baltic to the Black Sea ("open door" policy), and focused on the continuation of transformation.[83] It seemed that after 9/11 the world encountered a universal threat in terrorism and the Alliance was in the vanguard of the fight with it. This could only motivate the Baltic states to continue work on meeting the MAP requirements, implement reforms, and find niche capabilities to become an indispensable part of the Euro-Atlantic community. "No one should become a millstone for the others", said S. Kallas, Prime Minister of Estonia.[84] Aspirants wanted to become a member of a strong and effective Alliance, with a "strong and sound transatlantic link".[85] In other words, NATO seemed as a stable and united community of values, which connected North America and Europe and had a clear purpose of the operation.

---

[83] Prague Summit Declaration.
[84] Remarks by Mr. Siim Kallas, Prime Minister of the Republic of Estonia, at the NAC meeting with Invitees // NATO : офиц. сайт. 2002. November. 21. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s021121y.htm (accessed: 01.03.20)
[85] Address by H.E. Mr. Valdas Adamkus President of the Republic of Lithuania at NAC meeting with Invitees // NATO : офиц. сайт. 2002. November. 21. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s021121p.htm (accessed: 01.03.20)

Nevertheless, the contradiction between Atlanticism of the USA and the neo-Gaullism of France and Germany deepened due to different perceptions and approaches to fighting against terrorism.[86] It caused further polarization of member states' views on American leadership, which we considered in the previous chapter. A well-known answer from U.S. Defense Secretary D. Rumsfeld about support from allies created memorable names for this European split. In his speech, he stressed that "Old Europe" included states, which opposed and challenged US' decisions, and they did not represent all variety of opinions in Europe. As D. Rumsfeld said, "the center of gravity [in Europe] is shifting to the east".[87] Eastern Europe has become the "New Europe", which agrees with the USA's approach to foreign policy and supports Atlanticism.[88] They presented, so-called "realists' point of view", which included awareness of evidence and therefore accepted American leadership as an inevitable outcome.[89] The division within the Alliance aggravated the discussion on the expeditionary role of NATO promoted by the United States against the continental security approach articulated by France, Belgium, and Germany.[90]

For instance, from the very beginning, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania actively supported and participated in the War in Afghanistan and the Coalition of Willing in Iraq, unlike other NATO member states. Some authors name it as a "ticket to NATO", but in our opinion, it would not be quite correct to call rational cooperation between two sides for mutual benefits as sort of an easy way towards membership.[91] Through the support of the American decisions, the Baltic states gained strong loyalty and support of their concerns within NATO represented by the USA. At the same time, Washington kept in mind that in the expanded NAC it would need more members on its side, and the Baltic states would strive to demonstrate support to the American leadership. In light of this, the eagerness of the Baltic states to support expeditionary operations was justified as a return of favor and consolidated close ties between Washington and the Baltic capitals.

Some authors named as the end of discussion on a division in NATO the speech of the Secretary-General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, who proclaimed a new Atlanticism as consensus within the Alliance to "look beyond Europe". He stressed interdependence between Europe and the United States because "America remains Europe's No. 1 strategic partner", but "U.S. unilateralists who thought that the United States didn't really need Allies have come to realize that the U.S. not only needs Allies, but also the

---

[86] Lehti M. Protégé or Go-Between? The Role of the baltic states after 9/11 in eu–US Relations / M. Lehti // Journal of Baltic Studies. 2007. 38:2. P. 134. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/01629770701345065 (accessed: 01.03.20)

[87] Secretary Rumsfeld Briefs at the Foreign Press Center // US Department of Defense: офиц. сайт. 3003. January. 23. URL: https://archive.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=1330 (accessed: 01.03.20).

[88] Lehti M. Protégé or Go-Between? The Role of the baltic states after 9/11 in eu–US Relations. P. 130.

[89] Ibid.P. 133.

[90] Michta A. What Next for NATO? / A.Michta // Orbis. Vol. 51. Issue 1.2007. P. 156. URL: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0030438706001153 (accessed: 01.03.20).

[91] Александров М.В. Прибалтийское дежавю: об участии Литвы, Латвии и Эстонии в военной операции НАТО в Афганистане / М.В.Александров // Материк. 2011. Апрель. 01. URL: http://www.materik.ru/rubric/detail.php?ID=12190 (accessed: 01.03.20).

Alliance". [92] In this situation, the main task for the Baltic states was a restoration of the Euro-Atlantic community and linking states across the ocean. They were aware that the USA was a guarantee of a new democracies' security. Meanwhile, these states were European and also members of the EU. Thus, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia did not have other options, but to take the role of a mediator between North America and Europe. [93] However, the discussion between advocates of close ties within Europe and proponents of absolute American leadership was on the table for the period which is examined in this chapter.

Meanwhile, NATO was conducting political and military transformations. New members of the Alliance supported all initiatives in reformulating NATO's mission and restructuring its activities and contribute whatever was needed to demonstrate their ability to be effective. [94] Therefore, limited military capabilities of the B3 stated the reason for finding a narrow niche inside NATO's political dimension. First, three Baltic states became one of the main supporters of the "open door" agenda in the Alliance. [95] The status of member states gave them the authority to be an example of democratization for Near Abroad. This role was emphasized by US Vice President Cheney R. on the conference in Vilnius "The [Western] system that has brought such great hope to the shores of the Baltic can bring the same hope to the far shores of the Black Sea, and beyond. What is true in Vilnius is also true in Tbilisi and Kyiv"[96].

To prove their ability to implement the entrusted missions and demonstrate their efficiency, the Baltic states dedicated their efforts to public diplomacy in two interconnected tracks: building a remarkable image among other European states and facilitating democracy in the post-Soviet area. Initially, forming a new identity for the three Baltic states was a continuation of the rejection process of the former Soviet republics' legacy and its attributes. It enabled these states to promote the reputation of the advanced and democratic members of the Western community. [97] For instance, Estonia built an image of the "Skype country", which dealt with cyberwar, cyber defense, and IT sector in general and applied new technologies in everyday life. [98] It should be noted that the widely-spread opinion about the "Russian hacker attack" behind the establishment of the Cooperative Cyber Defense Centre of Excellence (CCDCOE) in Tallinn did not have solid ground. The work on the CCDCOE was initiated by the Estonian government back in 2003 and was a part of the program aimed at the development the "niche

[92] A New Atlanticism for the 21st Century. Speech by NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer at the Conference of the German Marshall Fund // NATO : офиц. сайт. 2004. June. 27. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2004/s040627a.htm (accessed: 01.03.20).

[93] Bugajski J. Washington's new European allies: Durable or conditional partners? / J. Bugajski, Teleki I. // Washington Quarterly. 2005. 28:2. P. 96. DOI: 10.1162/0163660053295257 (accessed: 01.03.20).

[94] Speech by the President of Latvia, Her Excellency Dr. Vaira Vike-Freiberga at the meeting of the North Atlantic Council // NATO : офиц. сайт. 2004. June. 28. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2004/s040628m.htm (accessed: 01.03.20).

[95] Воротников В.В. Страны Балтии в НАТО: итоги десятилетия. С. 10.

[96] Cheney's Speech in Lithuania // The New Your Times : неофиц. сайт. 2006. May. 04. URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/04/world/europe/04cnd-cheney-text.html (accessed: 02.03.20).

[97] Collier M. The Image Makers: Estonia.

[98] Bergmane U. Public Diplomacy as a National Security Tool / U. Bergmane // Foreign Policy Research Institute. 2017. May. 27. URL: https://www.fpri.org/article/2017/05/public-diplomacy-national-security-tool/ (accessed: 02.03.20).

capability" for future membership.[99] Latvia concentrated on ecological issues and became a center for environmental discourse.[100] Thus, they gained a status of role models among the post-Soviet area. Countries of the Near Abroad started to look up to the Baltic states as a link to the Euro-Atlantic community and searched for a possibility of cooperation.

Back in the 1990s, three Baltic states were using public diplomacy and political assistance to draw the attention of their Western neighbors, but after 2004 they redirected efforts to the East, involving former Soviet republics into an integration process with the Euro-Atlantic community and thus repeated their own experience when Nordic states patronized them. The support of the "open door" policy for politicians in the Baltic capitals was a window of opportunity to stand against Russia which thought about the Near Abroad as its exclusive sphere of interests[101] Therefore, three Baltic states conducted the policy of supporting states of the Black Sea region in several directions.

First, the Baltic states' embassies obtained the status of Contact Point Embassies for NATO, which served as a support for partnership and public diplomacy activities in countries participating in the Euro-Atlantic projects and initiatives; from 2004 to 2010 it was Lithuanian embassy in Minsk, after 2010 – Estonian.[102]

Second, the Baltic states aimed to strengthen the partnership between the Baltic and Black Seas. The Baltic model of development was a good example of successful transfer and integration into the Western institutes; the same transition was needed for Tbilisi and Kyiv. The most notable project was "New Group of Georgia's Friends" (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria) which was founded in 2005 and replaced "Group of Georgia's Friends" consisted of the United States, Germany, Britain, and France. The predecessor group was recognized ineffective since it was ruled by the "Russia-first" principle and it did not provide sufficient assistance to the aspirants. However, the key task of this association stayed the same - exchanging experience on Euro-Atlantic integration and facilitating such processes in the Black Sea-South Caucasus region.[103]

Third, all three Baltic states provided financial and practical support for the democratic advancement of Near Abroad. For instance, the Baltic governments financed Georgia in frames of cooperation policies for 12 million euros in total from 2005 to 2017. Besides, they sent civil servants and experts in e-governance, cybersecurity, military, and civil society development to increase Georgian

[99] Defending against cyberattacks // European Parlament: офиц. сайт. 2008. URL: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/sede/dv/sede251010audnatocyberattacks_/sede251010audnatocyberattacks_en.pdf (accessed: 02.03.20).

[100] Collier M. The Image Makers: Latvia / Collier M. // The Baltic Times. 2008. July. 29. URL: https://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/20951/ (accessed: 03.03.20).

[101] Gheciu A. « Transcending old divisions? NATO and Russia after the Cold War » / Gheciu A. // Politique américaine, 2009/1 (N° 13). DOI : 10.3917/polam.013.0037. URL : https://www.cairn.info/revue-politique-americaine-2009-1-page-37.htm (accessed: 03.03.20).

[102] Contact Point Embassies in partner countries // NATO : офиц. сайт. 2017. January. 27. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49190.htm (accessed: 02.03.20).

[103] Socor V. New Group Of Georgia's Friends Founded / Socor V. // The Jamestown Foundation. 2005. February. 07. URL: https://jamestown.org/program/new-group-of-georgias-friends-founded/ (accessed: 03.03.20).

capabilities.[104] The evidence suggests that the role of NATO representation in the face of Baltic states assisted in the overweighting influence of Russia in the Near Abroad. In addition, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia used a chance to demonstrate efficiency in advocating a "open door" policy.

The notable landmark in the determination of the Baltic states' inside the Alliance was a recognition of their achievements at the Bucharest Summit in April 2008. Providing commitments to Georgian and Ukrainian membership in NATO on the Declaration of the Summit was a noteworthy attempt for the next round of enlargement in the post-Soviet area.[105] During consultations, the US President proposed to start negotiations on the MAP as it did with Croatia, Macedonia, and Albania immediately. The three Baltic states were in favor of this decision, unlike other member states. In accordance with U.S. State Department officials, Germany, France, Italy, Hungary, and the Benelux countries were against the MAP for Kyiv and Tbilisi due to concerns about a negative reaction from Moscow.[106] However, not only Russian objection was named as the reason behind the decision; the negative perception of NATO by Ukraine's population, territorial disputes in Georgia and the energy dependence on Russian resources also were discussed.[107]

It is worth mentioning the positive shift in the perception of Russia in NATO in early 2000s. The relations between the Alliance and Moscow remained cooperative – assistance in the war in Afghanistan, constant connection through the NATO-Russia Council, and conducting joint military exercises with NATO troops demonstrated the ability of both sides to be strategic partners. During this period, Russia was not generally perceived as a possible threat even by the Baltic states. There was even condescending view upon their eastern neighbor, which needed assistance from much-advanced states such as Estonia in modernization and democratization.[108] However, the Alliance missed behind the Russian concerns on Rose Revolution in Georgia and Orange Revolution in Ukraine and its interpretation as anti-Russian outrage, rather than Western pro-democracy events as it was presented by NATO.

The first sign of change in NATO's perception of Russia appeared after President Putin's Munich Speech in 2007 with harsh arguments on American hegemony, which coincided with a dispute on the relocation of the Bronze Soldier of Tallinn. In April 2008, the discussion in the NATO-Russia Council took an unexpected turn. In accordance with an anonymous source, during the closed session, President Putin stated Moscow's plan in case of NATO would launch negotiations on the MAP for Georgia and Ukraine. The Russian president gave a hint that Russia would recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia by

[104] Apriashvili M. Baltic Support For Georgia: Solidarity, Niche, And Security Policies / Apriashvili M. // Georgian Institute of Politics. 2017. June. URL:
http://gip.ge/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Research-Paper-4.pdf (accessed: 03.03.20).
[105] Bucharest Summit Declaration // NATO: офиц. сайт. 2008. April. 03. URL:
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm (accessed: 03.03.20).
[106] Erlanger S. NATO Allies Oppose Bush on Georgia and Ukraine / S. Erlanger, S. L. Myers // The New York Times. 2008. April. 03. URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/03/world/europe/03nato.html (accessed: 03.03.20).
[107] Gallis P. The NATO Summit at Bucharest / Gallis P. // Congressional Research Service. 2008 May. 05. P. 5-6. URL: https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RS22847.pdf (accessed: 03.03.20).
[108] Veebel V. Estonian Perceptions Of Security: Not Only About Russia And The Refugees / I. Ploome, Veebel V // Journal on Baltic Studies. 2016. Vol. 2. Issue 2. P.52. URL: https://css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/resources/docs/JOBS.02.2.pdf (accessed: 03.03.20).

Kosovo precedent and that this territory would become a buffer zone between moving the border of the Alliance towards Russia. As for Ukrainian membership, Moscow would do everything possible to take away the Crimea peninsula.[109] Since the information in general corresponded with the following events in Georgia and Ukraine and the publication of this statement was referenced in several researches at these years, we can say that this speech could have taken place. However, it does not seem that NATO has reacted or taken any preventive actions since it has not seen Russia as a threat to the status quo.

After the events of August 2008, the Baltic states and Poland took a strong stand within NATO to support Georgia, condemn and punish Russia for its actions, but it encountered active counteractions from France, Germany, and like-minded member states.[110] France was the holder of the EU presidency at that time and presented the united opinion of Europe, deciding to take a lead in negotiation on Georgian conflict and refusing to condemn either side. From the very beginning, Paris emphasized the necessity for NATO to avoid involvement in the crisis.[111] The same view was shared by Germany. The German foreign minister F.W. Steinmeier said that Europe should be "an honest broker" in the case of Georgian conflict.[112] At that time, Berlin developed economic relations with Russia. It negotiated with the Russian Gazprom a new important project – the North European Gas Pipeline. These installations allowed to bypass the Baltic countries, Belarus, Ukraine, and Poland, accelerate the supplying, and transport gas directly from Russia without go-betweens.[113] The escalation of the situation and punishing Moscow were not in the interest of Berlin. The situation wounded the three Baltic capitals' economic and political interests, but they were forced to decrease the degree of criticism and to use soft power to promote their security concerns in regard to Russian aggressive actions within NATO.

Despite the position of Old Europe and some Eastern European states of the Alliance, the representatives of three Baltic states could not give up the idea of the involvement of the Near Abroad into European institutes and making a precedent of Russian interference into NATO's "open door" policy. In addition, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia were disturbed by the possibility of repeating the Georgian scenario in other states of Near Abroad.[114] For instance, Latvia drew attention to the increasing of Moscow's mass media influence on the Baltic population. [115] "Among Latvians, at least ethnic Latvians, what you hear is a sense that this could have been us", wrote Latvian official on Georgian

[109] Блок НАТО разошелся на блокпакеты // Коммерсантъ. 2008. Апрель. 07. URL: https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/877224 (accessed: 03.03.20).
[110] Европа раскололась об Грузию // Коммерсантъ. 2008. Август. 12. URL: https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1011125 (accessed: 04.03.20).
[111] NATO/Georgia: Situation at NATO HQ as of cob on August 8 // Wikileaks: неофиц. сайт. 2010. URL: https://search.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08USNATO278_a.html (accessed: 05.03.20).
[112] Valasek T. What does the war in Georgia mean for EU foreign policy? / T. Valasek // Centre for European Reform. 2008. URL: https://www.cer.eu/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/pdf/2011/briefing_georgia_15aug08_tv-1136.pdf (accessed: 04.03.20).
[113] Sleivyte J. Russia's European Agenda and The Baltic States. P. 25.
[114] Lašas A. When History Matters: Baltic and Polish Reactions to the Russo-Georgian War. P. 1068-1071..
[115] Press Statement and Answers to Journalists' Questions Following a Meeting of the Russia-NATO Council // Сайт Президента России. 2008. April. 04. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24903 (accessed: 04.03.20).

conflict in a telegram to US State Department on 15 August 2008.[116] Therefore, we should summarize that the ambiguous signals from Moscow and subsequent Georgian conflict created good conditions for Baltic capitals to draw attention to their weaknesses (limited military capabilities and the presence of significant Russian-speaking minorities). It was used as a pretext for demanding NATO's contingency planning for the Baltic states. Thus, the Baltic states played historical legacy card and exaggerated the threat of re-occupying former Soviet territories by Russia in negotiations with NATO on their defensibility, and it paid off.

In 2010 Wikileaks updated documents containing the correspondence of the 2008-2010 period on NATO's internal debate on compiling defense plans "Eagle Guardian" for the Baltic states. The authenticity of the papers was neither confirmed, nor denied by Brussels. However, the confused reaction of NATO and circumstantial evidence demonstrated that such plans were on the table. It should be noted that the publication occurred in the unsuitable for the Alliance time – the proclamation of strategic partnership and "reset" policy in relations with Russia contradicted stated in Eagle Guardian's perception of the threat from the East. US officials were aware of the international backlash, public discussion, and consequences and asked Baltic allies not to put contingency planning in a public eye.[117] Taking everything into account, we can determine the overall picture of the discussion on contingency planning of that time from all available information.

