

THE DISCREPANCY OF LITHUANIAN FOREIGN POLICY: “NORMATIVE” DEEDS FOR THE “REALPOLITIK” NEEDS?

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Abstract

This article aims at evaluating Lithuanian foreign policy in the context of the EU's normative power. First, a brief review of Lithuanian foreign policy prior to its membership in the EU and NATO, as well as the reload of Lithuanian foreign policy agenda immediately after its accession is presented and explanation of the rationale behind it is provided. This is followed by a discussion of issues concerning the normative dimension of recent Lithuanian foreign policy and its correspondence to the one of the EU. Subsequent analysis focuses primarily on (1) the role of norms and values in Lithuanian foreign policy; (2) Lithuania's main priorities and expectations in light of EU foreign policy; (3) the country's position on the introduction of political conditionality in EU external relations; and finally, (4) the human security dimension of Lithuanian foreign policy. The examination of the abovementioned questions results into the conclusion that Lithuania fails to become a beneficiary of and contributor to the EU's normative power mostly because, under the normative façade of its foreign policy, Lithuania's actions on international arena are still determined by the Realpolitik way of thinking.

Introduction

After becoming a fully fledged member of the European Union, Lithuania obtained both: the ability to gain from being part of the so-called “normative power Europe“, and the responsibility to contribute to the accumulation and exercise of this normative power. Six years of the EU membership when “the tremendous impact of EU enlargement on internal and foreign policy of Lithuania raises no doubts”,¹ give enough material already for the first and rough attempts to analyse how Lithuania manages to correspond to the challenges and turn to account the privileges of belonging to the “normative power Europe”.

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¹ Algirdas Gričius and Kęstutis Paulauskas, “EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy and Lithuania”. In *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review 2003*, Vilnius, 2004, p.81.

In this paper four interrelated aspects of Lithuanian foreign policy in the context of the EU as a normative power will be examined. These are as follows:

1. Fundamental values of Lithuanian foreign policy and their dissemination: What principles and values are present in Lithuanian foreign policy and are they its real drivers? What does Lithuania do to promote these values beyond its own boundaries as well as those of the EU?
2. Lithuanian foreign policy within the European context: What are Lithuania's main expectations towards EU policies in the regions of Lithuania's biggest concern?
3. Trade-off between values and benefit: What is Lithuanian viewpoint towards political conditionality in EU external relations?
4. Geographical limits of Lithuanian normative concern: How (if at all) is Lithuania contributing to the promotion and protection of human rights and rule of law around the globe? What is the role of human security dimension in Lithuania's foreign policy?

1. Two decades of Lithuanian foreign policy: the “return to Europe” and the quest for a niche

After Lithuania had regained and consolidated its independence in the early 1990s, the ultimate goal of its foreign policy since the end of 1993 – beginning of 1994 became what could be generally referred to as a “return of Lithuania to Europe”. The goals of EU and NATO membership prevailed in the political agenda of the first decade of independent Lithuania employing almost all means of foreign policy as well as a wide range of domestic policy measures.² Lithuanian political elite saw NATO as a guarantee of Lithuanian hard security attainable through the Article 5 commitments. Meanwhile, the EU membership was supposed to bring welfare and prosperity, thus embodying the “soft” dimension of national security.³

² Evaldas Nekrašas, “Lithuanian Foreign Policy: Concepts, Achievements and Predicaments”. In *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, 2004 13-14, p.29. and Evaldas Nekrašas, „Kritiniai pamąstymai apie Lietuvos užsienio politiką“. In *Politologija*, 2009 2(54), p. 124-125.

³ Gricius and Paulauskas, p. 82.

The priority (both in the political and in the popular perception, and at least till 1999) was given to Lithuanian NATO membership⁴ rather than to Lithuania's accession to the EU. In the cold-war sense, NATO was perceived as a shield against Russia,⁵ the constant fear of which was (and, to some extent, still remains) one of the main driving forces of Lithuanian foreign policy⁶, putting the issues of "hard security" high above those of "soft security" in Lithuanian political agenda of the time.⁷ Second, Lithuania historically considered the USA to be its most reliable ally and protector, much more trustworthy than "Old Europe". Unlike European countries, the USA had never recognised the legitimacy of the Soviet occupation of Lithuania and had always supported Lithuania's attempts at independence, though sometimes lacking political will to make official statements and, arguably, not so much for the sake of Lithuania itself, but rather in the overall context of the cold-war power race. Lithuanian mistrust in "Old Europe", namely France, Germany and the United Kingdom, was based, once again, on the history of having become a bargaining object for European powers since the 18th century (the partitions of the Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth) and throughout the inter-war period of the 20th century. In the minds of Lithuanian politicians, the opposition between the USA and Europe also originates from the times of the cold war when, striving to destroy the "evil empire" of the USSR, the *Realpolitik* of the USA was much more acceptable to Lithuanians than the European *Ostpolitik*, which aimed at peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union.⁸ This led to the common perception that, for Lithuania, membership in NATO with the USA as its pivot was a more trustworthy "road to success" in promoting national interests than the EU. Moreover, since the USA was enjoying

⁴ Evaldas Nekrašas, „NATO ir Europos Sąjungos santykių transformacija bei Lietuvos užsienio politika“. In *Šiaurės Atlanto erdvė ir Lietuva*. Vilnius, 2001, p. 17.

