

**University "St.Kliment Ohridski" - Bitola**  
**Faculty of Security - Skopje**

# **Security** *Horizons*

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**THE EURO - ATLANTIC VALUES  
IN THE BALKAN COUNTRIES**

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**Dear,**

The topic of the International Scientific Conference in Ohrid 2020 should create assumptions through scientific articles and through debate to offer answers about the situation with the implementation of Euro-Atlantic values of the Balkan countries. This is important because there are three European Union member states (Greece, Bulgaria and Croatia) in this area, which are also members of the NATO Alliance (Northern Macedonia joins this group, Albania and Montenegro), and other countries (such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia) are outside these structures.

This position of the countries in relation to the Euro-Atlantic integration causes numerous interactions and relations, which in many ways are specific, both for the relations between the Balkan countries and in terms of the application of criteria and values in the relations between the countries separately. The conflicting historical past has created the impression that "the Balkans are a powder keg", which is causing turmoil in politics, not only in Europe but also beyond. In that sense, it is good to create space, the academic community of the Balkan countries and beyond to try through the analysis of practices from the application of Euro-Atlantic values to offer new insights that will serve to strengthen the idea of Europe as a common home.

**The conference will present papers on the following topics:**

- ❖ ▪ Democracy, rule of law, human rights, their promotion and forms of protection
- ❖ ▪ International Standards for the Protection of Human and Citizen's Freedoms and Rights and the Policies of the Balkan States
- ❖ ▪ Forms of protection of freedoms and rights - experiences and perspectives
- ❖ ▪ Strengthening the rule of law and accountability of institutions
- ❖ ▪ Democracy, forms of democratic participation in government and governance
- ❖ ▪ Contemporary Criminal Theories and Crime Management
- ❖ ▪ Elections, Election Models, Electoral Participation, Election Campaigns, Free, Fair, Democratic Elections
- ❖ ▪ Accountability, transparency, control and accountability of public officials and entities exercising public authority

- ❖ ▪ Peace, non-violence and respect for the identity of man and citizen
- ❖ ▪ Freedom and equality, equality between nations, right to self-determination, national identity and dignity
- ❖ ▪ Respect for the freedoms and rights of the individual and citizen
- ❖ ▪ Individual freedoms
- ❖ ▪ Economic Freedoms and Rights
- ❖ ▪ Civil and Political Freedoms and Rights
- ❖ ▪ Equality, individual and collective, gender equality
- ❖ ▪ Solidarity, support for others, tolerance, respect for other cultures
- ❖ ▪ Religion and attitude towards traditional and other values
- ❖ ▪ Non-violence, peaceful settlement of disputes, mediation, arbitration, democratic dialogue
- ❖ ▪ How to deal with violence and terrorism
- ❖ ▪ Relation to nature and its sustainability
- ❖ ▪ Euro-Atlantic values and contemporary challenges, risks and threats
- ❖ ▪ Strategic Security Documents and Their Importance for realization of the Security Policies
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- ❖ ▪ Parliamentary control over the security system
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- ❖ ▪ Approaches to cases of domestic violence
- ❖ ▪ Cooperation between business entities between legal certainty and security threats and risks
- ❖ ▪ Regional cooperation and regional economic policies
- ❖ ▪ The Role of International Organizations in Promoting and Implementing International Norms for the Protection of Human Rights in the Balkans

- ❖ ▪ Contemporary forms of crime and ways of overcoming them
- ❖ ▪ Contemporary forms of cybercrime (electronic: fraud, fraud, threats, theft of personal data and other forms of electronic fraud and crime)
- ❖ ▪ Forms of crime related to internet and cyber services and how they are discovered
- ❖ ▪ Criminalistic experiences, achievements, methods, means and means of combating modern forms of crime.
- ❖ ▪ Comparative experiences and the latest anti-corruption mechanisms
- ❖ ▪ The types of corruption in the security system and the judiciary