In September 2008 the meeting on "enhancing the visibility of Article 5" was conducted by the UK, the USA, Canada, Visegrad and Baltic states ambassadors. It is important to note that the sides agreed that NATO would not return to the static territorial defense concept of the Cold War period. The first attempt to draw attention to the absence of a defense plan was taken in October 2008 by Gen. J. Craddock, then Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, but did not gain support from most of the member states.[118] The process of final decision in concern of the Baltic defense plan was temporarily frozen due to a change of administration in Washington and searching for a new NATO Secretary-General.[119] In February 2009, Lithuania received information from the US Secretary of Defense that the plan was under consideration of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) and it would be ready by the end of June. The further progress was not mentioned in documents until October 2009, when three Baltic governments expressed their apprehension of Russian military exercises "Zapad-09" and "Ladoga".[120] The Baltic states encountered obstacles inside the Alliance against a contingency plan in the North-East region. First, the firm position of Germany against the planning contingency operation

---

[116] What Georgia means to Latvia.
[117] NATO contingency planning for our Baltic allies // Wikileaks: неофиц. сайт. 2010. URL: https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09STATE127892_a.html (accessed: 05.03.20).
[118] NATO Chief Seeks Defense Plan For Allies Near Russia // Radio Free Europe. 2008. October. 08. URL: https://www.rferl.org/a/NATO_Chief_Seeks_Defense_Plan_For_Allies_Near_Russia/1294304.html (accessed: 05.03.20).
[119] The road to the NATO Summit and beyond: issues to address // Wikileaks: неофиц. сайт. 2010. URL: https://search.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09USNATO47_a.html (accessed: 05.03.20).
[120] Ambassador and Defense Minister plan for Secretary Gates meeting // Wikileaks: неофиц. сайт. 2010. https://search.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09VILNIUS84_a.html (accessed: 05.03.20).

in the Military Committee was rooted in the rejection to formally recognize Russia as a potential threat. Second, Poland was concerned in regard to inclusion neighboring states into its own defense plan, since it could dilute.[121]

The strong opposition in the NAC had been overcome by December 2009.[122] In the document to NATO HQs from December 18, 2009, Poland consented to the indispensability of contingency planning for the Baltic States "but would like to avoid delays in the completion of the Eagle Guardian plan for Poland".[123] Warsaw was assured that it would treat apart from three Baltic states plan and that U.S.-Polish military cooperation would increase. The final decision on the Baltic contingency plan was made within Military Committee on January 22, but an unofficial source released the information on inclusion Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into Polish "Eagle Guardian" plan on January 14. However, it did not cause a sharp reaction, unlike Wikileaks' publication and the article in the Guardian.[124] The ongoing update of Eagle Guardian was completed by March 2010 and unanimously adopted on the Lisbon Summit in November 2010.

We should keep in mind the initial reasons behind the adoption of the Eagle Guardian to see the consequences of it. The demand for the plan was an internal reassurance of NATO's commitments to the Baltic states and, after the Wikileaks' publication, deterrence's means of Russia. In fact, the creation of contingency planning was a natural step for NATO, since the Alliance's primary purpose was and still is to be ready and to anticipate possible external threats for its member states. The Russo-Georgian conflict merely gave solid ground to the Baltic requests. However, the Eastern flank was not a priority for NATO's agenda at that time.

Another crucial event for the Baltic region was the announcement made by President D. Medvedev in 2008 on countermeasures to President Bush's European expansion of "Ground-based Midcourse Defense" in Poland and the Czech Republic.[125] Russia was determined to cancel initial plans of removing three missile regiments from active duty, the deployment of Iskander-M (SS-26 Stone) in Kaliningrad and Leningrad oblast', and the establishment of an electronic counter-measures station there. We assume that signing the agreement between the USA and Poland on placing an American missile defense base on Polish territory in August 2008 was a reason behind the Russian announcement. The

---

[121] Action request: a decision on NATO contingency planning for the Baltics // Wikileaks: неофиц. сайт. 2010. URL: https://search.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09USNATO561_a.html (accessed: 05.03.20);
Action request: Baltic contingency planning: some ideas // Wikileaks: неофиц. сайт. 2010. URL: https://search.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09USNATO464_a.html (accessed: 05.03.20).
[122] Demarche delivered on NATO contingency planning for our Baltic allies States // Wikileaks: неофиц. сайт. 2010. URL: https://search.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09USNATO588_a.html (accessed: 05.03.20).
[123] Poland could accept "complementary" contingency planning for Poland and Baltic States // Wikileaks: неофиц. сайт. 2010. URL: https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09WARSAW1228_a.html (accessed: 04.03.20).
[124] Border controls // Economist. 2010. January. 14. URL: https://www.economist.com/europe/2010/01/14/border-controls (accessed: 05.03.20);
Traynor I.WikiLeaks cables reveal secret NATO plans to defend Baltics from Russia / Traynor I.// The Guardian. 2010. December. 06. URL: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/dec/06/wikileaks-cables-nato-russia-baltics (accessed: 05.03.20).
[125] Медведев развернет комплексы «Искандер» в Калининграде // Коммерсантъ. 2008. Novermber. 05. URL: https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1080063 (accessed: 06.03.20).

negotiations process was being conducted for six years since Washington's withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, but it caused an ambiguous reaction from European allies.[126] The main counterarguments were that it would not cover the territory of South-Eastern states and would undermine the principle of indivisible security within NATO by bilateral agreements only with host states, not to mention Russia's foreseeable opinion.[127] Thus, the Russian statement in November 2008 was a clear message for the upcoming administration in Washington to revise the decision on new missile installations near Russian borders. After the telephone conversation between President Medvedev and President Obama, Moscow suspended the military installations in the Western Military District.[128] B. Obama listened to European objections and abandoned the Bush's missile defense initiative. Instead, he proposed to apply a new "Phased Adopted Approach" (EPAA) within the Alliance as a part of NATO Missile Defense, thus he demonstrated the USA's commitments to the collective security, assured Moscow that the new system would be aimed against Iran and "welcomed Russians' cooperation to bring its missile defense capabilities into a broader defense of our common strategic interests".[129]

After the success of the New START treaty and invitation on the Lisbon Summit to cooperate with NATO on missile defense in Europe, it was expected from the USA, the Alliance, and Russia to continue work on in this field. Despite promising statements from the sides, they faced a deadlock by 2011. Apart from political, technical, and strategic irreconcilable obstacles between counterparts, the most important was the lack of trust which increased after the Georgian conflict.[130] As a consequence of stalemate and implementation of the EPAA Phase I, President Medvedev warned that Russia would deploy Iskander missiles in Kaliningrad and modern offensive weapon systems.[131] NATO accused Russia of rejection to link two missile defense systems, despite the weighty arguments from Moscow.[132] It could adverse reactions among the Baltic states, which discussed the possibility of the unified system's construction of ballistic missile defense, but it did not become a reality due to limited financial capabilities.[133] At the end of 2013, the Russian Ministry of Defense confirmed the deployment of

[126] Shanker T. U.S. and Poland Set Missile Deal / T. Shanker, Kulish N. // The NY Times. 2008. August. 14. URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/15/world/europe/15poland.html (accessed: 06.03.20).
[127] Meier O. Europeans Split Over U.S. Missile Defense Plans / O. Meier // Arms Control Association. 2007. April. URL: https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2007-04/europeans-split-over-us-missile-defense-plans (accessed: 06.03.20).
[128] Dmitry Medvedev and President of the USA Barack Obama had a telephone conversation // Сайт Президента Российской Федерации: офиц. Сайт. 2009. January. 26. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/2955 (accessed: 06.03.20);
"Искандеры" пока не направят в Калининград // Коммерсантъ. 2009. January. 29. URL: https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1109749 (accessed: 06.03.20).
[129] Remarks by the President on Strengthening Missile Defense in Europe // The White House President Obama: офиц. сайт. 2009. September. 18. URL: https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-strengthening-missile-defense-europe (accessed: 06.03.20).
[130] Weitz J. Deja Vu with BMD: The Improbability of Russia NATO Missile Defense / Weitz J. // Institut français des relations internationales. 2013. October. P. 9-13. URL: https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/ifriweitzamdengjan2013.pdf (accessed: 06.03.20).
[131] Медведев ответил на ЕвроПРО.
[132] NATO and Russia – Time to engage // NATO: офиц. сайт. 2014. February. 01. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_106788.htm?selectedLocale=en (accessed: 06.03.20).
[133] Konyshev V. US missile defence policy in the Baltic and Nordic regions / Konyshev V., A. Sergunin, S. Subbotin // Vol. 8, № 1. Baltic region. P. 37. URL: https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/us-missile-defence-policy-in-the-baltic-and-nordic-regions (accessed: 06.03.20).

Iskander-M in Kaliningrad oblast', which caused a disturbed reaction in Brussels and Baltic capitals because of the proximity of the deployed installation not only to Poland but also to the Baltic states' territory.[134]

During the considered period, the Baltic states became full members of the Euro-Atlantic community and took their place among the allies. Three Baltic states provided the necessary role of "mediator" between Near Abroad and NATO. Other member states defined the affiliation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to "New Europe", which completely supported American leadership within the Alliance. Later, it has reflected on the evaluation of threats to three Baltic states and NATO by "Old Europe". However, the Baltic fear of becoming a part of the Russian inherent sphere of influence affected their assumptions and influenced the promoted agenda within the Alliance. From the perspective of Western Europe, the possible complications in the East were improbable and the creation of the contingency plan was solely a part of measures to reassure the B3 in their rights as members and demonstrate the unity of the Alliance. Indeed, Moscow's political rhetoric raised concerns in NATO as well as in the Baltic capitals, but the Alliance did not anticipate that the crisis in Europe, such as the Ukrainian, would appear and it would challenge the status quo. Due to the shift in NATO's focus during the 2004-2013 period, it contemplated more the problems in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, than direct threats to Europe.

2.2 Military dimension of NATO's activity in three Baltic states

This part of the research is aimed to define the military capabilities of the three Baltic states and NATO's activity to enhance their security in the considered period.

During the admission process, it was already clear that the Baltic states would not contribute significantly to the NATO military capabilities. The limited number of personnel, old equipment, abandoned Soviet military bases, and an absence of maritime and airborne components posed the question of existing options for the Baltic states' security. The weakened capabilities after the Istanbul Summit needed to be brought up to full strength at the beginning of the XXI century. It might be useful, to sum up what capabilities the Baltic states had initially in the considered period.

First, only Estonia remained its conscription system parallel with professional personnel, unlike Lithuania and Latvia. It reflected its ability to change the total defense concept, which was used to build a modern reserve and guard forces in the region, to NATO's collective defense.[135] In accordance with M. Davis, Lithuanian reforms were the most successful due to the influence of Polish experience and it allowed to adopt a new concept quicker. In total, three Baltic states had around 48,000 personnel,

---

[134] «Искандер» в Калининграде // Голос Америки. 2013. Декабрь. 16. URL: https://www.golos-ameriki.ru/a/kaliningrad-iskander-rockets/1811374.html (accessed: 06.03.20).

[135] Farrell T. NATO's Transformation Gaps: Transatlantic Differences and the War in Afghanistan. P. 676.

including active reservists.[136] Second, the Baltic states did not have a full-range Air Forces. However, it had airbases which were abandoned by Soviet forces. One of them, the Zokniai airbase in Lithuania, became a key hub for the NATO Baltic Air Policing (BAP) in 2004. Another airdrome was Amari in Estonia. Lately, both of them were partly updated by the Baltic governments in association with NATO Security Investment Programme.[137] Third, the BALTNET was included in the NATO Integrated Air Defense System (NATINAMDS) and Lithuanian town Karmėlava became the Regional Airspace Surveillance Coordination Centre (RASCC) which covered all three Baltic states.[138] Fourth, the main joint naval project was Baltic Naval Squadron (BALTRON), which served as mine countermeasures. Moreover, there were large ports on the coast of the Baltic Sea, such as Liepāja and Riga in Latvia, Klaipėda in Lithuania, and Tallinn in Estonia. Fifth, the US lead promotion of information-technology within NATO was supported by the Baltic states.

It worth to be noted that before joining NATO the Baltic states were notable for their joint projects, but after, it they started to compete with each other and reduced military cooperation only to NATO's projects. However, the Baltic cooperation accelerated after the Georgian conflict, which caused the unifying efforts of three states to gain NATO contingency planning for their security. It was clear that the capabilities of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to repel possible attacks were limited, and would not be able to hold off the enemy until the reinforcement from allies arrive.[139] In accordance with undertaken commitments after 2004, NATO gradually involved the Baltic states into its military programs, but most of them were concentrated on out-of-area crisis management. Therefore, they did not contribute to the B3's resources and infrastructure to maintain autonomy in case of a military conflict.

After obtaining membership, the Baltic states urged to receive not only de-jure security guarantees from NATO but also de-facto assurances. However, most of the considered time the Alliance's interests laid outside of its territory. The Alliance was more interested in increasing Baltic's interoperability and relevance to its standards. Air policing was a measure of visible reassurance of commitments. The three Baltic states were seen as a possible buffer zone in case of the conflict, as it was during the Cold War with Eastern Europe. In addition, the possibility of the open confrontation in the north-eastern region of NATO's border was considered low in the 2000s and the beginning of 2010s. It reflected on limited interests of Brussels and Washington to be presented in the region, except for air policing mission, and obligations in accordance with the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act.[140] Moreover, the relative stability of the region did not give a solid ground to Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania

---

[136] Davis M. An Historical and Political View of the Reserve and Guard Forces of the Baltic States at the Beginning of the Twenty-first Century. P. 366.
[137] Воротников В. Внешняя политика государств Балтии в начале XXI века: Научное издание. – М.: Издательство «Аспект Пресс», Серия «Постсоветские и восточноевропейские исследования», 2015. С. 113.
[138] Зверев Ю. М. Вооруженные Силы И Инфраструктура НАТО В Странах Прибалтики. С. 112.
[139] Davis M. An Historical and Political View of the Reserve and Guard Forces of the Baltic States at the Beginning of the Twenty-first Century. P. 376.
[140] Gribanova G. NATO policies in the Baltics: objectives and Priorities P. 59.

for requesting contingency planning in case of aggression in 2004-2008. The pretext for triggering the discussion within NATO on contingency planning in the Baltic region was the Georgian conflict.[141]

It brought up again the question of Baltic's own capabilities. Together with the limited area of the theater of operation and the isolation from other allies made strategic planning in the region extremely complicated. Their armed forces were small and configured only to support NATO efforts in expeditionary operations, not to defend the region against a conventional attack. In accordance with optimistic assessments for that time, NATO's defense capabilities had an adequate willingness to deter a classic Article V contingency. Germany, France, and the UK would have forces that could be deployed adequately quickly to the eastern frontier of NATO. It would involve the employment of combat airpower and ISR assets to gain local air dominance to support a small ground expeditionary force delivered by air and sea.[142]

Although, the Baltic concerns were mostly based on political assumptions, and NATO member states were not interested in the investment into the military capabilities without the real threat of aggression, the Guardian Eagle planning appeared as a reassurance of the NATO's military commitments.[143] In accordance with leaked information, it was assumed that nine divisions from more military-advanced states (the USA, the UK,) had to deploy their troops in case of armed aggression against the three Baltic states. In addition, Poland and Germany would provide their ports had for British and US warships.[144] The Eagle Guardian was trained on the exercises, conducted in the Baltic states. First, it was used in April during large-scale Brilliant Ardent 2010 and Brilliant Mariner 2010 exercises conducted by NATO Response Force (NRF). The navy and air forces trained to carry out attacks in Baltic and North Seas against imaginary enemies. In May, the Baltic Host 2010 map-exercises were held in Latvia to enhance interoperability between the 3B and Allies in case of aggression.[145] The next exercise was BALTOPS (Baltic Operations) 2010 in June, which traditionally was maritime exercise, but in 2010 was transformed and included offload in Latvia and an amphibious exercise in Estonia.[146]

The development of hybrid threats drew the attention of NATO to communication strategy which came forward at that time and pushed aside hard military power. The lack of ability to construct proper communication appeared during the war in Afghanistan but also caused the inability to resist

[141] Asmus R. NATO, new allies and reassurance / R. Asmus, S. Czmur, Donnelly C., Ronis A., Valasek T., Wittmann K. // Center for European Reform. 2010. May. P. 2. URL: https://cer-live.thomas-paterson.co.uk/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/pdf/2011/pb_nato_12may10-215.pdf (accessed: 08.03.20).
[142] Larrabee S. NATO and the Challenges of Austerity/ S.Larrabee, S. Johnson, J. Gordon, etc // RAND Corporation. 2012. P. 76. URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/j.ctt1q60nw.10 (accessed: 08.03.20).
[143] Seib P. Public Diplomacy and Hard Power: The Challenges Facing NATO / P.Seib // The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs. 2014. vol.38:1. Winter. P. 98. URL: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/579fc2ad725e253a86230610/t/57ec7820be6594808a454295/1475115040958/38-1_Seib1.pdf (accessed: 10.03.20).
[144] WikiLeaks cables reveal secret Nato plans to defend Baltics from Russia.
[145] Baltic Host 2010 // Ministry of National Defence Republic of Lithuania: офиц. сайт. 2010. June. 02. URL: https://clck.ru/MoQBJ (accessed: 08.03.20).
[146] Rivera J. BALTOPS 2010 Kicks Off / J. Rivera // America's Navy. 2010. June. 09. URL: https://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story_id=53916 (accessed: 08.03.20).

disinformation. On the Strasbourg/Kehl Summit member states emphasized that "strategic communications are an integral part of our efforts to achieve the Alliance's political and military objectives".[147] For that purpose, NATO established a Strategic Communications cell at SHAPE in 2007 and opened the functioning NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence (StratCom) in Riga in 2014. [148] According to the 2010 Military Concept for NATO Strategic Communications of 2010, the StratCom aimed to ensure that the population would receive "truthful, accurate, and timely communication that will allow them to understand and assess the Alliance's actions and intentions". In other words, the main purposes were to promote information inside and outside the NATO area and counteract against the influence of unfriendly states, which could undermine the Alliance's security.

Meanwhile, it seemed that the new means of war moved aside the nuclear capabilities of NATO. However, after the initiatives announced on the Lisbon Summit and B. Obama's Prague speech, the perspectives of nuclear weapons in Europe blurred. The main controversy concerned the problem of how to maintain a nuclear posture and, above all, whether nuclear risk- and responsibility-sharing arrangements involving US nuclear weapons in Europe should be sustained. [149] This issue divided member states – mostly traditional Western and Northern European members (Germany, Belgium, Norway, and the Netherlands) perceived the deployment of NATO non-strategic nuclear weapons (NSNW) in Europe as obsolete and impeded in "reset" of relations with Russia. Meanwhile, the Baltic states insisted on the presence of the American NSNW as a guarantee of security link across the Atlantic and a calming factor for the B3 in the face of Russian capabilities, even nuclear capabilities would never be deployed on their territory.

Nevertheless, the Baltic states' installations of the NATINAMDS played an important role in the anticipation of early-warning counteroffensive actions in case of the attack, which were conducted after the Ukrainian crisis. The radar TPS-117 was stationed in Latvian Audriņi in 50 km. from the border with Russia. The diameter of coverage was up to 800 km, therefore it allowed to control Russian air space to 400 km in depth. A similar installation was deployed in Estonia. Much powerful radar AN/FPS-117 was installed near Daugavpils, Latvia. In accordance with Russian scholars, this system allowed to conduct reconnaissance on Russian air fighters and launch the missiles to the line Borovichy-Vyshniy Volochek-Rzhev-Yaroslavl. All information from the radars was directed to the Command and Reporting Center in Karmėlava, Lithuania, which meant that it collected data on air space of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania,

[147] Strasbourg / Kehl Summit Declaration // NATO: офиц. сайт. 2009. April. 06. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_52837.htm (accessed: 02.03.20).
[148] NATO strategic communications – An evolving battle of narratives // European Parlament: офиц. сайт. 2016. July. URL: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2016/586600/EPRS_BRI(2016)586600_EN.pdf (accessed: 02.03.20).
[149] Yost D. The US debate on NATO nuclear deterrence / Yost D. // International Affairs. Vol. 87. No. 6 (November 2011). P. 1401. URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/41306997 (accessed: 08.03.20).