⁵ The awareness of Russia as a threat to Lithuanian national security has its roots in the centuries of hostile relations between the countries beginning with the tensions in the middle-ages and peaking in the long-lasting forcible incorporations of Lithuanian territories first into Russian Empire (1775 – 1918) and then into the Soviet Union (1940-41, 1944-1990). After the collapse of the USSR, Lithuanian - Russian relations gradually turned into much more diplomatic dialogue.

⁶ Gričius and Paulauskas, p. 83.

⁷ Nekrašas, "Kritiniai pamąstymai...", p.126.

⁸ For more information see Nortautas Statkus, Kęstutis Paulauskas, *Tarp geopolitikos ir postmoderno: kur link sukti Lietuvos užsienio politikai?* Vilnius, 2008, p. 45.

quite an influential role in European politics at the time, Lithuanian policy-makers believed that, if Lithuania was accepted to NATO, the EU membership would safely come along.

The popular belief of “waking up prosperous and secure just after entering the EU and NATO”, of course, could never come true. However, if someone felt the difference “the following morning”, these were Lithuanian foreign policy-makers. As the two major goals of the previous decade had been achieved, some new objectives were to be raised to fill in the emerging vacuum in the *raison d’être* of Lithuanian foreign policy. The new guidelines for Lithuanian foreign policy were first laid out in the address by Artūras Paulauskas, Acting President of the Republic of Lithuania, at Vilnius University in May 2004, and were later developed in other key foreign policy documents of Lithuania.⁹ Up to 22 goals and aims for the “new agenda” of Lithuanian foreign policy were put forward. These can, however, be classified into three main foreign policy directions: (1) active membership in international organizations (EU and NATO, above all); (2) good neighbourhood policy; and the boldest one (3) Lithuania becoming a regional leader. As Acting President Artūras Paulauskas put it, “My vision of Lithuania is that of a country which, through the quality of its membership in the European Union and NATO and good neighbourhood policy, has become a leader of the region. I have a vision of Lithuania as a centre of the region with Vilnius as a regional capital”¹⁰.

In the subsequent years, after positioning itself as a “bridge between East and West” (and frequently failing to recognise the presence of more powerful “bridges”, like Poland, Czech Republic and Germany, in the region), Lithuania undertook reckless efforts to become visible in Europe by carrying the

⁹ For further information, please refer to key Lithuanian foreign policy documents: Speech by H. E. Mr. Artūras Paulauskas, Acting President of the Republic of Lithuania, at Vilnius University, on Lithuania’s New Foreign policy (24 May 2004), < http://www.urm.lt/popup2.php?item_id=8496 >; Address by H.E. Mr. Valdas Adamkus, the President of the Republic of Lithuania, to the heads of foreign diplomatic missions in Lithuania (14 July 2004), < http://www.urm.lt/popup2.php?item_id=8497 >; Welcome Address by Foreign Minister Antanas Valionis at the Annual Meeting of the Heads of the Lithuanian Diplomatic Missions (7 July 2004). The article “Lithuania, a Meeting Place of Europe”; prepared on the basis of the speech available in English: < <http://www.lfpr.lt/uploads/File/2004-13%2014/Valionis.pdf> >; Resolution of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania on Directions in Foreign Policy (May 1 2004), < http://www.urm.lt/popup2.php?item_id=8500 >

¹⁰ Speech by H. E. Mr. Artūras Paulauskas (24 May 2004).

“flag of democracy” to the Eastern borderlands of the EU: mainly Belarus, Ukraine and Georgia as well as (though, to significantly lower extent) Moldova, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Lithuania, of course, had never been strong and influential enough to become either an economic or a political leader or, in geopolitical terms, the “gravity centre of the region”.¹¹ This idea might have seemed attainable only from the perspective of normative power – becoming the centre of regional initiatives and the so-called “regional success story” facilitating further expansion of Western values eastwards by the example of good practice.¹² Thus the idea of regional leadership necessitated the shift from the then-dominating realist viewpoint towards the normative approach in Lithuanian foreign policy. However, this shift seems to never truly happen.