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**THE EURO-ATLANTIC VALUES IN  
THE BALKAN COUNTRIES**

## **MILITARY STRATEGIES OF SMALL COUNTRY AND GEOPOLITICAL CHANGE**

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### ***Abstract***

The current global order is in the process of building new relations. The beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the seemingly stable liberal order were brought into question with several unexpected events which created great insecurity and pressure on small countries so as to adapt their defense strategies to the changing security environment. Analyzing the issue of small country military strategies, the authors of the paper begin with theoretical considerations of the concepts of small country and military strategy with a brief overview of the history of the subject terms. Given the fact that there is no commonly accepted definition of small countries and that these are most often presented through certain quantitative elements, the authors consider small countries from the perspective of their ability to address key security and defense issues. On the other hand, it is evident that small countries are exposed to a range of security challenges and impacts which determine, among other things, the content of their military strategies. In order to gain greater security and stability, as well as greater influence, and meet their economic or political needs, small countries determine their military strategies in order to increase their chances of survival. In addition, the paper analyzes geopolitical changes based on neorealist principles focused on small countries, which recommend that countries adapt their strategies quickly to changes in the external environment. However, every country has different historical experience of conflicts and wars, as well as unique geographical features in terms of expansion and relative closeness to friendly or threatening major powers. Different experience also results in different military strategies, as well as participation in any military and political alliances. As an analytic framework, the authors link elements of neorealism (conceptualization of the international system) with subsequent neoclassicist and realistic studies of the politics of alliances, characteristics of

different levels of countries, and research within strategic studies related to the concept of strategy. Additionally, in terms of geopolitical changes the authors specifically analyze current events such as the terrorist attack on the USA, the Ukrainian conflict, the rise of the Islamic State, and use as the references military strategies of Latvia, Denmark and Lithuania.

*Key words: small countries, military strategy, defense strategy, geopolitical change, alliance, neutrality, national interests*

## INTRODUCTION

From the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the last phase of the Napoleonic Wars to the present, the concept of small countries remained inextricably bound to the concept of small powers. Viewed from the perspective of great powers, small countries were too weak in terms of their military capability to act as guardians of international order or peace treaties. This view was developing gradually during the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and the important event was the creation of the League of Nations, which offered institutional and organizational platform with opportunities for small countries to exert significant influence from time to time [Neumann, et al., 2004: 3-6] . When analyzing foreign and security policy studies of small countries, it can be observed that these were adapted and directed towards the most important developments in international relations and structural changes and events in international politics. In the interwar period and after the World War II, research focused on their position in the system of international organizations, especially in the League of Nations and the UN system. Subsequently, the interest in small countries began to fade while rising the preoccupation with bipolar tension between the USSR and the USA. In the later development of discourses on research about small countries, in the 1970s were introduced the topics related to dependency and economic cooperation between countries. This was reflected in general shift in the study of international relations with the increasing interest in international political economy and issues related to the concept of interdependence and the operation of international organizations [Neumann, et al., 2004: 6-8].

Over a long period of history, much of international relations theory has focused on the role of great powers. Explanations of the behavior of small countries have traditionally been either ignored or simplified. For

example, most supporters of the realist theory hold that, when faced with a threat, small countries should confront it on their own or treat the threat in accordance with the rules of conduct of the alliance in which they are. Subject generalization exists in theoretical considerations, but the reality is vastly different. Large number of small countries have traditionally chosen neutrality during security threats rather than linking or balancing. This obvious contradiction did not fit into realist theories despite its reality. Therefore, the role of small countries is generally little understood and at the same time overgeneralized. When small countries act in ways that envisage theories built on great powers, they affirm prejudices that great powers can be ignored; when small countries act beyond theoretical predictions, they are ignored as irrelevant to international relations because of the dominance of great powers. In the modern world, with the end of the Cold War and the slow transfer of international relations theory to the study of regions and regional issues, many scientists begin to turn their attention to the role of medium or small countries [Neal, et al., 2016: 3-4].