Sweden, Finland, Belorussia, and Russia (covers more than 900,000 km^2.). [150] It gave to these installations the strategic importance for NATO.

As we see, the geographical peculiarities of the Baltic states have their benefits, but they also have their drawbacks, which do not play into NATO's hands. For example, the Suwalki gap between Lithuania and Poland, which is the only land border between NATO allies and the three Baltic states, is sandwiched between Kaliningrad oblast' and Belarus and takes on strategic importance in times of crisis. Another thing is a long border between Estonia and Latvia and Russia together with a significant Russian-speaking minority, which creates favorable conditions for a possible unexpected attack on the large scope of the territory. [151]

During the considered period, the capabilities and readiness of the Baltic forces were reduced to joint exercises and conducting Air Policing, training of personnel, establishing of Centers of Excellence, and inclusion of existing installations to NATO's systems. Moreover, these initiatives did not involve a significant number of personnel and equipment. The contingency plan, adopted in 2010, had a limited scale and based only on rapid deployments of the most advanced member states, such as the USA, France, and the UK, and did not take into account the real resources, time of deployment, and possible complications during the defense operation. Even if it would have been including the existing airbases and ports, which were recently modernized, NATO did not solemnly consider the state of affairs on the ground and problems of conducting military campaign during the possible conflict.

All in all, the period from 2004 to 2014 could be described as a time of prevalence of political over military purposes in the Baltic states. Due to limited military potential, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania took the niche of political mediator with Near Abroad on behalf of the Alliance. In addition, NATO had new challenges in other regions of the world and focused on them. Therefore, it did not actively advance the Baltic military potential. The possibility of state-to-state conflict or invasion in the Baltic region was perceived as improbable on the political level, however, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania obtained the contingency plan as an assurance of commitments from the Alliance and the demonstration of its presence there to other states after the Georgian crisis.

---

[150] Жарский А. Военная политика государств северной Европы / Жарский А., Коршунов Э. // Защита и Безопасность. 2009. № 1 (48). С. 35.
[151] Rostoks T. Baltic States And NATO: Looking Beyond The Article V / Rostoks T. // National Defense University. 2013. URL: https://www.doria.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/88687/BalticStatesAndNATO_netti.pdf?sequence=1 (accessed: 10.03.20).

Chapter III. A contemporary state of affairs after the Ukrainian crisis

In this chapter, the author of this master thesis is to determine the current political perception of the threat for Estonia, Latvia and, Lithuania by NATO and its military readiness to defend the Baltic states.

Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have become the most vulnerable member states after the outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis, and the tension in the Baltic region in general swiftly escalated in comparison with the previous period. Russian capabilities have been raising concerns of the NATO since the Georgian conflict. The Ukrainian crisis was not only the confirmation of Baltic apprehensions but the challenge for the status quo in Europe existed before, where NATO was a supervisor.

The political and military measures were the demonstration of assurance for the Baltic states and means of deterrence. At the same time, NATO was trying to keep the balance between requests from its member states and possible provocative assessments of their implementation from Russia. Moreover, the current strategy of the Alliance led it to the political stalemate, where Brussels and Moscow neither were taking steps to escalate the situation on the common border nor reaching the breakthrough. The similar dynamic we can see on the military level. If the problem of deployment of the force in the Baltic states has been solved, the question of providing reinforcement in a short time in case of an attack was under discussion.

The main research task of this chapter is to determine the political and military strategy of NATO to adhere the obligations to three Baltic states and their implementation.

3.1 NATO's perception of the threats on the Eastern border of NATO

This part of the research is aimed to recognize the political vision of the threat to NATO in the Baltic states.

There is no doubt that the Ukrainian crisis was a watershed for NATO's perception of the threats. It became a game-changer which the Alliance did not anticipate. "Clearly the Russians have declared NATO as an adversary, so we have to begin to view Russia no longer as a partner but as more of an adversary than a partner", stated A. Vershbow, then Deputy Secretary-General of NATO. After the internal conflict in Ukraine and secession of Crimea the "business as usual" could not be continued. NATO did not recognize the "so-called referendum held on 16th of March in Ukraine's Autonomous Republic of Crimea" and stated it as a violation of the principle of the inviolability of its internationally

recognized borders.[152] The challenge for the post-Cold War status-quo posed the question of how to deter Russia and adapt to the new security environment on its Eastern border.

From the very beginning of the Ukrainian conflict, the Baltic states were the most vocal among member states on Russian hostility and a possible threat for them as the nearest neighbors. The Lithuanian Foreign Minister has invoked Article 4 of the Washington Treaty, which calls for consultations if "the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the parties is threatened".[153] It followed with President Putin's statement on the reason behind the Crimea and Eastern Ukraine events, which was the protection of the Russian-speaking populations. The Baltic states have a significant Russian ethnic minority, as does the Crimea, and "were certainly very worried that what is happening to Ukraine today could happen to them tomorrow".[154] Moreover, the historical past of the Baltic states affects their assumptions and increases their fear of recurrence post-World War II era events. For them, the Ukrainian case was perceived as a testing area for the Russian attack on the other states of Near Abroad, and the Baltic states. From the Baltic countries' point of view, there was no guarantee that "revanchists Moscow" would not decide to restore the territory of the Soviet Union. The B3 exaggerated these concerns inside NATO and insisted on more decisive actions from the Euro-Atlantic community against the aggressive neighbor.

However, it was Baltic concerns, not NATO's point of view. If we look at M. Ruhle's assumptions, we will see that, in his opinion, the Ukrainian crisis raised concerns in Brussels, but Russian actions did not pose a direct threat to NATO. Moscow's actions in Crimea were not directed by the desire to check the Alliance's ability to react or solely enlarge the territory, it was prevention of the worst-case scenario – the loss of the influence in historically and territorially close country.[155] Meanwhile, H. Kissinger sees the starting point of the NATO perception of the Eastern threat in initially wrong assumptions on the versatility of Western international order. It was not ready for the Russian challenge to the "western idea of a state" and counteractions from Moscow.[156]

Nevertheless, the situation seemed to go out of control every day since the beginning of 2014, which caused the necessity of a reduction of apprehensions among Eastern allies. During the official visit in Warsaw, Vice President J. Biden reassured three Baltic states and Poland that they could rely on their NATO membership's rights.[157] Secretary-General A. Rasmussen confirmed that "NATO's

---

[152] Statement by the North Atlantic Council on the so-called referendum in Crimea // NATO: офиц. Сайт. 2014. March. 16. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_108030.htm (accessed: 18.03.20).
[153] Lithuania invokes Nato treaty on Ukraine // EUOBSERVER. 2014. March. 01. URL: https://euobserver.com/tickers/123321 (accessed: 18.03.20).
[154] Brattberg E. Baltic States Worried by Crimea / Brattberg E. // Atlantic Council. 2014. March. 02. URL: https://cdn.atlanticcouncil.org/insight-impact/in-the-news/brattberg-baltic-states-worried-by-crimea/ (accessed: 18.03.20).
[155] Rühle M. NATO and the Ukraine Crisis. P. 82.
[156] H. Kissinger We are in a very, very grave period / H. Kissinger // Russia in Global Affairs. 2018. June. 24. URL: https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/articles/we-are-in-a-very-very-grave-period/ (accessed: 18.03.20).
[157] Erlanger S. Russian Aggression Puts NATO in Spotlight / Erlanger S. // The New York Times. 2014. March. 18. URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/19/world/europe/russias-aggression-in-crimea-brings-nato-into-renewed-focus.html (accessed: 18.03.20).

commitment to the security of all Allies is unbreakable […]; now and in the future". [158] He also announced an increasing number of flights in the Baltic region within Air Policing Mission and conducting military exercises in the nearest future there. Nonetheless, it was not enough to persuade Tallinn, Riga, and Vilnius in their security. The situation became inflamed due to the incidents on the border and politically motivated legal proceedings on the Russian-speaking population's rights.[159]

Besides, Brussels was aware of the risks of increasing tension and took time to evaluate the possible options and the meaning of the Ukrainian crisis for NATO as a collective security organization on the Eastern flank.[160] First, it could not openly name Moscow an enemy, since it would undermine the obligations of both sides in accordance with the Foundation Act of 1997. Second, the absence of proper dialogue on political and military levels enormously raised unpredictability. [161] The exchange of condemning statements and military signaling along the border between Russia and NATO became the only way of communication for the sides. Third, NATO was not completely ready to conduct hybrid warfare, and capabilities in this field had to be improved. Fourth, the focus on crisis response and out-of-area operations of the XXI century caused profound changes in the military structure and tools of the Alliance, which now had to be reformed and adapted to the new security environment and collective defense function. [162]

We assume that NATO was more agitated about how Russian involvement in the Ukrainian crisis annexation challenged the post-Cold War order, where the Alliance was an overseer in Europe than the possible threat to any member states. Nevertheless, it challenged the credibility of NATO's functions of deterrence and reassurance for its members.[163] In other words, NATO had to prove that it was able to react adequately, hold the firm position to deter nuclear state, preserve the image in the eyes of the international community, and reassure and defend its member states in case of the military attack.[164]

The contradictions between Europe and the USA were complicated by conflicting purposes, which came from different perceptions of the threats among them and different national interests.[165] From the point of view of the Baltic states, NATO did not take seriously their apprehensions. In accordance with Veebel V., the Baltic military leadership and the political elite did not see that allies,

---

[158] A strong NATO in a changed world // NATO: офиц. Сайт. 2014. March. 21. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_108215.htm (accessed: 18.03.20).
[159] Borger J. Russians open new front after Estonian official is captured in 'cross-border raid' / J. Borger // The Guardian. 2014. September. 07. URL: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/07/russia-parades-detained-estonian-police-officer (accessed: 18.03.20);
Неграждане в Прибалтике: 10 лет на решение вопроса? // BBC. 2014. Ноябрь. 11. URL: https://www.bbc.com/russian/international/2014/11/141104_statelessness_issue_baltic_states (accessed: 18.03.20).
[160] Where's NATO's Strong Response to Russia's Invasion of Crimea? // Foreign Policy. 2014. March. 18. URL: https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/03/18/wheres-natos-strong-response-to-russias-invasion-of-crimea/ (accessed: 18.03.20).
[161] Sperling J. NATO and the Ukraine crisis: Collective securitization / Sperling J., Webber M.// European Journal of International Security. 2017. 2(1). P. 20. doi:10.1017/eis.2016.17 (accessed: 16.03.20).
[162] NATO summit: reassurance and effective responses // Strategic Comments. 2014. 20:6. vi-vii. DOI: 10.1080/13567888.2014.973144 (accessed: 16.03.20).
[163] Sperling J. NATO and the Ukraine crisis: Collective securitization. P. 21.
[164] Bergeron J. Back to the Future in Wales P. 5.
[165] Dempsey J. Why Defense Matters: A New Narrative for NATO / Dempsey J. // Carnegie Europe. 2014. June. 24. URL: https://carnegieeurope.eu/2014/06/24/why-defense-matters-new-narrative-for-nato-pub-55979 (accessed: 16.03.20).

truly understood what "near abroad" meant for Russia and who would be the next after Ukraine.[166] Admittedly, despite condemning Russian actions in Ukraine, each member state attached different importance to it in the context of European security. The Eastern allies – Poland and the Baltic states – had apprehensions and called for urgent deterrence measures towards Russia and increasing NATO presence in the region. Meanwhile, the South flank of NATO – Spain, Portugal, Greece, and Turkey – paid close attention to the threats in the Middle East and North Africa, and security of Eastern Europe did not seem vital for their needs. It took about half a year before Brussels drew compromise settlement up since it was not easy to convince South allies in the necessity of Wales Summit's decisions.[167]

Nevertheless, the key Baltic ally, the United States, was among the first states which repeated guarantees of "defending the territorial integrity of every single Ally" and took several actions before NATO Summit in September 2014.[168] Indeed, it became the main promoter of the NATO initiatives aimed to reassure the Baltic states after Crimea.[169] For instance, the number of US fighters participating in the framework of the BAP mission was increased - from 4 to 10 in March-April 2014. Also, in June 2014 Washington announced the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI), which was designed as a demonstration of American commitments to European security. The initiative included increasing U.S. combat presence (rotation of a company-sized contingent of 150 soldiers per Baltic country), deployment of capabilities in Eastern Europe, funding additional exercises with allies and partners, improving pre-positioned equipment, enhancing infrastructure at U.S. airfields, bases, and training ranges, and build partner capacity for five years.[170] In addition, before the Wales Summit NATO carried out conspicuous military exercises in the Baltic region involving significant numbers of personnel and equipment in the Baltic countries. For instance, Saber Strike was conducted in June 2014 in association with the USA, which was aimed to "train interoperability in combined NATO units, coordination of actions and readiness to execute defensive and offensive operations".[171] Before it, Black Arrow was held

---

[166] Veebel V. Estonian perceptions of security: not only about Russia and the refugees. P. 53.
[167] Unprotected in the East: NATO Appears Toothless in Russia Crisis // The Atlantic Council. 2014. May. 19. URL: https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/unprotected-in-the-east-nato-appears-toothless-in-russia-crisis/ (accessed: 16.03.20).
[168] Remarks by President Obama to the People of Estonia // The White House: Barak Obama: офиц. сайт. 2014. September. 03. URL: https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/03/remarks-president-obama-people-estonia (accessed: 16.03.20).
[169] Simon L. Assessing NATO's Eastern European "Flank" / Simon L. // Parameters. 2014. 44(3). Autumn. P.69.
[170] Operation Atlantic Resolve // U.S. European Command. 2015. January. URL: https://archive.defense.gov/home/features/2014/0514_atlanticresolve/Operation_Atlantic_Resolve_Fact_Sheet_2014.pdf (accessed: 16.03.20).
[171] SABER STRIKE 2014 // Lithuanian Armed Forces: офиц. Сайт. 2014. URL: https://kariuomene.kam.lt/en/international_military_exercises/military_exercises_2014/siber_strike_2014.html (accessed: 16.03.20).

in May 2014 and performed "defensive operations at tactical field".[172] In recent years, the EDI budget steadily increases, despite the European concerns regarding President Tramp's policy and statements.[173]

In the light of the Ukrainian crisis, the summit in Wales became a landmark for NATO's future. The member states agreed on Readiness Action Plan (RAP) which included adaptation and assurance measures, which would demonstrate their commitments to the Baltic allies' security, move the focus from crisis response functions to collective defense and at the same time would not cause the escalation of the crisis in relations with Russia. In the framework of the RAP, the member states increased the number of aircraft by modernizing the Amari Air Base in Estonia following the Ukraine crisis. In addition to air policing, NATO also started observation flights over Eastern Europe and the Baltic countries with Airborne Warning & Control System (AWACS), which home is NATO Air Base (NAB) in Geilenkirchen, Germany. In addition, the main installations of NATO's missile defense systems had to become operational by 2015.

However, the core of the RAP is the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) of 4,000-6,000 troops, which should be deployed to the front line within a matter of days from Italy. J. Bergeron pointed out to the NATO paradox of the collective defense – to defend its Eastern allies, the Alliance would have to conduct the expeditionary operation since there were no deployed rapid-reaction troops.[174] The VJTF was included as a part of the NRF, which previously did not prove its effectiveness since the purpose of its existence was vague.[175] Nevertheless, on the Wales Summit, the main function of these forces was directly attached to collective defense function and invoking the Article 5 essence.[176] Despite the proclaimed benefits, the quick deployment of the VJTF was under question due to several reasons. First, the decision on taking action is on the NAC and, consequently, the ability of member states to find common ground urgently, not on SACEUR.[177] Second, the readiness of these forces is relative.[178] It is important to note that the timeframes of the deployment from different scholars disagree with each other – some urge on 30-45 days, another – on 2-5 days.[179] Thus, the difference of the assumption on the rapid deployment of the forces also will reflect the scenarios of defense in the Baltic states, which we will examine in the next subchapter. In sum, the announcement of the VJTF raised more questions than

[172] Black Arrow 2014 // Lithuanian Armed Forces: офиц. Сайт. URL: 2014.https://kariuomene.kam.lt/en/international_military_exercises/military_exercises_2014/black_arrow/news_4084/lithuanian_military_to_train_conducting_defensive_operations_at_tactical_field_exercise_black_arrow_2014_with_u.s._allies.html?pbck=0 (accessed: 16.03.20).

[173] European Deterrence Initiative: the transatlantic security guarantee // European Parlament. 2019. July. URL: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/625117/EPRS_BRI(2018)625117_EN.pdf (accessed: 16.03.20).

[174] Bergeron J. Back to the Future in Wales. P. 6.

[175] Wales Summit Declaration // NATO: офиц. сайт. 2014. September. 05. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm (accessed: 16.03.20).

[176] Ringsmose J. Can NATO's New Very High Readiness Joint Task Force Deter? / J. Ringsmose, S. Rynning // Norwegian Institute for International Affairs (NUPI). 2016. P. 2. URL: www.jstor.org/stable/resrep07991 (accessed: 16.03.20).

[177] Simon L. Assessing NATO's Eastern European "Flank". P. 68.

[178] Ringsmose J. Can NATO's New Very High Readiness Joint Task Force Deter? P. 2.

[179] Zapfe M. NATO's "Spearhead Force" / Zapfe M. // CSS Analyses in Security Policy. 2015. № 174. P. 1. URL: https://www.research-collection.ethz.ch/bitstream/handle/20.500.11850/118210/1/eth-49380-01.pdf (accessed: 16.03.20).

before about the existing NATO defense initiative and its effectiveness to fulfill its task in case of aggression.