Though criticised by some authors almost from its inception¹³, in recent years, the *idée fixe* of Lithuanian regional leadership has been smashed into smithereens by both the prevailing criticism of politicians and analysts, and even more importantly – by repeated and constantly growing disillusionments over democratisation in Georgia, Ukraine, and Belarus. Current Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė was one of the most savage critics of the country’s Eastern policy long before her run-up for presidency in 2009. She was also one of the first officials to speak openly about Lithuania being laughed out of court as a “one-issue state” at the European institutions because of perpetually raising “Russian issues” in any relevant or irrelevant circumstances. Grybauskaitė ran for the elections with a clearly articulated aspiration to change Lithuanian foreign policy by (1) redirecting it westwards or, to be more precise, from the Eastern Neighbourhood area and pronounced pro-Americanism towards “Old Europe”; and (2) by implementing pragmatic foreign policy in contrast to the idealistic one pursued by President Adamkus, especially during his second term (2004-2009).

¹¹ Address by H.E. Mr. Valdas Adamkus, (14 July 2004).

¹² Gražina Miniotaitė, „Search for Identity in Modern Foreign Policy of Lithuania: Between the Northern and Eastern Dimensions?“. In *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review 2004*. Vilnius, 2005, 80-82; and Gražina Miniotaitė, „Europos normatyvinė galia ir Lietuvos užsienio politika“. In *Politologija* 2006 3 (43).

¹³ See for example Česlovas Laurinavičius, “New Vision of Lithuania’s Foreign Policy”. In *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review* 2006/ 2(18), Vilnius, 2006.

Though the sound conclusions are yet difficult to draw, some Grybauskaitė's moves do point to her bearing in international relations as somewhat different from her predecessors, her endeavours at constructive dialogue with Russia and the discontinuation of the unconditional compliance with US policies (see the following chapters for details) being the most important. As concerns Lithuania's celebrated ambition to become a regional centre of initiatives, this much is certain so far: the idea itself has not disappeared from the current official rhetoric. However, the strategy of turning it into being is supposed to undergo significant alterations.

2. Norms and values in Lithuanian foreign policy: the driving force or the disguise of strategic interests?

As Ian Manners put it, being a normative power suggests that (1) the EU is "constructed on a normative basis" and (2) "this predisposes it to act in a normative way in the world politics"¹⁴, or, to put it simply, "to enforce its norms beyond its own frontiers"¹⁵. Accordingly, the first questions to be asked speaking of Lithuanian foreign policy in the light of EU's normative power are the following: (1) what are the values driving Lithuanian foreign policy? and (2) how does Lithuania contribute to promoting these values and norms outside the EU?

Perhaps as any European country, Lithuania builds its domestic as well as foreign and security policy on what can be generally referred to as the Western value system, wherein the most important values are freedom and democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and liberal economy. The main guidelines for Lithuanian foreign policy are defined in the Constitution of Lithuania as follows: "Lithuania shall follow the universally recognised principles and norms of international law, shall seek to ensure national security and independence, the welfare of the citizens and their basic rights and freedoms,

¹⁴ Ian Manners, "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?". In *Journal of Common Market Studies* 2002 40(2), p.252.

¹⁵ Zaki Laïdi, "The Normative Empire: The Unintended Consequences of European Power". Garnet Policy Brief Number 6, 2008, p. 1.

and shall contribute to the creation of the international order based on law and justice".¹⁶ These guidelines are reflected and further elaborated in all Lithuanian government programmes and foreign and security policy strategies, the most recent of them being the Programme of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania enacted by the Resolution of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania in December 2008. According to Chapter VII of the Programme on Foreign Affairs and the European Policy, "We shall ensure continuity of the traditional framework of values of the Lithuanian foreign policy, based on faithfulness to freedom and democracy and the principles of truth, justice and international law".¹⁷

The Government Programme indicates that Lithuania will not only base its foreign policy on the abovementioned values (among which democracy is emphasized the most), but also will strive to promulgate these values beyond its own frontiers. "The objectives of our foreign policy are to [...] support democratic development in the geopolitical environment of Lithuania, to promote democratic values in the sphere of international relations and to achieve a favourable external environment for the country's safe existence"¹⁸, – the document states.

The main vector of the promotion of democratic values in Lithuania's foreign policy has been the EU's Eastern neighbourhood area, namely, the post-Soviet states of Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus. Democracy promotion in this geographical and geopolitical area constitutes the core of the abovementioned idea of Lithuania becoming the regional leader, or the centre of regional initiatives.

The essence of Lithuanian policy towards its Eastern neighbourhood countries, however, hardly corresponds to the ambitious title of "democracy export to the East" it is often given, not only because, as some Lithuanian academics quip, "Lithuanian democracy is not the best item for export"¹⁹,

¹⁶ Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, 1992. Chapter XIII Foreign Policy and National Defence. < <http://www3.lrs.lt/home/Konstitucija/Constitution.htm> >

¹⁷ Resolution No XI-52 of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania of December 9, 2008 On the Programme of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, p. 38.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 37.