Further development of the small country concept studies did not develop particularly until the early 1990s. The period after the end of the Cold War represented an opportune moment for the development of the studies on small countries. In particular, the increase in the number of small countries, structural changes and events in the world of international politics and the movements within the theory of international relations, globalization and regional integration processes, as well as the issues related to the economies and foreign policies of small countries, contributed to this. The institutional changes and enlargements of the EU and NATO have resulted in a renewed focus on the strategies of small countries in the context of new institutional relations. Furthermore, the creation of new countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the ethnopolitical conflicts following the breakup of former multiethnic countries initiated focusing attention on small countries. In theoretical discussions within international relations theory, the end of the Cold War was used as an opportunity to challenge neorealistic theory. Since the early 1990s, social constructivism with a focus on international norms, ideas, roles, and identities has established new research patterns that have further benefited the academic field of the research of small countries [Archer et al., 2014: 68-72].

## **THE TERM OF SMALL COUNTRY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

There is no consensus on a unique definition of a small country, and in particular there is a lack of criteria that should be used to classify a country as a small country. However, there are many potential considerations, including population, territorial size, gross domestic product, military expenditures, and the like [Thorhallsson & Wivel, 2006: 653]. Population, which is highly correlated with size and GDP, is often used as an easy way to identify small countries and can support highlighting the limited resources of countries [World Bank, 2000]. However, even in the circumstances where the population is used, there is no consensus, although it is common to have a range of 1.5 to 15 million people [World Bank, 2000] used by international organizations such as the World Bank [Thorhallsson, 2012: 136]. However, there is caution in this case too, as more than a quarter of the World Bank member countries have 1.5 million or fewer inhabitants. These countries are located worldwide and predominantly in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific [World Bank, 2016]. Small countries differ drastically in their geographical circumstances because they range from poor island countries that depend, among other things, on fishing, to rich European countries, and considering their economic potential, they also differ drastically in their degree of development and the size of their economy.

Although many small countries have small economies, some are among the richest countries in the world. For example, Bahrain has about 1.4 million and a GDP of 66.37 billion of US dollars, which is about the same as the Democratic Republic of the Congo with 81 million inhabitants. Despite their diversity and the danger of overgeneralization, there are certain challenges common to many small countries because of their size and geographical characteristics. Namely, small countries often depend on a limited range of economic activities, a small resource base and small domestic markets. This prevents them from diversifying into a wider range of activities, making them more vulnerable to economic change and crises. In circumstances where dominant economic activity is declining, it also has consequences on the entire economy, exposing the population to economic and social instability [World Bank 2016].

However, despite these dilemmas, the concept of a small country has always been a relative term. The qualification of a country as a small country is only grounded in relation to large countries. Large countries generally dominate in international relations in a complex international system. Usually, great powers establish not only the norms and structures of an international system, but also the regional security hierarchy [Goetschel, 1998: 13-14]

Categorization of countries by their territorial space or population size used to be considered crucial. What is now called strategic depth and military strength were the important factors determining the survival of countries. Small countries were not just smaller than others, and the consequences of this relative quality could be absolute. The importance of "smallness" depends on the notion of power and the nature of the international system. Power is positioned as one of the most basic concepts of political science, whereby the political process is essentially the formation, distribution and exercise of power. In international relations theories is known that "statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined as power." But what is power? In a positive sense, power can be defined as the capacity of an individual or a group to modify the behavior of other individuals or groups in the way they desire. "In a negative sense, it is the ability to prevent others from influencing their behavior." The first form of power can be called influence, the second is a form of autonomy [Morgenthau, 1967: 5].

Quantitative criteria for qualifying a country as a small one or a large one such as geographical size, population size, GDP, or number of diplomatic missions were believed to indicate the degree to which today's country would like to influence operations outside its immediate environment, and more importantly, the degree to which its leaders would be prepared to take risks in pursuing extra-regional goals [Vital, 1971: 50-51].

When we discuss about power, the term "small" can be characterized as the effect of creating influence and lack of autonomy. Small countries have relatively small impact on their international environment, and their autonomy with respect to the environment is relatively small. Small countries are less powerful than larger ones. They suffer from a power deficit. The question is to what extent purely quantitative factors influence this deficit of power. To what extent do such factors affect the country's foreign and security policy? In addition to the basic division between influence and autonomy, different material dimensions of power must be distinguished.