All adaptation and assurance measures, which were stated, did not include NATO's permanent deployment of the combat troops. The adaptation on the ground included the opening of six Force Integration Units, so-called "small headquarters", in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and three other Southern allies to create a visible presence of the Alliance and create command and control elements. Also, these units assisted in arranging military exercises in the Baltic region. Therefore, the Baltic states insisted on more persistent actions from NATO on their territory and the review of the nuclear posture. However, the Baltic request did not find full support among the allies due to its risky and provocative nature.[180]

Another important issue was discussed, which was directly connected to the future enhancing of security on the Eastern flank – the increasing of national military budgets of allies to 2 %. It was not the Cold War's 10 % of expenditures, but it still could beat European economies and would not become a reality in the short-term future. Even in 2019, only nine member states reached a marked share of GDP.[181] Initially, the two percent pledge dated to the 2002 Prague summit when it was established as a non-binding target, but it was not at the center of the discussion in comparison with what we can see now.[182] The statement on "maintaining the full range of capabilities necessary to deter and defend against any threat to the safety and security of our populations" emphasized the intention to implement all three core tasks of the Alliance, in spite of swiftly increased expenditures.[183]

We can assume that a 2 % pledge was Washington's attempt to remind European allies that the times have changed and the US did not have intentions to be the only one who pays for the security in Europe. Indeed, Washington was the first which reacted to the Baltic concerns and invested in the security of the region, but the United States had other global challenges and it was a time to start sharing the burden of collective security. In light of the new security situation in Europe, this issue was discussed, and states took seriously the obligations to move towards 2% of military expenditure.[184] As then-Secretary General A. Rasmussen said: "To be a member of NATO is not only a privilege, it's also a duty", thus reminding about the equal rights and obligations under the Washington Treaty of all member states.[185]

In general, the decisions concerning the security of the Baltic region on the Wales Summit were limited in their nature due to several factors. On the one hand, it demonstrated that the Baltic states are

[180] Sauer T. Just Leave It: NATO's Nuclear Weapons Policy At the Warsaw Summit / Sauer T. // Arms Control Today. 2016. June. URL: https://clck.ru/Muf4z (accessed: 16.03.20).
[181] Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2013-2019) // NATO: офиц. сайт. 2019. November. URL: https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2019_06/20190625_PR2019-069-EN.pdf (accessed: 16.03.20).
[182] Dowdy J. More tooth, less tail: Getting beyond NATO's 2 percent rule / Dowdy J // McKinsey's & Company. 2017. November. URL: https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-sector/our-insights/more-tooth-less-tail-getting-beyond-natos-2-percent-rule (accessed: 16.03.20).
[183] Wales Summit Declaration.
[184] Ibid.
[185] Rasmussen: NATO Members Need to Increase Their Defense Budgets // Atlantic Council: неофиц. сайт. 2014. May. 14. URL: https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/rasmussen-nato-members-need-to-increase-their-defense-budgets/ (accessed: 16.03.20).

the part of the Alliance, and Article 5 is still the cornerstone of the Euro-Atlantic community. Brussels provisioned visible assurances, which were scanty before, and started the next round of transformation, nevertheless keeping it in the frames of Founding Act of 1997 with Russia. On the other hand, it revealed unsettled problems inside the NAC. It seemed that after the end of an active phase of Afghanistan campaign NATO gained a new reason to exist in the face of Russia and challenges posed by the Ukrainian crisis. In contrast, it revealed the absence of a united vision of threats among member states, since part of the members was not pleased with the coming increase in military expenditure because of the illusory threat from another part of Europe right after the exhausting war in Afghanistan. For the large part of the member states, Russian behavior was more predictable, unlike terrorist groups in the Middle East and the flow of refugees across the Mediterranean Sea.[186] To put it another way, NATO aimed to scatter its forces to the vast number of tasks and not all member states were satisfied with it.

For mentioned above reasons, the result of the summit was criticized for its irrelevance and limited impact upon defending the Baltic states and deterrence of Russia.[187] Nevertheless, if we look at this initiative as a first step towards enhancing security in the region, we will see it as the only possible option in prevailing circumstances. The Alliance definitely did not have enough resources, political will, and concrete strategic vision on tackling the problem of defensibility and deterrence on the Eastern flank. Therefore, the summit had to become a wake-up call for the accumulation of the member states' capabilities. "The business as usual" did not only relate to Russia, but also to the member states' perception of their role within NATO and implementation of its core tasks.

After the Summit, NATO strengthened close cooperation with other states of the Baltic region – Sweden and Finland. At the Wales Summit, the Partnership Interoperability Initiative was established. This initiative required Helsinki and Stockholm to advance interoperability with the Alliance's forces and standards to work together in the field of crisis management, with participation of the NRF. The interest in enhancing cooperation had several reasons, based on the deterrence policy towards Russia as well as on strategy in possible military conflict. First, NATO already had authority over strategic Øresund and Skagerrak straits to the Atlantic Ocean.[188] If NATO created a close partnership with these neutral states (in this situation the NATO membership would be too provocative), the Alliance would surround Russia in the Baltic basin. Second, the geographical peculiarities of the Baltic region and debates inside the Alliance made it vulnerable and challenging to provide rapid response and, consequently, it decreased the efficiency of deterrence. In case of attack, the neighboring states of the B3 would take part in the conflict and provide reinforcement, if the decision-making process would drag out in the NAC. In other words, the close political and military ties with Sweden and Finland were a

[186] Rühle M. NATO and the Ukraine Crisis / Rühle M // American Foreign Policy Interests. 2015. 37:2. P. 80. DOI: 10.1080/10803920.2015.1038925 (accessed: 16.03.20).
[187] Interview with Jakub Grygiel and Wess Mitchell. Post Crimea Europe: NATO In the Age of Limited Wars // The Small Wars. 2015. June. 02. URL: https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/post-crimea-europe-nato-in-the-age-of-limited-wars (accessed: 16.03.20).
[188] Манойло А. В Военно-политическая деятельность НАТО в странах Балтии на современном этапе. С. 161..

win-win situation for NATO in the deterrence policy and the assurance of the Baltic allies. It is highly possible that the USA considered these neutral states as possible participants of "coalition of willing" in case of a failure within the NAC to evoke Article 5. As Swedish scholar, T. Ries said, "If NATO as a whole can't agree, then at least one can establish a small coalition of the willing that would engage".[189]

The next summit in Warsaw carried on with measures to continue enhancing security and deterrence posture in the Baltic states. As B. Obama optimistically summed up the achievements of the Summit, it was "the most significant reinforcement of collective defense any time since the Cold War".[190] First of all, it established Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) initiative which provided one rotational multinational battlegroup for each Baltic state as a "demonstration of solidarity, determination, and an ability to act in defense of NATO territory".[191] Each deployed battalion was led by the United Kingdom (Estonia), Canada (Latvia), and Germany (Lithuania) and also included troops from other members states' armed forces. The command and control center of the eFP was situated in multinational headquarters in Poland. In case of invoking Article 5, each battlegroup would defend the territory of NATO's host members. For now, the main task for the battlegroups was to train with national defense forces to strengthen interoperability. As it was conceived, in case of aggression these forces would respond in accordance with the right to self-defense, in coordination with the national forces of the host nation. The multinational battlegroups were finally deployed in mid-2017.

Second, the Alliance acknowledged the essential role of Total Defense and Unconventional Warfare's (TD/UW) capabilities as the instrument of deterrence in the Baltic states.[192] Consequently, it recognized cyberspace as an operational domain in its own right.[193] Moreover, the emphasis of the importance of Article 3 included civilian preparedness, supporting continuity of the government, the provision of essential services in member states, and the civil support to the military. The Baltic states became NATO's outpost against hybrid warfare where anything can be used in confrontation, including undermining energy security and disinformation. The admiration in the words of then-SACEUR P. Breedlove about Russian "the most amazing information warfare blitzkrieg we have ever seen in the history of information warfare" changed to the puzzlement of what should NATO do to confront such capabilities.[194] The enhancing of defense capabilities against a new threat assumed as strengthening existing conventional defense efforts of the Baltic states and the Alliance and "less likely to be

[189] Kirk L. Sweden and Finland upgrade Nato relations / L.Kirk // EU Observer. 2016. May. 20. URL: https://euobserver.com/nordic/133493 (accessed: 16.03.20).
[190] Press Conference by President Obama after NATO Summit // The White House: Barak Obama: офиц. сайт. 2016. July. 09. URL: https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/07/09/press-conference-president-obama-after-nato-summit (accessed: 16.03.20).
[191] The Secretary General's Annual Report 2016 // NATO: офиц. сайт. 2017. URL: https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_03/20170313_SG_AnnualReport_2016_en.pdf#page=7 (accessed: 16.03.20).
[192] Warsaw Summit Communiqué // NATO: офиц. сайт. 2016. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm (accessed: 16.03.20).
[193] Ibid.
[194] Vandiver J. SACEUR: Allies must prepare for Russia 'hybrid war'/ Vandiver J. // Stars and Stripes. 2014. September. 04. URL: https://www.stripes.com/news/saceur-allies-must-prepare-for-russia-hybrid-war-1.301464 (accessed: 16.03.20).

characterized as provocative or escalatory than increases in national or NATO conventional military forces".[195]

Third, the "360-degree approach" which was under discussion among militaries since 2015, finally had its realization.[196] The core of this approach was to create full-range capabilities on geographical and functional dimensions. The adoption of the initiatives laid in discontent with the lack of attention towards the interests of all member states. On the one hand, the Alliance counteracted threats on both Eastern and Southern borders, which challenged NATO's ability to respond to the tasks wherever they could come from. On the other hand, they were a completely different in their nature and required completely different set of capabilities and resources to perform a variety of tasks. The approach was considered as primarily a political expression rather than a military concept since it did not correspond with states of affairs.[197] The possibility to secure two or more flanks implied the probability to conduct military actions there, which would be burdensome for allies.

All in all, the Warsaw summit revealed the desire to satisfy the needs of all allies. The focus on readiness for multifaceted threats in different regions and the division of threat assessments from Russia inside the alliance caused a lack in effectiveness of deterrence on the eastern flank of NATO.[198] Moreover, it seemed that NATO neglected the nuclear element at its core.[199] The re-evaluation of NATO nuclear posture was needed since it did not match Russian doctrine and capabilities to maintain a posture.[200] Moreover, if the question of NATO's forces readiness has at least been reflected in official documents, the reinforcement in case of the crisis still was not covered.

By the Brussels summit, the deadlock inside the Alliance aggravated and challenged the political ability of member states to find common ground. Deterrence, collective defense, and NATO-Russia relations still were among the main priorities of the agenda within NATO, but four years since the Ukrainian crisis, the clear answer to the challenges still has not been found. To ensure the full range of capabilities and reinforce its presence on the Eastern border in case of a crisis, leaders of member states agreed on the NATO Readiness Initiative, the so-called "Four Thirties".[201] To have larger forces equipped and available to react with greater speed to an emerging crisis, the Alliance committed, by

---

[195] Flanagan S. Deterring Russian Aggression in the Baltic States Through Resilience and Resistance / Flanagan S., J. Osburg, A. Binnendijk, M. Kepe, A. Radin // RAND Corporation. 2019. P. 2. URL: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2779.html (accessed: 27.03.20).

[196] Statement by NATO Defence Ministers // NATO: офиц. сайт. 2015. June. 25. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_121133.htm (accessed: 16.03.20).

[197] Zandee D. The Future of NATO / Zandee D // Strategic Monitor 2018-2019. 2017. URL: https://www.clingendael.org/pub/2018/strategic-monitor-2018-2019/the-future-of-nato/ (accessed: 16.03.20).

[198] Dempsey J. NATO's Eastern Flank and Its Future Relationship With Russia / J. Dempsey // Carnegie Europe. 2017. October. 23. URL: https://carnegieeurope.eu/2017/10/23/nato-s-eastern-flank-and-its-future-relationship-with-russia-pub-73499 (accessed: 16.03.20).

[199] Anderson, M. P. NATO Nuclear Deterrence: The Warsaw Summit and Beyond / Anderson, M. P // Connections: The Quarterly Journal. 2016. 15(4). DOI: https://doi.org/10.11610/Connections.15.4.01(accessed: 16.03.20).

[200] Arnold J.M. NATO's Readiness Action Plan Strategic Benefits and Outstanding Challenges / Arnold J.M. // Strategic Studies Quarterly. 2016. Spring. URL: https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-10_Issue-1/Arnold.pdf (accessed: 16.03.20).

[201] Brussels Summit Declaration // NATO: офиц. сайт. 2018. July. 11. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156624.htm (accessed: 16.03.20).

2020, to muster 30 mechanized battalions, 30 air squadrons, and 30 combat vessels, ready to use within 30 days or less. At the previous summits, the NAC established the foundation for the limited military presence in the Baltic states, but at the Brussels summit, member states took measures to reinforce deployed troops as quickly as possible.

At that time the expert community assumed that deterrence by conventional capabilities failed and it "does not have negative consequences only thanks to the lack of Russian interest in challenging the status quo in the Baltics in the first place".[202] Indeed, the absence of aggression did not indicate the success of deterrence. The role of the nuclear weapons was gradually decreased in the XXI century and it reflected on the inefficiency of creating credible capabilities in the Baltic states without nuclear weapons.[203] To send a clear message and stress the retaining nature of nuclear arsenal, NATO paid special attention to its status of the nuclear alliance[204]. Unlike previous final documents of summits, the Brussels Declaration emphasized the importance of the US's deployed capabilities as a guarantee of the security for the Alliance.[205] Also, NATO cautiously expressed its concerns on Russian violation of the INF Treaty by the 9M728 (NATO classification - SSC-8) cruise missile, which by December turned into "significant risks to Euro-Atlantic security" and reason of undermining strategic stability. From the Brussels' point of view, the existence and deployment of 9M728 on Iskander-M in Kaliningrad endangered the NATO's Eastern border.

To the 70th Anniversary of the Washington Treaty NATO came estranged. The ambiguous statement of French President E. Macron on threats (terrorism, not Russia) and "brain dead" of NATO was an answer to the Trump's "obsolete Alliance" trope and threats to withdraw from it from the previous summit. [206] The London Summit seemed to be crucial for the future of the Euro-Atlantic community since it was lacerated by an obvious internal political tension and divergent views on a range of issues (U.S.'s relations with NATO and Europe, Turkey's security concerns, strained relations with Russia). Before the Summit, the news about Istanbul's refusal to adopt updated defense plans for Eastern allies was perceived as a clear signal of disaccord within the NAC.[207] Moreover, the European states stressed the usefulness of the two-track approach towards Russia – maintain deterrence and rebuild partnership, – which did not correspond with views of the Baltic states and Poland.[208] Paris saw the

[202] Halas M. Proving a negative: why deterrence does not work in the Baltics / M.Halas // European Security. 2019. 28:4. P. 433. DOI: 10.1080/09662839.2019.1637855 (accessed: 16.03.20).

[203] Montgomery M. NATO Presses Stand on Nuclear Weapons / Montgomery M. // Arms Control Association. 2018. September. URL: https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2018-09/news/nato-presses-stand-nuclear-weapons (accessed: 16.03.20).

[204] Grand C. Nuclear deterrence and the Alliance in the 21st century / Grand C. // NATO Review. 2016. July. 04. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2016/07/04/nuclear-deterrence-and-the-alliance-in-the-21st-century/index.html (accessed: 16.03.20).

[205] Brussels Summit Declaration.

[206] Macron: NATO's Enemy Is Terrorism, Not Russia Or China // Radio Free Europe: неофиц. сайт. 2019. November . 28. URL: https://www.rferl.org/a/macron-nato-terrorism-russia-china/30297274.html (accessed: 16.03.20).

[207] Wintour P. Turkey denies blackmailing Nato over Baltics defence plan / P.Wintour // The Guardian. 2019. December. 02. URL: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/dec/02/turkey-denies-blackmailing-nato-over-baltics-defence-plan (accessed: 16.03.20).

[208] Belkin P. NATO: Key Issues Following the 2019 Leaders' Meeting / Belkin P. // Congressional Research Service. 2020. April. 01. URL: https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R46066.pdf (accessed: 16.03.20).

current situation on the Eastern border as a deadlock without the way-out – time goes on, but nothing has changed since 2014. Therefore, European states took the initiative to broaden the approach in regard to the eastern border. In other words, the old paradigm of hard pressure and demonstrative enhancing security of the Baltic states did not prove its efficiency. Besides, complete ceasing of the cooperation and dialogue outside the NATO-Russia Council was not productive in terms of overcoming the lack of trust, and only created unnecessary tension in the Baltic Sea.

In 2014, Russia questioned the existing order in Europe by its actions, which the Alliance safeguarded since the end of the Cold War. The menace of NATO did not consist of the threat of recurrence of Crimea events in the Baltic region but in the idea that it could happen again. The lack of transparency and mutual distrust between NATO and Russia aggravated the situation. The fundamental shift in the Alliance's perception of the threat from Moscow was in the consideration that not all threats are laid far from continental Europe and its allies with limited capabilities would be the first in jeopardy. Due to their geographical and historical proximity to Russia, the Baltic states have become the outpost of NATO's deterrence, which caused the increase of security assurance. Moreover, the acknowledging of new operational domains in cyberspace and outer space expands the perception of possible conflict in the Baltic states. Nevertheless, eFP plays the role of visible assurance, not substantial support in case of the outbreak of conflict in the Baltic states. However, its multinational nature declares the Euro-Atlantic guarantee of defense. It implies that if the conflict breaks out, the member states will not leave behind the Baltic states because their troops are in an area where hostilities are taking place.

3.2. Evaluation of NATO's military potential in the Baltic states and its readiness to defense

This part of the research is aimed to exam the readiness of NATO's military capabilities to defend three Baltic states.

The Baltic region was one of the most peaceful regions in the world before the Ukrainian crisis, but now it seems that it was always a time-bomb, which directly is connected to NATO-Russian relations. As we saw in the previous chapter, the three Baltic states have been drawing attention to their security concerns since the very beginning of their membership. The challenge from the East in 2014 posed the question of NATO's ability to implement the core element of all military alliances – collective defense in case of attack against one of the members, particularly Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Right after the Ukrainian crisis, NATO strengthened the air and sea surveillance in the Baltic states by increasing the

number of fighters as part of the BAP mission (it was reduced in 2015 from 12 to 8 fighter aircrafts) and reactivation of the Standing NATO Mine Counter-Measures Group 1.[209]

The overall capabilities and readiness, which NATO have at its disposal in the territory of Baltic states, are such. In total, the national military forces amount around 22,000 with conscripts and reserves (from Estonia and Lithuania) and 448 heavy artillery pieces.[210] Another important element of national defense is the existence of plans of the TD/UW. Estonia, more than other Baltic states, advanced its resilience, the UW, and resistance plans and capabilities. Latvia still needs to update a professional army and strengthen the size and capabilities of its national guard force, and improve the readiness of its society for the attack. Lithuania, in its turn, focuses on the training the national guard and educating its citizens to increase resilience. [211] As for infrastructure, each of the three Baltic states hosts strategic hubs of NATO. Estonian Amari airbase is the main location of the BAP mission; BALTNET Center is situated in Lithuania, which is one of the commands within the NATINADS. [212] Moreover, Vilnius provides territory for the European Activity Set of the USA to store arms and vehicles. As for Latvia, there are four training grounds for military exercises conducted by both NATO and the USA (Latvia and Estonia have four together). Riga has lobbied construction of a navy base in Liepaja, but have not succeeded so far.[213] Apart from EFP brigades in the Baltic states and Poland, the units of US troops had been stationed in each of the Baltic states on a permanent basis since 2014 and were withdrawn in the fall of 2017. However, regularly the USA temporarily deploys its troops in the Baltic states for exercises. For instance, it has announced that 500 US Army soldiers, 30 Abrams tanks, 25 Bradley armored vehicles, and 70 other vehicles will be stationed in Lithuania in spring 2020 to ensure deterrence. It has been planned to conduct exercises with these forces near Suwalki Gap and withdraw them after. [214]

If we take into account these capabilities of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, it is clear that in case of the attack it would not hold out long. Russian joint military exercises with Belorussian "Zapad 2017" demonstrated its ability to mobilize a significant number of forces, armored vehicles, and air fighters. [215] The scenario of maneuver itself (large scale state-on-state conflict), as well as the information about