Since power is differently defined and interpreted as a possibility of transformation from one form to another, it influences that the country can be large and small at the same time. Usual indicator of power used to be limited to the availability of military and economic instruments. The increasing complexity of the international environment has also affected the resources of power as the traditional ones lost their importance and new resources developed. There are situations where quantitative attributes of power do not matter. Small countries can try to make up for their traditional quantitative weakness by highlighting qualitative virtues, such as mediating peacebuilding and stability, building partnerships and trusts and other non-coercive means [Rothstein, 1968: 26]. Power can be the result of the negotiation process. Such power is called "negotiation power" or "bargaining power". These dimensions of power may, of course, be influenced by quantitative indicators of power, such as military or economic resources [Keohane et al., 1989: 2].

### **CHANGES IN THE STRATEGIES OF SMALL COUNTRIES**

During the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the defense (military) policy of small countries has undergone two fundamental reviews, facing the expansion of security agendas and the increasing institutionalization of security. Firstly, the traditional dichotomy by which police forces guarantee internal security and the armed forces guard borders is completely blurred. Today's post-conflict operations are increasingly relying on international military and police forces that have been "pulled out" of national contingents [Lutterbeck, 2004: 46-48]. Similarly, the role of the armed forces has now been expanded to support counterterrorism efforts, protect critical infrastructure and respond to environmental and industrial disasters, and assist the civilian population. Secondly, the new style of international operations characterized by long distance also requires the specialization of forces involved in multinational cooperation. To participate, even the smallest country needs to have interoperable expeditionary capabilities. Thus the armed forces of small countries face more diverse and complex missions that require ever more sophisticated capabilities and professional staff. Therefore, small military forces with limited resources that have traditionally relied on recruits have had evident problems in achieving interoperability, which has also led to a change in priorities and methods.

In addition to the aforementioned, the armed forces are required for national needs to increase cooperation with the civilian sector, especially in accomplishing tasks such as the fight against terrorism, NBC protection, control of illegal migration and the like. On the other hand, at the international level, they have to find opportunities that are useful for certain types of operations in which they wish to participate (peacekeeping, peace enforcement, stabilization, reconstruction), which often means building specialties (capabilities) [Rickli, 2008: 308–310]. Focusing on such specific tasks may give small countries special capabilities, which they can trade in creating international partnerships, but this further limits them to develop a wider range of capabilities. The overall result is that small countries become even more dependent on their stronger partners, both to handle wide range of security missions and probably to defend their territory.

Modern small countries can try to mitigate "hard" realistic challenges by directing their own influence on changing the rules of the game in international relations. An example of this can be found in the Nordic countries, which have exerted their influence on global norms and ambitions in the areas of sustainable development, peaceful conflict resolution and the like. Starting from a distant geographical location and with limited material resources, the Nordics sought multiplier effects of their ideas through institutions, especially in the UN and OSCE, where there are many small and medium countries and which share similar views on many common issues [Ingebritsen, 2002: 18- 21].

Regardless of whether they are small or large countries, changes in strategies also cause geopolitical changes, which vary in size and origin. Some strategic changes present the expected continuation of a trend influencing the changes in strategic environment. On the other hand, there are unimaginable or at least unpredictable events, although in retrospect there have always been some clues that are often overlooked or unnoticed. Nevertheless, strategic change is an event that is not expected by the political elite as likely and whose consequences are particularly significant (Gray 2014: 197). Strategic change has the effect of forcing affected countries and its institutions to fundamentally reorient strategies, strategic plans and missions (Freier 2008: 2). However, it is extremely objective to argue that the very occurrence of strategic change depends in part on the perception, assessment and reactions of key actors. The political elite in one country may not be experiencing change the way it is perceived by the political authorities

in another country, in other words, strategic changes have different effects on different countries.

**EXAMPLE OF SMALL COUNTRY MILITARY STRATEGY CHANGE IN THE SHADOW OF GEOPOLITICAL CHANGE- CASE STUDY**

The terrorist attacks on the United States of America dating September 11<sup>th</sup> have, among other things, been the cause of transformations in various fields, including defense systems in many countries. The aforementioned event can be seen as unexpected and with profound consequences. In this regard, the Danish government rejected the possibility

*Table 1: Budgetary allocations for the defense of Denmark*

<b>Year</b>	<b>GDP %</b>	<b>Billions of US</b>
<b>2005</b>	1,31	3,47
<b>2006</b>	1,38	3,90
<b>2007</b>	1,31	4,18
<b>2008</b>	1,36	4,79
<b>2009</b>	1,35	4,34
<b>2010</b>	1,40	4,50
<b>2011</b>	1,31	4,52
<b>2012</b>	1,35	4,42
<b>2013</b>	1,23	4,22
<b>2014</b>	1,15	4,06
<b>2015</b>	1,11	3,36
<b>2016</b>	1,15	3,59
<b>2017</b>	1,15	3,76
<b>2018</b>	1,18	4,23

of a direct military threat. The analysis of the international environment has been shifted from NATO's immediate neighborhood to the Middle East, and in particular to Afghanistan and Iraq. Denmark has been steadily increasing its involvement in managing international crises, and contributing to international peace and

[World Bank: 2018]

stability, especially in military terms, has been major objective. [Edstrom et al., 2019: 86]

Despite the absence of direct military challenges, the defense of the Danish territory and its citizens continued to be a focus of attention. Prosperity and respect for human rights have gradually received increasing attention, and the prevention of crises and wars has been prioritized over managing their consequences. Initially, it was considered necessary to have a fairly wide range of military resources to implement defense policy, with the focus on readiness and quality over quantity. In this regard, special forces were the only formations that increased in size, while other capacities were

reduced or even discontinued. For example, strategic and operational transport capacities were given priority, while land-based air defense systems were abolished. At the political-strategic level, cooperation with key partners, both on the use of force and on prospects for future cooperation, gained their primacy. This applies primarily to NATO and the USA. Proactivity was declared the most important approach, however it was not specified exactly what it represented when using Danish military power as part of USA and NATO-led operations.

Russia's military attack on Ukraine and the establishment of the caliphate and its terrorist regime have also been interpreted as important events globally by the Danish government. Russian military interventions and international terrorism have already been more or less known phenomena, but the magnitude of every event has been unexpected. Each of mentioned events led to deeply consequential and demanding countermeasures decided by Danish political elite. Danish analysis of international environment focused on four separate areas. It was essentially the mainland of Denmark and the risks of direct terrorist attacks on Danish territory. The Middle East and North Africa were strongly associated with these considerations. On the one hand, volatile political and social conditions were fertile ground for terrorist organizations to recruit new members. On the other hand, civil war and armed violence forced millions to flee their homes, seeking safe haven in Europe and potentially in Denmark. Increased Russian involvement in the region, and in Syria in particular, raised concerns, as well as increased Russian military activity in the Baltic Sea region, highlighted that perception. Even if Russia was not always explicitly mentioned when the focus was on the Arctic, it was still clear that Danish concerns about Greenland and the Faroe Islands included some uncertainty about Russian intentions. The same could be said about the perceived challenges from cyber domains. The overall conclusion is that security threats in the immediate environment, and in particular the armed conflict in Ukraine, have revived Denmark's security policy [Edstrom et al., 2019: 150].

Danish discussions of defense and security objectives have often used general term, national interest, as a starting point. When the interests of protecting Danish sovereignty as well as the security of the Danes are specified, these are defined as preventing terrorist attacks and defending the territories of NATO member countries. Other goals included promoting Western values, preserving stability in the region and the Middle East, and

detering potential threats of attacks on Denmark and NATO allies. There has been obviously a clear link between the perception of the international environment and national interests. There also appears to have been a connection to the funds, although the resources have become quite negligible. The military units and their combat means presented rather modest military power. In this regard, there was an ambition to upgrade certain military formations to the level of two brigades, with different levels of readiness. On the other hand, the abolition of the F-16 system and the introduction of the F-35 system would mean the impossibility of international involvement of the air force over several years. Even so, special forces increased in number, and one of the reasons was the creation of cyber warfare capabilities. It is important to note that the use of force have had perspective dominance in considerations. Preferred methods and means were still proactive in nature, even if the decline in number, as well as the transformation of the air force, clearly affected the awareness of Danish strategists about what they could actually do. The shift in focus towards Eastern Europe clearly influenced the Danish strategy. From the Danish point of view, the main objective in the war against the Islamic state was objectively defined to contribute to the final victory and remain a reliable ally [Edstrom et al., 2019: 182].