[209] What Is the Significance of Halving the NATO Baltic Air Policing Mission? // International Center for Defense and Security. 2015. August. 26. URL: https://icds.ee/what-is-the-significance-of-halving-the-nato-baltic-air-policing-mission/ (accessed: 27.03.20).
[210] Kepe M. Total Defense: How The Baltic States Are Integrating Citizenry Into Their National Security Strategies. URL: https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/total-defense-how-the-baltic-states-are-integrating-citizenry-into-their-national-security- (accessed: 27.03.20).
[211] Flanagan S. Deterring Russian Aggression in the Baltic States Through Resilience and Resistance. P. 2.
[212] Зверев С. Инфографика: Инфраструктура НАТО в Прибалтике: основные объекты / Зверев С. // Евразия Эксперт. 2018. Декабря. 14. URL: https://eurasia.expert/infografika-infrastruktura-nato-v-pribaltike-osnovnye-obekty/ (accessed: 27.03.20).
[213] Latvia denies that it is planning to build NATO military base in coastal city of Liepaja // UAWire. 2016. December. 11. URL: https://uawire.org/news/latvia-denies-that-it-is-planning-to-build-nato-military-base-in-coastal-city-of-liepaja (accessed: 23.04.2020).
[214] U.S. to deploy 500 troops to Lithuania in fresh signal to Russia // Reuters. 2019. September. 25. URL: https://www.reuters.com/article/usa-russia-lithuania/us-to-deploy-500-troops-to-lithuania-in-fresh-signal-to-russia-idUSL5N26G2VC (accessed: 23.04.2020).
[215] Wilk A. The Zapad-2017 exercises: the information war (for now) / Wilk A // OSW. 2017. September. 04. URL: https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2017-09-04/zapad-2017-exercises-information-war-now (accessed: 23.04.2020).

underestimation of an official number of participating troops (60,000-70,000 instead announced 13,000), raised the question on the effectiveness of rapid reaction forces of NATO.[216]

One of the attempts to fill this gap of short-notice forces was the Wales Summit's decision to reinvigorate the NRF by the creation of the Spearhead, also known as the VJTF, within the RAP. However, the embodiment of the rapidly deployable forces was far from the initial idea of it. No one can argue that it takes time to gather, transport, and deploy forces, but the main question is how long would it take. Since we have limited information about the Spearhead and the NRF in general, we can only base our analysis on NATO's data and scholars' assumptions. The Alliance calculates that it would take from two to seven days to deploy the VJTF.[217] In accordance with U. Kühn, there are some apprehensions that NATO's schedule of deployment is underestimated and in reality, the timeframes from notice to stationing would take 30-45 days and prospects of the third wave of reinforcement is more unclear.[218] Besides, the geographical peculiarities of the Baltic states (their territory is extended to the East) pose the question not only about the speed of reinforcement but also the means of transportation of personnel and military equipment. NATO has only two ways to do it – by air or by sea since the net of railways is not properly developed among the allies and the possession of the Suwalki Gap would be under the question in case of attack.[219]

To enhance Baltic capabilities, the Warsaw Summit established four eFP battalions, deployed on the Eastern flank as a band-aid for the reinforcement question. Each unit contains around 1,000 servicemen, which have quite limited capabilities for early combat. The rotation basis of troops concerns the Baltic states and they constantly repeated the necessity of the permanent presence of NATO on their territory as it happened in Poland. However, this approach has an advantage. After seven years of allies' troops' rotation, theoretically, NATO has prepared 280,000 forces (without the USA and Canada) to conduct military actions in the Baltic states.[220] Nevertheless, the problem of transportation of these troops, as well as the Spearhead Force during the conflict in the region, is still in the agenda.

All in all, the physical presence of NATO military forces and equipment is limited at the moment which has its advantages and disadvantages for the atmosphere in the region. On the one hand, if NATO resolves to deploy additional forces to the Baltics, it might trigger the Russian reaction and a wrong perception of it as a hostile action. On the other hand, the unclear prospects of the Spearhead Force's efficiency and capabilities of currently deployed troops in the Baltic states could demonstrate the

[216] Johnson D. ZAPAD 2017 and Euro-Atlantic security / Johnson D. // NATO Review. 2017. December. 14. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2017/12/14/zapad-2017-and-euro-atlantic-security/index.html (accessed: 23.04.2020).

[217] NATO Response Force (NRF) Fact Sheet // SHAPE: офиц. сайт. 2020. URL: https://jfcbs.nato.int/page5725819/nato-response-force-nrf-fact-sheet.aspx (accessed: 23.04.2020).

[218] Kühl U. Preventing Escalation in the Baltics.. / Kühn U. // Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. 2018. P. 28. URL: https://carnegieendowment.org/files/Kuhn_Baltics_INT_final_WEB.pdf (accessed: 27.03.20).

[219] Idid. P. 29.

[220] Трунов Ф.О. Наращивание присутствия НАТО в Восточной Европе: особенности и последствия. С. 181.

unwillingness of the Alliance to fulfill the request of the member states and put them in the vulnerable position disregarding their concerns in comparison with Russia.

The scholars emphasize the crucial role of Russian defense systems as a factor preventing the deployment of additional troops of the Alliance. Moscow can use the mixture of air-defense systems, radars, and guided missiles to reduce the ability of allied forces during the upgoing conflict.[221] Initially, the concept of Russian anti-access/anti-denial (A2/AD) bubbles in the Baltic region was perceived as an insurmountable. If we look at the definition of this strategy, we will see that "the objective of a strategy is to prevent the attacker from bringing its forces into the contested region (A2) or to prevent the attacker from freely operating within the region and maximizing its combat power (AD)".[222] It seems that the existence of these bubbles makes the region out of reach for the adversaries' offensive and counteroffensive strikes. Air defense covers Russian territory and territorial waters, but also all three Baltic states, to say nothing of anti-shipping and surface-to-surface missiles.[223] The range and capabilities of S-300, S-400, and dual-use Iskander missiles together with different layers of radar systems and a more integrated C2 system in comparison with NATO create the opportunity for Moscow to block the Alliance's attempts to breach the defense. In this case, NATO's reliance on naval and air components diminishes its superiority and ability to confront A2/AD installations in the region.

The "bubbles" in the region could be broken out by launching a high-intensity cyber-warfare and bombing campaign to destroy the air-defense and land-based cruise-missile systems, which would threaten allied forces. However, it could not be enough to breach the Russian defense systems. This means that allied air forces would incur significant losses.[224] In other words, the A2/AD not only made the complicated implementation of NATO's defense/offense strategy, but also reduced the effectiveness of deterrence in the region. To solve this problem, NATO is developing capabilities not only in traditional dimensions (air, ground, sea) but also in cyberspace.

The Alliance took action to enhance its ability to confront the challenge of the A2/AD system by installing defensive systems.[225] It is important to note that the main defensive installations are planned to be stationed in Poland and not in the Baltic states. It can be caused by the USA's vision of it as a regional power and the most capable state on the Eastern flank. However, in case of an outbreak of hostilities in the Baltic states and evoking Article 5, Warsaw will assist NATO to break through the A2/AD system. Poland bought, in addition to the construction element of NATO missile defense, Patriot

[221] Pothier F. An Area-Access Strategy for NATO / Pothier F. // Survival. 59:3. P. 76. DOI: 10.1080/00396338.2017.1325600 (accessed: 27.03.20).

[222] Schmidt A. Countering Anti-Access / Area Denial Future Capability Requirements in NATO / Schmidt A. // Journal of Military Science and Security Studies. 2018. № 1. P. 249. URL: https://gmr.mapn.ro/app/webroot/fileslib/upload/files/RMT_1-2%202018.pdf#page=248 (accessed: 27.03.20).

[223] Williams I. The Russia – NATO A2AD Environment / I. Williams // Missile Threat. 2017. January. 03. URL: https://missilethreat.csis.org/russia-nato-a2ad-environment/ (accessed: 27.03.20).

[224] Pothier F. An Area-Access Strategy for NATO / F. Pothier // Survival. 2017. 59:3. P. 76. DOI: 10.1080/00396338.2017.1325600 (accessed: 08.03.20).

[225] Baroudos C. Why NATO Should Fear Russia's A2/AD Capabilities (And How to Respond) / C. Baroudos // National Interest. 2016. September. 21. URL: https://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/why-nato-should-fear-russias-a2-ad-capabilities-how-respond-17776 (accessed: 27.03.20).

surface-to-air missile system.[226] In addition, it ordered Army Tactical Missile System Block IA Unitary which allows to strike in the depth on the battlefield. Besides, Warsaw will receive the M-142 HIMARS system, which can launch six cruise missiles with a range of 70 km, or a single missile with up to 300 km range.[227]

Even though some scholars assume that the Russian A2/AD system does not threaten NATO and the US forces due to the lack of resilience, it creates unpredictability, which undermines the strategic stability. From this point of view, the speculations on Russian capabilities in the Baltic region play into Moscow's hands since it deters NATO from actions.[228] At the same time, even if Kaliningrad seems to be Russian bastion in the region and the main hazard to NATO, the seizure of it will neutralize the threat for the Alliance and give an advantage over Russia.[229]

In light of Baltic states' apprehensions and absence of the way-out in this situation, the only mean of the Alliance's reassurance was the intensification of both NATO and Allied National military exercises in the region. Most of them were aimed to rise interoperability between allies as well as with partners and transferring the equipment and personnel on short notice. The most notable exercises are "Steadfast Javelin" (Spring Storm), "Saber Strike", "Steadfast Cobalt", "BALTOP", "Cyber Coalition" and "Ramstein Alley". Part of them was led by U.S. Army Europe. The core of the participated forces, except for exercises in cyberspace, was infantry and tank units with significant support for heavy machinery. The main goals of these exercises were elaborating on total defense activities and counteroffensive strikes.[230] As a matter of fact, NATO aims to strengthen Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian military capabilities for holding out in case of an attack until the reinforcement arrives, and to train the rapid deployment of additional troops from allies.

The glaring example of such training was Steadfast Javelin in May 2014 (Estonia) and September 2014 (three Baltic states). In May, the joint forces worked on the scenario repelling of an attack on Estonia, where one of the main roles was played by the Estonian reservists and conscripts (the participation in exercise was their final exam) with support from the USA, France, Denmark, and the UK. [231] Due to the limited number of troops (2,000 troops), it served more as an assurance to the Baltic capitals, than a measure of deterrence. In September, troops of the Alliance and Baltic states conducted training to confront terrorist groups of the hypothetical enemy and test the interoperability of forces. In 2015 already, this exercise became the biggest military training in the Baltic region (13,000 troops from

[226] Poland signs $4.75bn deal to buy US Patriot missiles // BBC. 2018. March. 28. URL: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-43574308 (accessed: 27.03.20).

[227] Poland to spend $414 million on Lockheed's HIMARS mobile rocket system // The Defense Post. 2019. Frbruary. 10. URL: https://www.thedefensepost.com/2019/02/10/poland-himars-lockheed-414-million/ (accessed: 27.03.20).

[228] Giles K. Russia's A2/AD Capabilities: Real and Imagined / Giles K., Boulegue M. // Parameters. 2019. Spring-Summer. P. 23.

[229] Frühling S. NATO, A2/AD and the Kaliningrad Challenge / S. Frühling, G. Lasconjarias // Survival. 58:2. P. 103-105. DOI: 10.1080/00396338.2016.1161906 (accessed: 27.03.20).

[230] Манойло А.В. Военно-политическая деятельность НАТО в странах Балтии на современном этапе. С. 167-168.

[231] Gotkowska J. NATO's presence in the Baltic states – reassurance for its allies or deterrence for Russia? / J. Gotkowska, P. Szymański // OSW Commentary. 2015. April. 25. P. 8. URL: http://aei.pitt.edu/64164/1/commentary_169_0.pdf (accessed: 27.03.20).

Estonia and Allied countries).[232] However, after 2016 the Alliance renamed the exercises to the Spring Storm, due to the change of the personnel of the troops – before it was joint force, now it is only special operation forces.[233] Russian scholars connected the change of the name with increasing of the Baltic states' confidence in their own military capabilities. In other words, during Steadfast Javelin NATO trained the Baltic force to meet the first strike of Russian forces; during Spring Storm the allies conducted the training of reinforcement and reduced the number of personnel (from 13,000 to 6,000). [234] Spring Storm 2018 was not conducted, but in the light of the USA's accusation to Russia on violations of the INF Treaty and escalation of Moscow's rhetoric on a potential missile threat coming from Estonia in 2019, we can see the raise of troop's number to 9,000 which participated in maneuvers.[235]

Meanwhile, the Saber Strike was held in 2014-2018 and was aimed to foster better preparedness of Latvian forces, which had lower combat capabilities and readiness in comparison with Estonia and Lithuania (both of them were involved in the exercises). By 2018, Riga had raised its military forces to 6,000 professional personnel but still fell behind its neighbors. [236] The scale of the exercise differed from year to year – it steadily increased in 2014-2016 (from 4,700 to 10,000 personnel), in 2017 swiftly dropped to 2,000 and dramatically rocketed to 18,000 in 2018.[237] Saber Strike, as well as Spring Storm, concentrated on rapid transfer of reinforcement and equipment from Poland.

As for Lithuania, it did not host large-scale exercises before Steadfast Cobalt in 2017 and 2018 and Iron Wolf (2017- to present). The scale of Steadfast Cobalt was limited, but evaluation and testing of communication systems in support of the enhanced NRF did not require a significant number of personnel. In addition, the involvement of 25 states, which sent their statesmen for this exercise highlights the importance of Steadfast Cobalt for the Alliance's interoperability.[238] Iron Wolf, in turn, was concentrated on "planning and arranging defensive and offensive operations in populated areas" for the multinational EFP tactical groups, and improving interoperability among allies.[239] Vilnius will continue its shift towards enhancing the involvement of Latvia into military exercises and conducting more wargames.[240]

[232] Siil / Steadfast Javelin kicks off in Estonia // NATO: офиц. сайт. 2014. May. 10. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/ru/natohq/news_119257.htm?selectedLocale=en (accessed: 27.03.20).
[233] Exercises // NATO: офиц. сайт. 2019. July. 01. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/ru/natohq/topics_49285.htm?selectedLocale=en (accessed: 27.03.20).
[234] Манойло А.В. Военно-политическая деятельность НАТО в странах Балтии на современном этапе. С. 167.
[235] Spring Storm over Russian Border: NATO Demonstrates its Military Power // Warsaw Institute. 2019. May. 29. URL: https://warsawinstitute.org/spring-storm-russian-border-nato-demonstrates-military-power/ (accessed: 27.03.20).
[236] Veebel V. Are the Baltic States Convincing Russia by Developing their Defence Capability? / Veebel V. // International Center for Defense and Security. 2019. November. 22. URL: https://icds.ee/are-the-baltic-states-convincing-russia-by-developing-their-defence-capability/ (accessed: 27.03.20).
[237] Fahey S. Saber Strike: What would we do without you? / Fahey S .// International Center for Defense and Security. 2019. September. 19. URL: https://icds.ee/saber-strike-what-would-we-do-without-you/ (accessed: 27.03.20).
[238] Exercise Steadfast Cobalt Set To Get Underway In Lithuania // SHAPE: : офиц. сайт. 2017. URL: https://shape.nato.int/news-archive/2017/exercise-steadfast-cobalt-set-to-get-underway-in-lithuania (accessed: 27.03.20).
[239] Multinational exercise Iron Wolf 2017 to kick off in Lithuania // Delfi.en. 2017. June. 12. URL: https://en.delfi.lt/politics/multinational-exercise-iron-wolf-2017-to-kick-off-in-lithuania.d?id=74909786 (accessed: 27.03.20).
[240] Lithuania to host more NATO exercises, chief of defence says// The Lithuanian Tribune. 2014. November. 19. URL: https://lithuaniatribune.com/lithuania-to-host-more-nato-exercises-chief-of-defence-says/ (accessed: 27.03.20).

Other maneuvers in the Baltic region, such as BALTOPS, Ramstein Alley, and Cyber Coalition focused on one of the operational domains (naval, air, cyberspace). It is important to note that the dates and places of some NATO and Allied National exercises overlay with each over and muster a significant number of troops on alert. For instance, there were around 23,000 servicemen and 40 ships with support from over 60 aircraft in the Baltic Sea region due to the BALTOPS and Saber Strike exercises in June 2018. In other words, it is meant to assemble a considerable number of troops and equipment, but at the same time not to violate the OSCE's Vienna Document.

All exercises were aimed to raise interoperability on the ground and training possible scenarios of the attack and NATO's retaliation. All presented reports considered only counteroffensive actions from NATO invoking Article 5.

As a result of conducted by RAND wargames in 2014-2015, organized by D. Shlapak and M. Johnson, the analysts came to the conclusion that NATO cannot defend the territory of the Baltic states since Russia would reach Tallinn and Riga in 36-60 hours.[241] Therefore, Russia would reach its strategic objective – the discredited and dismantling of NATO. The deployed 17 battalions (including the flow of some reinforcements in advance) would be enough to defend the territory of Latvia and Estonia, which leads to the three options for the Alliance. First, the NAC would decide to restore the sovereignty of the two Baltic states by counteroffensive operation which could cause escalation pending threat to use the nuclear weapons. Second, in this scenario, NATO would return to the massive retaliation doctrine and threaten by nuclear response to force Moscow to give up occupied territory. The authors of the report highlighted that if deterrence fails, it would undermine its credibility and raise the risk of further escalation. In this case, it is "highly unlikely that the United States would be willing to exchange New York for Riga". Third, this scenario examined the possibility of a new Cold War with dividing line on the Latvian-Lithuanian border. It could cause the collapse of NATO, since its core obligation has not been implemented. As recommendation, the authors insisted on the deployment of armored vehicles in the Baltic states, increasing air component and command and control (C2) structure.

This research has two drawbacks. First of all, it did not cover possible Lithuanian seizure and specific geographical peculiarities of it, thus the strategic role of the Suwalki gap and Kaliningrad region have not been taken into account in the wargames. Second, it considered the Russian purpose solely to the "divide and conquer" of NATO.

Unlike previous research, the U.S. Army Asymmetric Warfare Group report considered that the beginning of a conventional attack of Russia against the Baltic states would start from Gotland Island (Swedish territory) under cover of large-scale exercises.[242] This territory has strategic value in case of a military conflict. Whichever army holds Gotland can control large parts of the sea, as well as access to

---

[241] Shlapak D. Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO's Eastern Flank: Wargaming the Defense of the Baltics. P. 6.
[242] Ambiguous Threats and External Influences in the Baltic States // NATO STRATCOM: офиц. сайт. 2015. November. URL: https://www.stratcomcoe.org/ambiguous-threats-and-external-influences-baltic-states (accessed: 27.03.20).

the Baltic States. Today, the island is only defended by limited Swedish forces and is seen as an easy target for Russian well-equipped forces.

The U.S. Army Asymmetric Warfare Group concluded that there are five scenarios exceling by the scope of severity. This report takes into account all scenarios which can take place in the near future. However, the authors stressed that there is no evidence that one of them will occur. The first scenario presupposes open military conflict with a large involvement of forces. In this research analytics came to the same conclusion as RAND experts – Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania will surrender in two days. Despite the internal instability of Russia's and possible problems with transport, it surpasses NATO forces in the C2 system and the rapidity of making decisions in the NAC. If NATO reaches the decision to invoke Article 5, it will trigger an uncompromising response from Moscow by a tactical nuclear strike along the lines of the Zapad-2009 scenario. The retaliation from the Alliance will not happen, thanks to Russian air defense, which prevents dropping the B-61 gravity bomb. Brussels will have limited number of options – negotiation for peace, continuing the conventional local conflict, or using strategic nuclear weapons. The second scenario describes the possibility of a high-profile incident, which involves the Russian minority in the Baltic states, more likely in Narva (Estonia) or Largale (Latvia), Vilnius (Lithuania). By using it as a reason for humanitarian intervention, Moscow will proclaim its actions as a defense of compatriots. The recognition of it as a ground for invoking Article 5 by the NAC is questionable. The third scenario is similar to the previous one but does not include a large-scale military invasion of the territory of three Baltic states. Moscow will limit its action to artillery or airstrikes, "even a raid, and claim the operation was necessary either to protect compatriots or to defend against aggression". The fourth scenario involves cyber attacks resembling to the Bronze Soldier incident in 2007, where a direct link to Russia was not found. The last scenario describes the existing status quo. NATO will continue strengthening visible reassurance and deterring Moscow, and Russia in its turn will cut itself down to non-military undermining means.