Traditionally, Latvia has based its defense policy on NATO membership, contributing to collective defense and building strategic partnerships with member countries such as the USA, Norway, Denmark and several others in order to develop and maintain certain military capabilities. However, with the onset of the Ukrainian crisis and the formation of joint expeditionary forces by the United Kingdom, the awakening of Germany, Poland's willingness to play a role in the defense of the Baltic countries, and the deployment of a Canadian multinational battalion on the Latvian territory created a complex picture of Latvia's bilateral cooperation. Latvia, on the other hand, began to integrate total defense into its national security strategy. The strategy is focused on resilience by increasing the ability to resist hybrid threats that may be economic, political and technological in nature, to counter the information war and, like Estonia, to increase social cohesion. Most of the measures aimed at enhancing Latvia's defense capabilities followed the events in Ukraine [Rostoks & Vanaga, 2016: 74-76].

The most important decision made in recent years has been to increase defense spending by up to 2% of GDP. In doing so, Lithuania wanted to show NATO that it took seriously the threat posed by Russia. But

it is quite understandable that even 2% of GDP for defense expenditures is not enough to implement adequate deterrence. Accordingly, Latvia expects the support of other NATO member countries either in developing self-defense capabilities or through participation in NATO policies on the Eastern wing.

In addition to the aforementioned, the armed conflict in Ukraine has affected Latvia's basic views on security. Most importantly, much of Latvia's security analysis was based on the assumption that stability in the Baltic region was

Table 1.: Budgetary allocations for the defense of Latvia

<b>Year</b>	<b>GDP %</b>	<b>Billions of US \$</b>
<b>2005</b>	1,61	0,27
<b>2006</b>	1,72	0,37
<b>2007</b>	1,56	0,48
<b>2008</b>	1,63	0,58
<b>2009</b>	1,39	0,36
<b>2010</b>	1,09	0,26
<b>2011</b>	1,04	0,30
<b>2012</b>	0,91	0,26
<b>2013</b>	0,94	0,28
<b>2014</b>	0,94	0,30
<b>2015</b>	1,05	0,28
<b>2016</b>	1,47	0,41
<b>2017</b>	1,68	0,51
<b>2018</b>	1,98	0,68

[World Bank: 2018]

highly dependent on NATO and its superiority, and that Russia would not dare openly challenge the sovereignty and territorial integrity of any NATO member state. From the analysis of the State Defense Concept, it can be seen that Latvia bases its policy on the extended defense concept provided by NATO (military presence and rapid reaction capability) and the central deterrence that is achieved at the national level.

The second, important step was to improve decision-making and command procedures during the crisis. The legal framework was reviewed and necessary adjustments were made. For example, the authority of the Minister of Defense and the Commander of Units in the event of a surprise attack were extended. Numerous exercises were organized, involving different institutions to improve coordination and cooperation as well as the decision-making process. Civil-military cooperation between the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Internal Affairs was intensified significantly, formulating preventive actions should the Ukrainian scenario be repeated in Latvia. Much emphasis was placed on cooperation with border services. The Ministry of Defense has been conducting regular training of the border services, which has been, among other things, updated with new weapons and

equipment and new regulations provide for integration into the armed forces in the event of a crisis [Vanaga 2017: 70].

Thirdly, most of the funding was allocated to strengthen the defense of the territory by improving combat capabilities of the armed forces, procuring necessary weapons and equipment, training of personnel and investing in infrastructure. Latvia's long-term development plan for the armed forces (2012-2024) was revised shortly after the Ukrainian crisis. The new long-term development plan 2016-2028 has defined military capabilities such as special operations forces, national guards, mechanized ground forces, air defense and surveillance, command and control (including cyber security), intelligence, electronic warfare and cyber security [ Sharaka 2017: 12]. In addition, a set of measures was implemented to provide personnel not only for the development of new military capabilities, but also for the formation of a reserve. Related to this has been an increase in the armed forces of 600 soldiers a year. The personnel is increased from the existing 5,000 to 7,000 soldiers. Most recruits are directed at the Land Brigades and the National Guard. Particular attention is focused on the National Guard's willingness to strengthen territorial defense. The continuing underfunding of the National Guard has left a serious impact on its ability to fulfill its tasks. Finally, the fifth activity is active strategic communication at national level led by the government and the Ministry of Defense in an effort to achieve different goals. At the national level, wide-range campaigns to raise patriotism in society among others are conducted by the government.

Russia's occupation of Crimea and the intensification of the conflict in eastern Ukraine in 2014 spurred major changes in Lithuania's strategic thinking and political action. In just a few years' time, Lithuania has topped the list of NATO members in terms of its defense spending by accelerated increase of its defense budget.

Among other things, the reason for this should be found in the fact that when confronted with the assessment of potential Russian aggression, it was observed that the Lithuanian army was very weak and without military reserve, which also prompted a political decision to reintroduce recruiting. In February 2015, the Lithuanian Defense Council, as the highest security institution, decided to reintroduce mandatory nine-month military service with the plan to train approximately 3,500 Lithuanian citizens annually.

The renewal of the nine-month recruitment period also marked the transition of Lithuania into a mixed model of replenishment of the armed forces, which should contribute to more effective deterrence and better preparedness of the society for the defense of the country. Lithuanian society was surprisingly positive about the reintroduction of recruiting. The mainstream media played an important role in shaping this positive attitude. Despite some chaotic communication by official institutions in the days following the announcement of the decision to impose recruiting obligation, the dominant discourse among the main media actors was patriotic, which also supported that decision. Along with the reintroduction of the mandatory recruiting obligation, the Lithuanian army also made structural adjustments.

A new motorized infantry brigade was established - two battalions were transferred from the main mechanized infantry brigade, and additional battalions of artillery and infantry were established in the new motorized infantry brigade. Recruits became valuable for completing the

**Table 2: Budget allocations for the defense of Lithuania**

<b>Year</b>	<b>GDP %</b>	<b>Billions of US \$</b>
<b>2008</b>	1,13	0,54
<b>2009</b>	1,08	0,40
<b>2010</b>	0,88	0,33
<b>2011</b>	0,79	0,34
<b>2012</b>	0,77	0,33
<b>2013</b>	0,76	0,35
<b>2014</b>	0,88	0,43
<b>2015</b>	1,14	0,47
<b>2016</b>	1,48	0,64
<b>2017</b>	1,72	0,81
<b>2018</b>	1,96	1,03

[World Bank: 2018]

composition of the ground forces, accounting for about 30% of the personnel of the Lithuanian ground forces [MoD 2017b: 11].

However, the main force driving the Lithuanian army's change has been modernization. In doing so, it began with the view that Lithuania could not exceed quantitative characteristics of its adversaries, but therefore it must strive for the quality of the armaments and training of its units. That is why the modernization slogan is "see better, move faster, shoot further. That is why we need modernization and armaments." [Jakilaitis 2017]. In practice, this means upgrading military equipment through the implementation of new arms supply. The Lithuanian army has explained its shift to a new defense conception with the slogan "to fight with all we have" [MoD 2017b: 9].

Lithuanian security institutions have made considerable efforts to increase public awareness and resistance to potential Russian attempts to spread misinformation, to foment distrust in political institutions or to

provoke social destabilization. Since 2014, the State Security Department (SSD) and the Second Investigation Department (SEC) at the Ministry of Defense have been providing annual public reports on the assessment of national security threats. This was a deliberate move by Lithuanian intelligence services to provide the public with concrete information on Russian and Belarussian efforts to influence political processes, expand the information and energy sectors in Lithuania. These reports could be observed as active measures to cope with the massive inflow of Russian propaganda.