Another RAND report, prepared by A. Binnendijk and M. Priebe, does not only concentrates on possible scenarios of NATO counteroffensive strategy but considers the possibility of a coalition of willing.[243] The authors consider the failure within the NAC on invoking Article 5, probably because of Italian and German objections. To overcome it and counteract Russia, the most influential member states will decide to support suffered states outside NATO's framework, since the decision of the NAC can be not in favor of invoking Article 5. The authors again highlight the idea that if NATO does not react to the attack and implement its core function, it will cause the collapse of the Alliance. Finland and Sweden are more likely to join the operation within both NATO or coalition, open airspace for flights, and provide their territory for deploying troops.

---

[243] Binnendijk A. An Attack Against Them All? Drivers of Decisions to Contribute to NATO Collective Defense / A. Binnendijk M. Priebe // RAND Corporation. 2019. URL: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2964.html. (accessed: 27.03.20).

J. Hooker in his research evaluates the ability of NATO to defend the territory of the Baltic states with the current number of personnel and equipment.[244]   He based his assumptions on the standard planning's proportion of defensive capabilities. The one-third of attacker forces will be enough to defend, but combat power is another issue. Taking it into account, the author draws up the possible plan of a military attack against Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. In this scenario, Russia aims in two directions: first, "to strike through Lithuania to link up with Kaliningrad", second, "to seize and hold Estonia and possibly Latvia to demonstrate NATO's inability to enforce Article 5". The research focuses on the best-case scenario for NATO, where the NAC will receive an early warning, make a decision in 48–72 hours, and launch the defensive preparations. Military and non-military preparations will be completed on time. The Suwalki Gap will be defended by Poland, which also will create a menacing to the Kaliningrad region. Besides, NATO will have to concentrate its naval and air powers on Kaliningrad to eliminate the air-defense and missile systems based there and occupy its territory for undermining Russian defense and presence in the Baltic Sea.

However, if the delay occurs in the NAC and member states wait for Russian forces to cross the borders, the lost time will be fatal. In this case, J. Hooker stresses the importance of rapidly formed coalition from the US's strongest and closest allies, but it raises unpredictability and complicates the evaluation of military capabilities which would confront Russia.

All in all, only the timely decision of NATO gives a window of opportunity to retain the control under the Baltic capitals, decrease the risks of escalation to nuclear strikes, and need for more and heavier NATO reinforcements. From the point of view of J. Hooker, the seizure of Kaliningrad would be the best bargaining chip in the following negotiations. Besides, all mistakes of Russian forces would work in NATO's favor and put it in a position of advantage in the post-conflict realm diplomacy. However, in accordance with J. Hooker's opinion, now NATO demonstrates a lack of cohesion, credibility, and capability, which augments the threat to the Baltic states and, consequently, to NATO.

After reviewing the most profound researches on possible NATO defense scenarios in the Baltic states, we can summarize the results and common features, which could be considered by SHAPE's strategists. First, the most vulnerable issue for the Baltic states' defensibility is the rapidness of reinforcement. Without the operational reaction of the NAC and following quick response, the capitals of Estonia and Latvia will be occupied within two or three days. Moreover, most of the experts emphasized the essential role of heavy brigades, which would be fully manned, trained, equipped, competently led, and adequately supported with artillery, ISR, and air defense. With these deployed in advance forces NATO can hold in check Russian first echelon forces for up to 30 days.

Second, the purpose of NATO under attack is clear – to liberate the Baltic states. What is more important, there is no definite view on the Russian motive for the attack. It varies from restoring historical justice to undermining NATO's influence and ability to provide security guarantees for the

---

[244] Hooker R. How to defend the Baltic States.

allies. In our opinion, it demonstrates the lack of understanding among the researchers on how to formulate the Russian threat in a concrete definition.

Third, despite the Russian military capabilities and possible lack of cohesion among the member states, the direct attack against one of the allies is a risk with unpredictable consequences and failure of deterrence. Both of the sides obtain nuclear weapons, and reducing conventional deterrence's efficiency due to the invasion could trigger the implementation of worst-case scenarios by Moscow, London, Washington, and Paris.

Since the Ukrainian crisis, the geographical peculiarities of the Baltic states (small territory, Suwalki corridor, which connects them with allies, Kaliningrad enclave, remoteness) and political caution of NATO posed restrictions on freedom of actions in terms of military planning. For now, NATO strategists can only draw up plans of defense of the Baltic states and train deployed troops to take the first hit. Even if the eFP has potential benefits for the Alliance, such as support of Baltic national troops and deterrence, it is highly unlikely that the deployed forces will hold out until the reinforcement arrive. There are still no concrete and solid forces or initiatives, which could allow allies to station additional troops in the Baltic states in a short period of time. The same goes for the countermeasure to the Russian A2/AD capabilities in the region. For example, due to the NATO missile defense, the Alliance has a minute to detect and make the decision of shooting down the adversary missile. But in case of an attack against Estonia or Latvia, NATO would not have even sixty seconds to do it, since the closest installations of missile defense are situated in Poland and still under construction. All this together questions the efficiency of the defense in case of attack and engender uncertainty, which could lead to dangerous consequences.

All in all, NATO's perception of the threat on the Eastern flank after 2014 on the political level is to prevent any sign of hesitation on prioritizing the Baltic states' security and concerns in comparison with other allies. Thus, it uses visible assurances, such as an increasing number of aircrafts for policing mission, deployment of rotational troops, and conducting of military exercises, to warn Russian against provocative actions. From the point of view of militaries, NATO would face an unprecedented and complicated task in case of the attack on three Baltic states due to various factors, such as the geography of the region, possible delay of the decision in the NAC, and capabilities of the possible adversary. A variety of possible scenarios, the level of uncertainty for NATO is high and it poses the question of what it has to be ready for.

CONCLUSION

The place of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in NATO's vision of Europe and its strategic planning naturally changed over the years, due to alteration of the Baltic states' status and international environment.

During the research, it has been discovered that the Baltic states' aspiration to become members of NATO in the 1990s was perceived as highly improbable. Their defensibility and the average level of development were significantly lower, to say nothing about the Soviet past. However, the Baltic region, in general, was the most peaceful in the world at that time and opened access to the Russian border. Thanks to the influence of the supporters among the member states, the military forces of the Baltic states were developing in comparison with what it was at the beginning of 1990s. NATO was guided by the aim of democratizing former communist states, including it into its sphere of influence and using the results of the Cold War in its favor. Therefore, we can say that the Alliance stressed the political benefits as opposed to military drawbacks. In other words, the enlargement as the means to transform NATO neglected the prospect of complications and deepened already existed inequality of capabilities among allies. At this stage, the main priority for NATO in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania was the gradual inclusion of them into the Alliance's structure at first as a partner and then as aspirants for membership.

The analysis of NATO's activity in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania after 2004 demonstrated that despite the existing problems and concerns of allies after the Georgian conflict, the Baltic states' security did not draw close attention from Brussels. The Baltic support of "open door" policy and promotion of it in the Near Abroad enabled them to do what they can do, in accordance with their potential. However, as an assurance measure, Brussels provided a contingency plan to the Baltic states. In the military dimension, the Baltic states provided obsolete Soviet installations in advantageous places, which NATO aimed to modernize and adapt it to its needs. It also continued to train personnel and conduct military exercises on the ground. By 2014, the territory of the Baltic states had limited military capabilities without armored vehicles or air forces, except allied aircrafts for the BAP. In other words, NATO focused its activity in the Baltic states on modernizing the airbases and training personnel.

After the outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis, the existence of a significant Russian-speaking minority, the Soviet past, and the absence of considerable military forces have turned to be an issue for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and revealed long-term unsolved problems. The grand strategy of NATO had been forming since the end of the Cold War and unforeseen turn in 2014 changed the existing security environment in Europe. To demonstrate its willingness to defend its member states, the Alliance had to entrench and demonstrate its presence due to membership of the Baltic states in it. It was performed through the visible assurance of the deployed multinational allied troops, regular exercises, and transferring of the equipment.

However, if the conflict starts, NATO would have modest resources to hit back, since the deployed forces do not have enough ability and equipment to conduct counteroffensive operation. The importance of security commitments to member states is mentioned numerous times in NATO's documents and speeches of officials, but its actions and existent resources do not correspond with it. The new initiative of "Four Thirties" most likely increases the potential of Baltic states to resist significantly, but it is too early to make more accurate predictions.

The research has demonstrated that in the case of NATO the preservation of peace and security in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania is laid in the predictability of the situation in the region since it is situated right on the border with Russia. The final goal of the Alliance is not to even military potential with an adversary in the border area, but to convince with a smaller number of troops its willingness and ability to increase the forces in the short period of time. At the political level, the means of assurance and deterrence in the Baltic states serve to NATO's long-term perspective to build upon them advancing military initiatives in the region. In the military dimension, the Alliance is aware of its disadvantages and limited capabilities on the ground but aims to overcome it. Therefore, it advances transportation hubs, which will allow NATO to move forces and equipment over shorter periods. Moreover, the regular exercises involve not only Baltic military forces but also allied troops that expand the knowledge of the field's peculiarities among the personnel of member states.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I.   Sources

a) NATO's official documents

1. 374-е Пленарное Заседание Совета // ОБСЕ : офиц. сайт. – 2001. – Декабрь. – 18. URL : https://www.osce.org/ru/pc/18160?download=true (accessed : 14.11.2019).

2. The Secretary General's Annual Report 2016 // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 2017. URL : https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_03/20170313_SG_AnnualReport _2016_en.pdf#page=7 (accessed : 16.03.2020).

3. Brussels Summit Declaration // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 2018. – July. – 11. URL : https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156624.htm (accessed : 16.03.2020).

4. Bucharest Summit Declaration // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 2008. – April. – 03. URL : https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm (accessed : 03.03.2020).

5. Declaration of the Heads of State and Government // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 1994. – January. – 11. URL :
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_24470.htm?mode=pressrelease (accessed : 11.11.2019).

6. London Declaration On A Transformed North Atlantic Alliance // NATO Online Library : офиц. сайт. – 1990. – July. – 06. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c900706a.htm. (accessed : 13.11.2019).

7. Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 1991. – November. – 08. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c911108a.htm (accessed : 20.12.2019).

8. Strasbourg / Kehl Summit Declaration // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 2009. – April. – 06. URL : https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_52837.htm (accessed: 02.03.2020).

9. The Alliance's New Strategic Concept. NATO : офиц. сайт. – 1991. – Ноябрь. URL : https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_23847.htm (accessed : 30.10.2019).

10. The Alliance's Strategic Concept NATO: офиц. сайт. – 1999. – April. – 24. URL : https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm (accessed : 11.11.2019).

11. Warsaw Summit Communiqué // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 2016. URL : https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm (accessed: 16.03.2020).

b) Speeches and press statements of officials

12. A New Atlanticism for the 21st Century. Speech by NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer at the Conference of the German Marshall Fund // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 2004. – June. – 27. URL : https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2004/s040627a.htm (accessed : 01.03.2020).

13. Address by H.E. Mr. Valdas Adamkus President of the Republic of Lithuania at NAC meeting with Invitees // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 2002. – November. – 21. URL : https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s021121p.htm (accessed : 01.03.2020)

14. Address of the President of the Republic of Estonia, Mr. Lennart Meri // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 1998. – November. – 04. URL : https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1998/s981104a.htm (accessed : 11.11.2019).

15. Cheney's Speech in Lithuania // The New Your Times : неофиц. сайт. – 2006. – May. – 04. URL : https://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/04/world/europe/04cnd-cheney-text.html (accessed: 02.03.2020).

16. Press Conference by President Obama after NATO Summit // The White House: Barak Obama : офиц. сайт. – 2016. – July. – 09. URL : https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/07/09/press-conference-president-obama-after-nato-summit (accessed : 16.03.2020).

17. Press Statement and Answers to Journalists' Questions Following a Meeting of the Russia-NATO Council // Сайт Президента России: офиц. сайт. – 2008. – April. – 04. URL : http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24903 (accessed : 04.03.2020).

18. Rasmussen: NATO Members Need to Increase Their Defense Budgets // Atlantic Council : неофиц. сайт. – 2014. – May. – 14. URL : https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/rasmussen-nato-members-need-to-increase-their-defense-budgets/ (accessed : 16.03.20).

19. Remarks by Mr. Siim Kallas, Prime Minister of the Republic of Estonia, at the NAC meeting with Invitees // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 2002. – November. – 21. URL : https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s021121y.htm (accessed : 01.03.2020)

20. Remarks by the President on Strengthening Missile Defense in Europe // The White House President Obama : офиц. сайт. – 2009. – September. – 18. URL : https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-strengthening-missile-defense-europe (accessed : 06.03.2020).

21. Remarks by President Obama to the People of Estonia // The White House: Barak Obama : офиц. сайт. – 2014. – September. – 03. URL : https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/03/remarks-president-obama-people-estonia (accessed : 16.03.2020).

22. Secretary Rumsfeld Briefs at the Foreign Press Center // US Department of Defense : офиц. сайт. – 2003. – January. – 23. URL :

https://archive.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=1330 (accessed : 01.03.2020).

23. Speech by the President of Latvia, Her Excellency Dr. Vaira Vike-Freiberga at the meeting of the North Atlantic Council // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 2004. – June. – 28. URL : https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2004/s040628m.htm (accessed: 01.03.2020).

24. Speech to North Atlantic Council at Turnberry // Margaret Thatcher Foundation : офиц. сайт. – 1990. – June. – 07. URL : https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/108106 (accessed : 16.01.2020);

25. Statement by NATO Defence Ministers // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 2015. – June. – 25. URL : https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_121133.htm (accessed : 16.03.2020).

26. Transcript: President Bush speech in Warsaw // Inside Politics : неофиц. сайт. – 2001. – June. – 15. URL : http://edition.cnn.com/2001/ALLPOLITICS/06/15/bush.warsaw.trans/ (accessed : 21.01.2020).

c) Agreements and Acts

27. Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security Between NATO And the Russian Federation Signed in Paris, France. NATO : офиц. сайт. – 1997. – May. – 25. URL : https://www.nato.int/nrc-website/media/59451/1997_nato_russia_founding_act.pdf (accessed : 13.11.2019).

28. U.S. Baltic Charter // Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Estonia : офиц. сайт. – 1998. – January. – 16. URL : https://vm.ee/en/us-baltic-charter (accessed : 11.11.2019).

29. Agreement concerning international road transport (with protocols) // ООН : офиц. сайт. – 1993. – October. – 18. URL : https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%201831/volume-1831-I-31342-English.pdf (accessed : 14.02.2020).

d) Transcripts of conversations and lectures

30. Dmitry Medvedev and President of the USA Barack Obama had a telephone conversation // Сайт Президента Российской Федерации : офиц. сайт. – 2009. – January. – 26. URL : http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/2955 (accessed : 06.03.2020);

31. Document 04. Memorandum of Conversation between James Baker and Eduard Shevardnadze in Moscow // National Security Archive: неофиц. сайт. – 1990. – February. – 09. URL : https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/dc.html?doc=4325678-Document-04-Memorandum-of-conversation-between (accessed : 13.11.2019).

32. Shea J. Transcript of the lecture "How did NATO survive the Cold War? //. NATO: офиц. сайт. – 2003. – November. – 06. URL : https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_20526.htm?selectedLocale=en (accessed: 20.12.19).

e) Leaked NATO's documents

33. Action request: a decision on NATO contingency planning for the Baltics // Wikileaks : неофиц. сайт. – 2010. URL : https://search.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09USNATO561_a.html (accessed : 05.03.2020).
34. Action request: Baltic contingency planning: some ideas // Wikileaks: неофиц. сайт. 2010. URL: https://search.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09USNATO464_a.html (accessed: 05.03.20).
35. Ambassador and Defense Minister plan for Secretary Gates meeting // Wikileaks : неофиц. сайт. – 2010. https://search.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09VILNIUS84_a.html (accessed : 05.03.2020).
36. Demarche delivered on NATO contingency planning for our Baltic allies States // Wikileaks : неофиц. сайт. – 2010. URL : https://search.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09USNATO588_a.html (accessed : 05.03.2020).
37. NATO contingency planning for our Baltic allies // Wikileaks : неофиц. сайт. – 2010. URL : https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09STATE127892_a.html (accessed : 05.03.2020).
38. NATO/Georgia : Situation at NATO HQ as of cob on August 8 // Wikileaks : неофиц. сайт. – 2010. URL : https://search.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08USNATO278_a.html (accessed : 05.03.2020).
39. Poland could accept "complementary" contingency planning for Poland and Baltic States // Wikileaks : неофиц. сайт. – 2010. URL : https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09WARSAW1228_a.html (accessed : 04.03.2020).
40. The road to the NATO Summit and beyond: issues to address // Wikileaks : неофиц. сайт. – 2010. URL : https://search.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09USNATO47_a.html (accessed : 05.03.2020).
41. What Georgia means to Latvia // Wikileaks : неофиц. сайт. – 2010. URL : https://search.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08RIGA496_a.html (accessed : 05.03.2020).

f) Memoirs

42. Примаков Е. М. Годы в большой политике : [Воспоминания] / Е. М. Примаков. М. : Коллекция "Совершенно секретно", 1999.

g) Articles wrote by NATO and Baltic states' officials

43. Krastins V. Will They Sacrifice the Baltic Peoples Again? V. / Krastins // International Herald Tribune. – 1996. – December. – – 06. URL : https://www.nytimes.com/1996/12/06/opinion/IHT-will-they-sacrifice-the-baltic-peoples-again.html?searchResultPosition=13 (accessed : 11.11.2019).

44. Wörner M. NATO Transformed: the significance of the Rome Summit / M. Wörner // NATO Review. – 1991. Vol. 39. No. 6. – December. URL : https://www.nato.int/docu/review/1991/9106-1.htm (accessed: 13.11.2019).

h) Materials from NATO's, member states' and partners official sites

45. A strong NATO in a changed world // NATO: офиц. сайт. 2014. March. 21. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_108215.htm (accessed: 18.03.20).

46. Baltic Host 2010 // Ministry of National Defence Republic of Lithuania : офиц. сайт. – 2010. – June.– 02. URL : https://clck.ru/MoQBJ (accessed : 08.03.2020).

47. Black Arrow 2014 // Lithuanian Armed Forces: офиц. сайт. – 2014. URL : https://kariuomene.kam.lt/en/international_military_exercises/military_exercises_2014/black_arrow/news_4084/lithuanian_military_to_train_conducting_defensive_operations_at_tactical_field_exercise_black_arrow_2014_with_u.s._allies.html?pbck=0 (accessed : 16.03.2020).

48. Contact Point Embassies in partner countries // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 2017. – January. – 27. URL : https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49190.htm (accessed : 02.03.2020).

49. Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2013-2019) // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 2019. – November. URL : https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2019_06/20190625_PR2019-069-EN.pdf (accessed : 16.03.2020).

50. Defending against cyberattacks // European Parlament: офиц. сайт. – 2008. URL : https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/sede/dv/sede251010audnatocyberattacks_/sede251010audnatocyberattacks_en.pdf (accessed : 02.03.2020).

51. Exercises // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 2019. – July. – 01. URL : https://www.nato.int/cps/ru/natohq/topics_49285.htm?selectedLocale=en (accessed : 27.03.2020).

52. Exercise Steadfast Cobalt Set To Get Underway In Lithuania // SHAPE : офиц. сайт. – 2017. URL : https://shape.nato.int/news-archive/2017/exercise-steadfast-cobalt-set-to-get-underway-in-lithuania (accessed : 27.03.2020).

53. European Deterrence Initiative: the transatlantic security guarantee // European Parlament: офиц. сайт. 2019. July. URL: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/625117/EPRS_BRI(2018)625117_EN.pdf (accessed: 16.03.20).

54. NATO and Russia – Time to engage // NATO: офиц. сайт. – 2014. – February. – 01. URL : https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_106788.htm?selectedLocale=en (accessed: 06.03.2020).

55. NATO Response Force (NRF) Fact Sheet // SHAPE : офиц. сайт. – 2020. URL : https://jfcbs.nato.int/page5725819/nato-response-force-nrf-fact-sheet.aspx (accessed: 23.04.2020).

NATO strategic communications – An evolving battle of narratives // European Parlament: офиц. сайт. 2016. July. URL: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2016/586600/EPRS_BRI(2016)586600_EN.pdf (accessed: 02.03.20).

56. Operation Atlantic Resolve // U.S. European Command : офиц. сайт. – 2015. – January. URL : https://archive.defense.gov/home/features/2014/0514_atlanticresolve/Operation_Atlantic_Resolve_Fact_Sheet_2014.pdf (accessed : 16.03.2020).

57. SABER STRIKE 2014 // Lithuanian Armed Forces: офиц. сайт. – 2014. URL : https://kariuomene.kam.lt/en/international_military_exercises/military_exercises_2014/siber_strike_2014.html (accessed : 16.03.2020).

58. Siil / Steadfast Javelin kicks off in Estonia // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 2014. – May. – 10. URL : https://www.nato.int/cps/ru/natohq/news_119257.htm?selectedLocale=en (accessed: 27.03.2020).

59. Statement by the North Atlantic Council on the so-called referendum in Crimea // NATO : офиц. сайт. – 2014. – March. – 16. URL : https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_108030.htm (accessed : 18.03.2020).

II.   Literature

i) Research articles and reports

60. Ambiguous Threats and External Influences in the Baltic States // NATO STRATCOM: офиц. сайт. 2015. URL: November. https://www.stratcomcoe.org/ambiguous-threats-and-external-influences-baltic-states (accessed: 27.03.20).

61. Anderson, M. P. NATO Nuclear Deterrence: The Warsaw Summit and Beyond / Anderson, M. P // Connections: The Quarterly Journal. – 2016. – 15(4). – pp. 5-30. – DOI: https://doi.org/10.11610/Connections.15.4.01. – 16.03.2020).

62. Apriashvili M. Baltic Support For Georgia: Solidarity, Niche, And Security Policies / Apriashvili M. // Georgian Institute of Politics. – 2017. – June. – 17 p. URL : http://gip.ge/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Research-Paper-4.pdf (accessed : 03.03.2020).

63. Archer C. Nordic involvement in the Baltic states security: Needs, response and success // European Security. – 1998. – Vol. 7. – № 3. – P. 43-62. DOI: 10.1080/09662839808407372 (accessed : 11.11.2019).

64. Arnold J.M. NATO's Readiness Action Plan Strategic Benefits and Outstanding Challenges / Arnold J.M. // Strategic Studies Quarterly. 2016. Spring. pp. 74-105. URL: https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-10_Issue-1/Arnold.pdf (accessed: 16.03.20).

65. Asmus R. NATO Enlargement and the Baltic States / Asmus R., Nurick C // Survival. – 1996. – pp. 121-142. DOI: 10.1080/00396339608442849 (accessed : 13.11.2019).

66. Asmus R. NATO, new allies and reassurance / R. Asmus, S. Czmur, Donnelly C., Ronis A., Valasek T., Wittmann K. // Center for European Reform. – 2010. – May. – 6 p. URL: https://cer-live.thomas-paterson.co.uk/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/pdf/2011/pb_nato_12may10-215.pdf (accessed : 08.03.2020).

67. Baroudos C. Why NATO Should Fear Russia's A2/AD Capabilities (And How to Respond) / C. Baroudos // National Interest. – 2016. – September. – 21. URL: https://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/why-nato-should-fear-russias-a2-ad-capabilities-how-respond-17776 (accessed: 27.03.20).

68. Belkin P. NATO: Key Issues Following the 2019 Leaders' Meeting / Belkin P. // Congressional Research Service. 2020. April. 01. URL: https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R46066.pdf (accessed: 16.03.20).

69. Binnendijk A. An Attack Against Them All? Drivers of Decisions to Contribute to NATO Collective Defense / A. Binnendijk M. Priebe // RAND Corporation. 2019. URL: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2964.html. (accessed: 27.03.20).

70. Bergeron J. Back to the Future in Wales / Bergeron J. // The RUSI Journal. – 2014. – 159:3. – P. 4-8. DOI: 10.1080/03071847.2014.927990 (accessed : 16.03.2020).

71. Bergmane U. Public Diplomacy as a National Security Tool / U. Bergmane // Foreign Policy Research Institute. – 2017. – May. – 27. URL : https://www.fpri.org/article/2017/05/public-diplomacy-national-security-tool/ (accessed : 02.03.2020).

72. Blank S. Russia, NATO Enlargement, and the Baltic States / Blank S // World Affairs. – 1998. – № 3. – P. 115-125. URL : http://www.jstor.org/stable/20672519 (accessed: 03.03.2020).

73. Brattberg E. Baltic States Worried by Crimea / Brattberg E. // Atlantic Council. 2014. March. 02. URL: https://cdn.atlanticcouncil.org/insight-impact/in-the-news/brattberg-baltic-states-worried-by-crimea/ (accessed: 18.03.20).

74. Bugajski J. Washington's new European allies: Durable or conditional partners? / J. Bugajski, Teleki I. // Washington Quarterly. – 2005. – 28:2. – P. 95-107. DOI: 10.1162/0163660053295257 (accessed : 01.03.2020).

75. Davis M. An Historical and Political View of the Reserve and Guard Forces of the Baltic States at the Beginning of the Twenty-first Century / Davis M. // Journal of Baltic Studies. 2006. Winter. Vol. 37. No. 4. pp. 363-387. URL: www.jstor.org/stable/43212738 (accessed: 11.11.19).

76. Díaz-Plaja R. Projecting Stability: an agenda for action / R.Díaz-Plaja // NATO Review. – 2018. – March. – 13. URL : https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2018/03/13/projecting-stability-an-agenda-for-action/index.html (accessed : 11.11.2019).

77. Dempsey J. NATO's Eastern Flank and Its Future Relationship With Russia / J. Dempsey // Carnegie Europe. – 2017. – October. – 23. URL : https://carnegieeurope.eu/2017/10/23/nato-s-eastern-flank-and-its-future-relationship-with-russia-pub-73499 (accessed : 16.03.2020).

78. Dempsey J. Why Defense Matters: A New Narrative for NATO / Dempsey J. // Carnegie Europe. – 2014. – June. – 24. URL : https://carnegieeurope.eu/2014/06/24/why-defense-matters-new-narrative-for-nato-pub-55979 (accessed : 16.03.2020).

79. Dowdy J. More tooth, less tail: Getting beyond NATO's 2 percent rule / J. Dowdy // McKinsey's & Company. – 2017. – November. URL : https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-sector/our-insights/more-tooth-less-tail-getting-beyond-natos-2-percent-rule (accessed : 16.03.2020).

80. Duffied J. NATO's Functions after the Cold War / J. Duffied // Political Science Quarterly. – 1994-1995. – Vol. 109. – №. 5. – Winter. – P. 763-787. URL : www.jstor.org/stable/2152531 (accessed : 10.04.2020).

81. Eide V. The military dimension in the transformed alliance / V. Eide// NATO Review. – 1992. – No. 4. – Vol. 40. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/review/1992/9204-4.htm (accessed : 11.11.2019).

82. Fahey S. Saber Strike: What would we do without you? / Fahey S .// International Center for Defense and Security. – 2019. –September. – 19. URL: https://icds.ee/saber-strike-what-would-we-do-without-you/ (accessed: 27.03.20).

83. Farrell T. NATO's Transformation Gaps: Transatlantic Differences and the War in Afghanistan / Farrell T., S. Rynning // The Journal of Strategic Studies.2010. - 33:5. – P. 673-699. DOI: 10.1080/01402390.2010.498247 (accessed : 06.03.2020).

84. Flanagan S. Deterring Russian Aggression in the Baltic States Through Resilience and Resistance / Flanagan S., J. Osburg, A. Binnendijk, M. Kepe, A. Radin // RAND Corporation. 2019. P. 2. URL: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2779.html (accessed: 27.03.20).

85. Frühling S. NATO, A2/AD and the Kaliningrad Challenge / S. Frühling, G. Lasconjarias // Survival. – 2016. – 58:2. – pp. 95-116. DOI: 10.1080/00396338.2016.1161906 (accessed : 27.03.2020).

86. Frydrych E. The Debate on NATO Expansion / Frydrych E. // Connections. – 2008. – Fall. – Vol. 7. – No. 4. – pp. 58-61. URL : https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26323362 (accessed : 11.11.2019).

87. Gallis P. The NATO Summit at Bucharest / Gallis P. // Congressional Research Service. 2008 May. 05. P. 5-6. URL: https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RS22847.pdf (accessed: 03.03.20).

88. Gheciu A. Transcending old divisions? NATO and Russia after the Cold War / Gheciu A. // Politique américaine. – 2009. – № 13. URL : https://www.cairn.info/revue-politique-americaine-2009-1-page-37.htm (accessed : 03.03.2020).

89. Giles K. Russia's A2/AD Capabilities: Real and Imagined / Giles K., Boulegue M. // Parameters. 2019. Spring-Summer. pp 21-36. URL: https://clck.ru/NRn4j (accessed : 11.11.2019).

90. Gotkowska J. NATO's presence in the Baltic states – reassurance for its allies or deterrence for Russia? / J. Gotkowska, P. Szymański // OSW Commentary. – 2015. – April. – 25. – 9 p. URL: http://aei.pitt.edu/64164/1/commentary_169_0.pdf (accessed: 27.03.20).

91. Gorenburg S. The expansion of NATO into the Baltic sea region: Prague 2002 and beyond / S. Gorenburg, M. Henton, Whiteneck D. // Center of Strategic Studies. 2002. May. P. 9-13. URL: https://www.cna.org/CNA_files/PDF/D0006161.A2.pdf (accessed: 02.02.20).

92. Grand C. Nuclear deterrence and the Alliance in the 21st century / Grand C. // NATO Review. – 2016. – July. – 04. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2016/07/04/nuclear-deterrence-and-the-alliance-in-the-21st-century/index.html (accessed: 16.03.2020).

93. Gribanova G. NATO policies in the Baltics: objectives and Priorities/ Gribanova G., Kosov Yu. // Baltic Region. – 2018. – № 1. – P. 56-72. URL : https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/nato-policies-in-the-baltics-objectives-and-priorities (accessed: 03.04.2020).

94. Halas M. Proving a negative: why deterrence does not work in the Baltics / M.Halas // European Security. 2019. 28:4. P. 433. DOI: 10.1080/09662839.2019.1637855 (accessed: 16.03.20).

95. Heuven van M. US role in post-Cold War Europe / M. Heuven // National Defense Research Institute. 1994. URL:

https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/2007/MR404.pdf (accessed: 20.12.19).

96. Holtom P. Arms transit trade in the Baltic region / P. Holtom // Safer World. 2003. September. URL: https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/58-arms-transit-trade-in-the-baltic-region (accessed: 02.02.20).

97. Hooker R. How to defend the Baltic States / Hooker R. // The Jamestown Foundation. 2019. October. URL: https://jamestown.org/product/how-to-defend-the-baltic-states/ (accessed: 27.03.20).

98. Ivkina N. Evolution of the position of France in NATO / N. Ivkina // Центр стратегических оценок и прогнозов. – 2013. – Январь. – 13. URL : http://csef.ru/en/politica-i-geopolitica/500/evolyucziya-poziczii-franczii-po-nato-3949 (accessed : 16.02.2020).

99. Johnson D. ZAPAD 2017 and Euro-Atlantic security / Johnson D. // NATO Review. – 2017. – December. – 14. URL: https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2017/12/14/zapad-2017-and-euro-atlantic-security/index.html (accessed: 23.04.2020).

100.   Kepe M. Total Defense: How The Baltic States Are Integrating Citizenry Into Their National Security Strategies. – 2017. URL: https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/total-defense-how-the-baltic-states-are-integrating-citizenry-into-their-national-security- (accessed: 27.03.2020).

101.   Killick J. Small is beautiful: The case against the enlargement of NATO / J. Killick // The RUSI Journal. – 2008. – 141:4. pp. 58-61. DOI: 10.1080/03071849608446052 (accessed : 11.11.2019).

102.   Kiknadze V. G The military and political situation in the Baltic region in the late 20th - early 21st centuries: the prospects of 'uneasy peace' / V. G. Kiknadze, D. A. Mironyuk, G. V. Kretinin // Baltic Region. – 2019. –Vol. 11. – № 1. – P. 60-75. URL : https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/the-military-and-political-situation-in-the-baltic-region-in-the-late-20th-early-21st-centuries-the-prospects-of-uneasy-peace (accessed : 04.03.2020).

103.   Kirk L. Sweden and Finland upgrade Nato relations / L.Kirk // EU Observer. 2016. May. 20. URL: https://euobserver.com/nordic/133493 (accessed: 16.03.20).

104.   Knudsen O. Cooperative security in the Baltic Sea region / O. Knudsen // Institute for Security Studies of WEU. 1998. November. URL: https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/cp033e.pdf (accessed: 14.11.19).

105.   Konyshev V. US missile defence policy in the Baltic and Nordic regions / Konyshev V., A. Sergunin, S. Subbotin // Baltic region. – 2016. – № 1. – pp. 33-44. URL : https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/us-missile-defence-policy-in-the-baltic-and-nordic-regions (accessed: 06.03.2020).

106.	Kortinov A. How to stop NATO? / A. Kortinov // Russia in Global Affairs. – 2019. – December. – 04. URL : https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/article/How-to-Stop-NATO-20268 (accessed : 16.02.2020).

107.	Kramer M. NATO, the Baltic States and Russia: A Framework for Sustainable Enlargement / Kramer M. // International Affairs. – 2002. – № 4. – P. 731-756. URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/3095754 (accessed: 03.03.2020);

108.	Kühn U. Preventing Escalation in the Baltics: A NATO Playbook / Kühn U. // Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. 2018. p. 87. URL: https://carnegieendowment.org/files/Kuhn_Baltics_INT_final_WEB.pdf (accessed: 27.03.20).

109.	Lamoreaux J. The Baltic States As 'Small States': Negotiating The 'East' By Engaging The West' / J. Lamoreaux, D. Galbreath // Journal of Baltic Studies. – 2008. – March. – Vol. 39. – № 1. – P. 1-14. URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/43212804 (accessed : 04.12.2019)ю

110.	Larrabee S. NATO and the Challenges of Austerity/ S.Larrabee, S. Johnson, J. Gordon, etc // RAND Corporation. 2012. P. 76. URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/j.ctt1q60nw.10 (accessed: 08.03.20).

111.	Lašas A. When History Matters: Baltic and Polish Reactions to the Russo-Georgian War / A. Lašas // Europe-Asia Studies. – 2012. – Vol. 64. P. 1061-1075. DOI: 10.1080/09668136.2012.691724 (accessed : 04.03.2020).

112.	Lehti M. Protégé or Go-Between? The Role of the baltic states after 9/11 in eu–US Relations / M. Lehti // Journal of Baltic Studies. – 2007. – 38:2. pp. 127-151. DOI: 10.1080/01629770701345065 (accessed : 01.03.2020).

113.	Mälksoo M. Enabling NATO enlargement: changing constructions of the Baltic States / M. Mälksoo // Trames. – 2004. – T. 8. –№. 3. – P. 284-298. URL: https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=37010 (accessed : 23.03.2020).

114.	Marten K. Reconsidering NATO expansion: A counterfactual analysis of Russia and the West in the 1990s / K. Marten // European Journal of International Security. – 2018. – Volume 3. – Issue 2. – June. – pp. 135-16. Doi:10.1017/eis.2017.16 (accessed : 13.11.2019).

115.	Meier O. Europeans Split Over U.S. Missile Defense Plans / O. Meier // Arms Control Association. – 2007. – April. URL : https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2007-04/europeans-split-over-us-missile-defense-plans (accessed : 06.03.2020).

116.	Meyer K. R. US support for Baltic membership in NATO: What ends, what risks? // Parameters. – 2000. – T. 30. – №. 4. – pp. 67-82. URL: http://www.bits.de/NRANEU/docs/Meyer2000.htm (accessed : 19.12.2019).

117.	Michta A. What Next for NATO? / A.Michta // Orbis. – 2007. – Vol. 51. – Issue 1. – pp. 155-164. URL: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0030438706001153 (accessed : 01.03.2020).

118. Molis A. et al. Baltic military cooperation: past, present and the future // Lithuanian foreign policy review. – 2009. – №. 22. – Pp. 28-47. URL: http://lfpr.lt/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/LFPR-22-Molis.pdf (accessed: 11.11.19).

119. Montgomery M. NATO Presses Stand on Nuclear Weapons / Montgomery M. // Arms Control Association. – 2018. – September. – URL : https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2018-09/news/nato-presses-stand-nuclear-weapons (accessed: 16.03.20).

120. NATO summit: reassurance and effective responses // Strategic Comments. – 2014. – 20:6. – vi-vii. DOI: 10.1080/13567888.2014.973144 (accessed: 16.03.20).

121. Pothier F. An Area-Access Strategy for NATO / Pothier F. // Survival. – 59:3. – pp. 73-80. DOI: 10.1080/00396338.2017.1325600 (accessed: 27.03.2020).

122. Ringsmose J. Can NATO's New Very High Readiness Joint Task Force Deter? / J. Ringsmose, S. Rynning // Norwegian Institute for International Affairs (NUPI). – 2016. – p. 2. URL : www.jstor.org/stable/resrep07991 (accessed : 16.03.2020).

123. Rostoks T. Baltic States And NATO: Looking Beyond The Article V / Rostoks T. // National Defense University. – 2013. URL : https://www.doria.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/88687/BalticStatesAndNATO_netti.pdf?sequence =1 (accessed : 10.03.2020).

124. Rühle M. NATO and the Ukraine Crisis / Rühle M // American Foreign Policy Interests. – 2015. – 37:2. – pp. 80-86. DOI : 10.1080/10803920.2015.1038925 (accessed : 16.03.2020).