Despite the transformation of military doctrine and the start of modernization of the army, Lithuania is still in the early stages of establishing effective deterrent conditions. The credibility of deterrence, from Lithuania's strategic perspective, depends largely on how NATO's security guarantees could be applied in a practical and effective manner in the event of a conflict. Secondly, even reformed and modernized Lithuanian armed forces would have limited capabilities in the event of war. The concept of territorial defense is still under discussion, but no clear vision has been defined so far. However, without broad involvement of Lithuanian society, any territorial defense strategy would be doomed to failure. Thirdly, it is challenging to maintain longstanding awareness of military and soft security threats in Lithuanian society. Representative survey of the Lithuanian population on subjective evaluation of threats, conducted by the Lithuanian Social Research Center in 2016, showed that significant proportion of the population was already tired of negative information flows. Negative information about Russia and its potential threats does not always promote better understanding of what can be done to improve the country's security. According to the survey, 55% of Lithuanian respondents think that their society is not ready to stop the enemy attack, and only 17% think that Lithuania is ready for its defense [Vileikienė and Janušauskienė 2016: 129].

Fourthly, in order to establish a better defense, for Lithuania is strongly needed to continue closer military cooperation and integration with the other two Baltic countries and Poland. The military planners perceive the Baltic Sea as common operating space and the need for cooperation. However, there is a lack of common territorial defense planning among the Baltic countries; there is no interest in building regional defense planning mechanism; every nation has its own vision of how to do this and provide territorial defense in conflict and more willingly devote resources to fulfilling the set national tasks, rather than building multilateral planning capacities.

## CONCLUSION

The strategies of small countries are usually reactive because they adapt to external environment that cannot be shaped nor, in particular, controlled. However, there is room for maneuver for small countries. From the examples given in the paper, it can be concluded that strategic changes have been absorbed in the area of defense strategy. In addition, countries remain free to redirect their changes to other instruments of power without any implications of military strategies.

Historical experience and geographical characteristics are two of the most important elements in a country's strategic culture. Historical conflict experience - including perceived failures or successes of previous strategies, military defeats or victories, and experience of aggression or military assistance from other countries provide significant explanations and understandings of the defense strategies of small countries. Geographical proximity of great powers plays significant role in determining how small countries are defended, as it allows for understanding of strategic positioning and also presents strategic basis for every state.

Although the character of the deterrence concept has not changed, its practice has undergone some changes over the Cold War period. Nevertheless, the goal of deterrence for the Baltic countries in current circumstances remains the same, which is to persuade Russia not to launch military aggression against NATO member countries or any other European country. The onset of the Ukrainian crisis has been a shock to many in NATO and has led to the realization of how vulnerable the Baltic countries are and how much effort needs to be put to provide adequate defense. Addressing military and non-military threats in the Baltic countries is equally important. In military terms, the Baltic countries are considering how to increase their armed forces (Lithuania has renewed recruiting) and increase its self-defense capabilities. Much of the investment is directed at equipping and training the armed forces. The size of special operation forces has been multiplied many times in order to solve hybrid scenarios. Another area that has received particular attention is civil-military cooperation with the aim of ensuring full coordination of the most important national defense entities. There is a number of examples in the world of the countries which have shaped their defense strategies in line with the assessment of the events in international relations. Bearing in mind that a number of small countries have

decided to adhere to a certain alliance, it is a question of motivating another part of such countries to stay on the path of neutrality. It is also important to note that neutrality does not imply complete exclusion of its own capacities, but in most cases the development of defense capacities.

Moreover, it should be noted that the above geopolitical changes have been crucial for small countries to start deliberating and discussing their defense strategies. Namely, for almost two decades, small countries, whether NATO members or not, have focused on developing their armed forces to participate in international military operations. In addition, they relied heavily on the extended deterrence provided by key NATO member countries. On the other hand, geopolitical changes in the world have also influenced changes in the allocation of budget resources of small countries to the armed forces. The budget funds are primarily aimed at modernizing arms and equipment, as well as the formation of new organizational units of the armed forces in order to adequately respond to new changes in the environment of the analyzed countries.

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