125. Sauer T. Just Leave It: NATO's Nuclear Weapons Policy At the Warsaw Summit / Sauer T. // Arms Control Today. – 2016. – June. URL: https://clck.ru/Muf4z (accessed : 16.03.2020).

126. Schmidt A. Countering Anti-Access / Area Denial Future Capability Requirements in NATO / Schmidt A. // Journal of Military Science and Security Studies. – 2018. – № 1. – P. 248-257. URL: https://gmr.mapn.ro/app/webroot/fileslib/upload/files/RMT_1-2%202018.pdf#page=248 (accessed: 27.03.2020).

127. Seib P. Public Diplomacy and Hard Power: The Challenges Facing NATO / P.Seib // The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs. 2014. vol. 38:1. Winter. pp. 95-100. URL: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/579fc2ad725e253a86230610/t/57ec7820be6594808a454 295/1475115040958/38-1_Seib1.pdf (accessed: 10.03.20).

128. Shlapak D. Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO's Eastern Flank: Wargaming the Defense of the Baltics / Shlapak D., M. Johnson // RAND Corporation. 2016. P. 6. URL: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1253.html. (accessed: 27.03.20).

129. Simon L. Assessing NATO's Eastern European "Flank" / Simon L. // Parameters. Autumn. 2014. 44(3). pp. 67-79. URL: https://publications.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/3716.pdf (accessed: 18.03.20).

130. Sperling J. NATO and the Ukraine crisis: Collective securitization / J.Sperling, M. Webber // European Journal of International Security. – 2017. – 2(1). – pp. 19-46. doi:10.1017/eis.2016.17 (accessed : 16.03.2020).

131. Spring Storm over Russian Border: NATO Demonstrates its Military Power // Warsaw Institute. 2019. May. 29. URL: https://warsawinstitute.org/spring-storm-russian-border-nato-demonstrates-military-power/ (accessed: 27.03.20).

132. Socor V. New Group Of Georgia's Friends Founded / Socor V. // The Jamestown Foundation. – 2005. – February. – 07. URL: https://jamestown.org/program/new-group-of-georgias-friends-founded/ (accessed: 03.03.20).

133. Trapans J.A. The Baltic states: Defence and geopolitics // European Security. – 1998. – 7:3. – pp. 92-100. DOI: 10.1080/09662839808407374 (accessed : 13.11.2019).

134. Unprotected in the East: NATO Appears Toothless in Russia Crisis // The Atlantic Council. – 2014. – May. – 19. URL :
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/unprotected-in-the-east-nato-appears-toothless-in-russia-crisis/ (accessed : 16.03.2020).

135. Vaïsse M. France and NATO: An History / M. Vaïsse // Politique étrangère. – 2009. P. 139-150. URL : https://www.cairn.info/revue-politique-etrangere-2009-5-page-139.htm (accessed : 30.10.2019).

136. Valasek T. What does the war in Georgia mean for EU foreign policy? / T. Valasek // Centre for European Reform. – 2008. – 5 p. URL : https://www.cer.eu/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/pdf/2011/briefing_georgia_15aug08_tv-1136.pdf (accessed : 04.03.2020).

137. Veebel V. Are the Baltic States Convincing Russia by Developing their Defence Capability? / Veebel V. // International Center for Defense and Security. – 2019. – November. – 22. URL: https://icds.ee/are-the-baltic-states-convincing-russia-by-developing-their-defence-capability/ (accessed: 27.03.20).

138. Veebel V. Estonian Perceptions Of Security: Not Only About Russia And The Refugees / I. Ploome, Veebel V // Journal on Baltic Studies. – 2016. – Vol. 2. – Issue 2. – pp. 35-70. URL : https://css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/resources/docs/JOBS.02.2.pdf (accessed : 03.03.2020).

139. Wallin L (2001) A defsnce model for the Baltic states / L. Wallin, B.Andersson // European Security. – 2001. – pp. 94-106. DOI: 10.1080/09662830108407484 (accessed : 13.11.2019).

140. Waterman H. NATO and Democracy / H.Waterman, D. Zagorcheva, D. Reiter // International Security. – Winter, 2001-2002. – Vol. 26. – No. 3. pp. 226-227. URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/3092095 (accessed : 11.11.2019).

141.   Weitz J. Deja Vu with BMD: The Improbability of Russia NATO Missile Defense / Weitz J. // Institut français des relations internationales. – 2013. – October. – 20 p. URL : https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/ifriweitzamdengjan2013.pdf (accessed : 06.03.2020).

142.   What Is the Significance of Halving the NATO Baltic Air Policing Mission? // International Center for Defense and Security. 2015. August. 26. URL: https://icds.ee/what-is-the-significance-of-halving-the-nato-baltic-air-policing-mission/ (accessed: 27.03.20).

143.   Where's NATO's Strong Response to Russia's Invasion of Crimea? // Foreign Policy. – 2014. – March. – 18. URL: https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/03/18/wheres-natos-strong-response-to-russias-invasion-of-crimea/ (accessed : 18.03.2020).

144.   Wilk A. The Zapad-2017 exercises: the information war (for now) / Wilk A // OSW. – 2017. – September. – 04. URL: https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2017-09-04/zapad-2017-exercises-information-war-now (accessed: 23.04.2020).

145.   Yost D. The US debate on NATO nuclear deterrence/ Yost D. // International Affairs. – 2011. – November. – Vol. 87. – No. 6. - pp. 1401-1438. URL : https://www.jstor.org/stable/41306997 (accessed : 08.03.2020).

146.   Zaccor A.V. Problems in the Baltic armed forces / A.V. Zaccor // The Journal of Slavic Military Studies. – 1995. – Vol. 8. P. 53-72. DOI: 10.1080/13518049508430177 (accessed : 13.11.2019).

147.   Zájedová I. The Baltic States' Security and NATO Enlargement / I. Zájedová // Perspectives. № 13. Special issue: The Balkans, NATO and European Security after the Kosovo War. – 1999/2000. – Winter. – pp. 79-90. URL : https://www.jstor.org/stable/23615944 (accessed : 10.07.2019).

148.   Zandee D. The Future of NATO / Zandee D // Strategic Monitor 2018-2019. – 2017. URL : https://www.clingendael.org/pub/2018/strategic-monitor-2018-2019/the-future-of-nato/ (accessed : 16.03.2020).

149.   Zapfe M. NATO's "Spearhead Force" / Zapfe M. // CSS Analyses in Security Policy. – 2015. – № 174. – 5 p. URL : https://www.research-collection.ethz.ch/bitstream/handle/20.500.11850/118210/1/eth-49380-01.pdf (accessed : 16.03.2020).

150.   Александров М.В. Прибалтийское дежавю: об участии Литвы, Латвии и Эстонии в военной операции НАТО в Афганистане / М.В.Александров // Материк. – 2011. – Апрель. – 01. URL: http://www.materik.ru/rubric/detail.php?ID=12190 (accessed : 01.03.2020).

151.   Вахрамеев А. В. Страны Балтии у ворот НАТО // Современная Европа. – 2000. – №. 4. – С. 82-92. URL : https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/strany-baltii-u-vorot-nato (accessed : 13.11.2019).

152. Воротников В.В. Страны Балтии в НАТО: итоги десятилетия / В.В.Воротников // Вестник МГИМО-Университета. – 2014. – №6. – С. 9-17. URL : https://vestnik.mgimo.ru/jour/article/view/236?locale=ru_RU (accessed : 04.03.2020).

153. Воротников В. Внешняя политика государств Балтии в начале XXI века: Научное издание. – М.: Издательство «Аспект Пресс», Серия «Постсоветские и восточноевропейские исследования», 2015. – 275 с. URL : http://biblioclub.ru/index.php?page=book&id=457814 (accessed : 06.03.2020).

154. Жарский А. Военная политика государств северной Европы / Жарский А., Коршунов Э. // Защита и Безопасность. 2009. № 1 (48). – С. 34-36. URL : https://www.elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=14349572 (accessed : 08.03.2020).

155. Зверев Ю. М. Вооруженные Силы И Инфраструктура НАТО В Странах Прибалтики // Прибалтийские исследования в России. – 2016. – С. 110-116. URL : https://www.elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=27354322 (accessed : 10.04.2020).

156. Манойло А. В Военно-политическая деятельность НАТО в странах Балтии на современном этапе / Манойло А.В , Ф.О. Трунов // Проблемы европейской безопасности. – 2018. – № 3. – С. 159-175. URL: https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/voenno-politicheskaya-deyatelnost-nato-v-stranah-baltii-na-sovremennom-etape (accessed : 10.04.2020).

157. Трунов Ф.О. Наращивание присутствия НАТО в Восточной Европе: особенности и последствия // АПЕ. – 2017. – № 3. – С. 177-198. URL: https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/naraschivanie-prisutstviya-nato-v-vostochnoy-evrope-osobennosti-i-posledstviya (accessed: 23.04.2020).

158. Уткин А.И. Два берега Атлантики / А.И. Уткин // Институт США и Канады. – 1999. – № 2. URL : http://www.iskran.ru/russ/mag/utkin.html (accessed : 16.02.2020).

j) *Books*

159. Chapter 14. Hunter R. Toward NATO Enlargement: The Role of USNATO // Open Door: NATO and Euro- Atlantic Security After the Cold War / D. S. Hamilton, K. Spohr, eds. Washington, 2019. School of Advanced International Studies Johns Hopkins University. – pp. 297-337. URL: https://transatlanticrelations.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/14-Hunter.pdf (accessed: 11.11.19).

160. Kriz Z. NATO after the End of the Cold War / Z. Kriz. MUNI Press: Brno, 2015. – 126 p. URL: https://munispace.muni.cz/library/catalog/book/801 (accessed: 13.11.19).

161. Silova, I. From Sites of Occupation to Symbols of Multiculturalism: Re-conceptualizing Minority Education in Post-Soviet Latvia. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

k) *Interviews of scholars*

162. Интервью В.П. Воробьева. Правовое положение национальных меньшинств в Латвии и Эстонии: исследование МГИМО // МГИМО. – 2011. – Ноябрь. – 09. URL : https://mgimo.ru/about/news/inno/212723/ (accessed: 14.11.2019).

163. Interview with Jakub Grygiel and Wess Mitchell. Post Crimea Europe: NATO In the Age of Limited Wars // The Small Wars. 2015. June. 02. URL: https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/post-crimea-europe-nato-in-the-age-of-limited-wars (accessed: 16.03.20).

164. Interview with H. Kissinger "We are in a very, very grave period" // Russia in Global Affairs. 2018. June. 24. URL: https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/articles/we-are-in-a-very-very-grave-period/ (accessed: 18.03.20).

l) *Publications in mass media*

165. 25 years ago today: Iceland recogises Estonia and Latvia // Iceland Monitor. – 2016. – August. – 22. URL: https://icelandmonitor.mbl.is/news/politics_and_society/2016/08/22/25_years_ago_today_iceland_recognises_estonia_and_l/ (accessed: 11.11.19).

166. Border controls // Economist. – 2010. – January. – 14. URL: https://www.economist.com/europe/2010/01/14/border-controls (accessed: 05.03.20);

167. Borger J. Russians open new front after Estonian official is captured in 'cross-border raid' / J. Borger // The Guardian. – 2014. – September. –07. URL: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/07/russia-parades-detained-estonian-police-officer (accessed: 18.03.20).

168. Collier M. The Image Makers: Estonia / Collier M. // The Baltic Times. – 2008. – July. – 16. URL: https://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/20839/ (accessed: 03.03.20);

169. Collier M. The Image Makers: Latvia / Collier M. // The Baltic Times. – 2008. – July. – 29. URL: https://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/20951/ (accessed: 03.03.20).

170. Erlanger S. NATO Allies Oppose Bush on Georgia and Ukraine / S. Erlanger, S. L. Myers // The New York Times. 2008. April. 03. URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/03/world/europe/03nato.html (accessed: 03.03.20).

171. Erlanger S. Russian Aggression Puts NATO in Spotlight / Erlanger S. // The New York Times. – 2014. – March. – 18. URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/19/world/europe/russias-aggression-in-crimea-brings-nato-into-renewed-focus.html (accessed: 18.03.20).

172.	Latvia denies that it is planning to build NATO military base in coastal city of Liepaja // UAWire. – 2016. – December. – 11. URL: https://uawire.org/news/latvia-denies-that-it-is-planning-to-build-nato-military-base-in-coastal-city-of-liepaja (accessed: 23.04.2020).

173.	Lithuania invokes Nato treaty on Ukraine // EUOBSERVER. – 2014. – March. – 01. URL: https://euobserver.com/tickers/123321 (accessed: 18.03.20).

174.	Lithuanian, Latvian leaders hope to resolve sea border dispute within 4 years // The Baltic Course. – 2019. – October. – 03. URL: http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/baltic_states/?doc=151774&output=d (accessed: 14.11.19).

175.	Lithuania to host more NATO exercises, chief of defence says// The Lithuanian Tribute. – 2014. – November. – 19. URL: https://lithuaniatribune.com/lithuania-to-host-more-nato-exercises-chief-of-defence-says/ (accessed: 27.03.20).

176.	Macron: NATO's Enemy Is Terrorism, Not Russia Or China // Radio Free Europe. – 2019. – November. – 28. URL: https://www.rferl.org/a/macron-nato-terrorism-russia-china/30297274.html (accessed: 16.03.20).

177.	Multinational exercise Iron Wolf 2017 to kick off in Lithuania // Delfi.en. – 2017. – June. – 12. URL: https://en.delfi.lt/politics/multinational-exercise-iron-wolf-2017-to-kick-off-in-lithuania.d?id=74909786 (accessed: 27.03.2020).

178.	NATO Chief Seeks Defense Plan For Allies Near Russia // Radio Free Europe. – 2008. – October. – 08. URL:
https://www.rferl.org/a/NATO_Chief_Seeks_Defense_Plan_For_Allies_Near_Russia/1294304.html (accessed: 05.03.20).

179.	Poland signs $4.75bn deal to buy US Patriot missiles // BBC. – 2018. – March. – 28. URL: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-43574308 (accessed: 27.03.20).

180.	Poland to spend $414 million on Lockheed's HIMARS mobile rocket system // The Defense Post. – 2019. – February. – 10. URL: https://www.thedefensepost.com/2019/02/10/poland-himars-lockheed-414-million/ (accessed: 27.03.20).

181.	Rivera J. BALTOPS 2010 Kicks Off / J. Rivera // America's Navy. – 2010. – June. – 09. URL: https://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story_id=53916 (accessed: 08.03.20).

182.	Shanker T. U.S. and Poland Set Missile Deal / T. Shanker, Kulish N. // The NY Times. – 2008. – August. – 14. URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/15/world/europe/15poland.html (accessed: 06.03.20).

183.	Traynor I.WikiLeaks cables reveal secret NATO plans to defend Baltics from Russia / Traynor I.// The Guardian. – 2010. – December. – 06. URL: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/dec/06/wikileaks-cables-nato-russia-baltics (accessed: 05.03.20).

184.   Vandiver J. SACEUR: Allies must prepare for Russia 'hybrid war'/ Vandiver J. // Stars and Stripes. – 2014. – September. – 04. URL: https://www.stripes.com/news/saceur-allies-must-prepare-for-russia-hybrid-war-1.301464 (accessed: 16.03.20).

185.   U.S. to deploy 500 troops to Lithuania in fresh signal to Russia // Reuters. 2019. September. 25. URL: https://www.reuters.com/article/usa-russia-lithuania/us-to-deploy-500-troops-to-lithuania-in-fresh-signal-to-russia-idUSL5N26G2VC (accessed: 23.04.2020).

186.   Westad O.A. The Cold War and America's Delusion of Victory / O.A. Westad // The New York Times. – 2017. – August. – 28. URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/28/opinion/cold-war-american-soviet-victory.html (accessed: 13.11.19);

187.   WikiLeaks cables reveal secret Nato plans to defend Baltics from Russia // The Guardian. – 2010. – December. – 06. URL: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/dec/06/wikileaks-cables-nato-russia-baltics (accessed: 08.03.20).

188.   Wintour P. Turkey denies blackmailing Nato over Baltics defence plan / P.Wintour // The Guardian. – 2019. – December. – 02. URL: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/dec/02/turkey-denies-blackmailing-nato-over-baltics-defence-plan (accessed: 16.03.20).

189.   Блок НАТО разошелся на блокпакеты // Коммерсантъ. – 2008. – Апрель. – 07. URL: https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/877224 (accessed: 03.03.20).

190.   Европа раскололась об Грузию // Коммерсантъ. – 2008. – Август. – 12. URL: https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1011125 (accessed: 04.03.20).

191.   Искандер» в Калининграде // Голос Америки. – 2013. – Декабрь. – 16. URL: https://www.golos-ameriki.ru/a/kaliningrad-iskander-rockets/1811374.html (accessed: 06.03.20).

192.   "Искандеры" пока не направят в Калининград // Коммерсантъ. – 2009. – January. – 29. URL: https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1109749 (accessed: 06.03.20).

193.   Медведев ответил на ЕвроПРО // РИА Новости. – 2011. – Ноябрь. – 23. URL: https://ria.ru/20111123/496002002.html (accessed: 06.03.20);

194.   Медведев развернет комплексы «Искандер» в Калининграде // Коммерсантъ. – 2008. – Novermber. – 05. URL: https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1080063 (accessed: 06.03.20).

195.   Неграждане в Прибалтике: 10 лет на решение вопроса? // ВВС. – 2014. – Ноябрь. – 11. URL: https://www.bbc.com/russian/international/2014/11/141104_statelessness_issue_baltic_states (accessed: 18.03.20).

m) Graphic schemes

196.   Williams I. The Russia – NATO A2AD Environment / I. Williams // Missile Threat. – 2017. – January. – 03. URL: https://missilethreat.csis.org/russia-nato-a2ad-environment/ (accessed: 27.03.20).

197.   Зверев С. Инфографика: Инфраструктура НАТО в Прибалтике: основные объекты / Зверев С. // Евразия Эксперт. 2018. Декабря. 14. URL: https://eurasia.expert/infografika-infrastruktura-nato-v-pribaltike-osnovnye-obekty/ (accessed: 27.03.20).

Abbreviations

A2/AD	Anti-Access/Anti-Denial
BALTBAT	Baltic Batalion
BALTCCIS	Baltic Challenge Exercises, Baltic Command and Control Informational System
BALDEFCOL	Baltic Defense College
BALTNET	Baltic Air Surveillance Network
BAP	Baltic Air Policing
BALTOPS	Baltic Operations
BALTSEA	Baltic Security Assistance Forces
CCDCOE	Cooperative Cyber Defense Centre of Excellence
C2	Command and control
EDI	European Deterrence Initiative
eFP	Enhanced Forward Presence
EPAA	European Phased Adaptive Approach
MAP	Membership Action Plan
NAB	NATO Air Base
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NACC	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NATINAMDS	NATO Integrated Air Defense System
NRF	NATO Response Force
NSNW	Non-strategic nuclear weapons
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PfP	Partnership for Peace
RAP	Readiness Action Plan
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
StratCom	Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence
VJTF	Very High Readiness Joint Task Force
TD/UW	Total Defense and Counteraction to Unconventional Warfare