¹⁹ Nekrašas, „Kritiniai pamąstymai...“, p. 141.

but also (not to say, first and foremost), because it is questionable whether the shift to democracy in these countries has ever been the real intention of Lithuania's Eastern policy.²⁰ There was, of course, a significant amount of idealism and romanticism especially vivid in the foreign policy of President Valdas Adamkus, for instance, putting on a helmet and flying to the war zone in Georgia to negotiate the conflict resolution, or standing hand in hand with the leaders of "brotherly" Ukraine during the latter's political crisis following the presidential election of 2004 (the so-called "Orange Revolution"). However, one might wonder how idealistic the real reasons behind this policy used to be.

Several *Realpolitik*²¹ reasons giving the ground for Lithuania's normative intention of "bringing democracy to the Eastern neighbourhood of the EU" might be highlighted.

First, it is an attempt, by democratisation and westernisation of the post-Communist countries lying in between the EU and Russia, to weaken the influence of the latter in the region and hereby to diminish Russia's ability to bring out the dangers still perceived by Lithuanian policy-makers as one of the biggest security threats the country is facing.²² The importance of this reason in the rationale behind the Eastern policy of Lithuania is well revealed in a symptomatic statement of the Government Programme on Lithuanian Foreign Policy priorities announcing that "we shall promote development of democracy in Russia's neighbourhood, contributing to the stability and security of the whole region."²³ The question that arises naturally is why the area

²⁰ Česlovas Laurinavičius, p. 137.

²¹ *Realpolitik* is an approach towards foreign policy and diplomacy emphasizing power politics in which material factors and security interests prevail over ideological notions or ethical concerns. First defined by Ludwig von Rochau in his book *Grundsätze der Realpolitik angewendet auf die staatlichen Zustände* (1853), the term was later adopted and widely used by authors within (neo)realist paradigm - Frank W. Wayman, Paul Francis Diehl (eds.), *Reconstructing Realpolitik*. University of Michigan Press 1994. See also: Edward H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939*. New York, NY: St. Martins Press, 1939; Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. 5th Edition. New York, NY: Knopf, 1973; Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. Reading MA: Addison-Wesley. 1979; Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1994.

²² Česlovas Laurinavičius, Raimundas Lopata and Vldas Sirutavičius, "Kritinis požiūris į Lietuvos užsienio politiką: kas pasikeitė nuo Augustino Voldemaro laikų?. In *Politologija*, 2009 2(54), p. 108-109.

²³ Resolution of the Seimas on the Programme of the Government of Lithuania, p. 44.

of democracy promotion is referred to as “Russia’s neighbourhood”, but not, say, the Eastern neighbourhood of the EU. The most obvious answer consequent from the political context of the document is that “Russia’s neighbourhood”, rather than the “development of democracy”, is the key to understanding the main reasons behind this policy.

The second, hardly normative, reason behind Lithuania’s promotion of Western values eastwards is even more down-to-earth and might be concisely described as a “quest for an alternative “pipeline”. By “making friends” with Ukraine and the South Caucasus as well as advocating, to some extent, their interests in the EU, Lithuania has sought to create a favourable political environment for joint regional energy projects thereby decreasing Lithuania’s dependence on Russian energy system, which Lithuania has considered to be one of its biggest security threats. Thus, strong ties with EU ENP countries are not only Lithuania’s goal *per se*, but also one of the most important security policy measures employed seeking to balance Lithuanian energy system and secure energy inflows to the country (at least to some extent) in the case of eventual confrontation with Russia.²⁴

Finally, from its inception, the policy of democracy promotion has been perceived as one of the main ways for Lithuania to become a visible and active member of the EU. Lithuanian strategic documents put it simply: Lithuania “will seek to become an active country, visible in the world and influential in the region”.²⁵ Indeed, for a new EU member state, Eastern neighbourhood initiatives could be a favourable niche for taking an active role inside the EU. The history of occupation by the totalitarian regime as well as the regional proximity gives Lithuania the ability to understand other post-Communist countries far better than Western European states ever could. Meanwhile, the experience of transformation into an independent democratic country and successful Euro-Atlantic integration enables Lithuania to become an example of good practice in the region and pass the experience of democratisation to Eastern neighbours. The problem, however, lies in the fact that Lithuanian attempts at being visible were often made regardless of the fact whether they were the best way of achieving the goals of democratisation and westernisation

²⁴ Laurinavičius, Lopata and Sirutavičius, p. 113.

²⁵ Resolution of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania on Directions in Foreign Policy (May 1 2004).

of the EU's Eastern neighbourhood. In other words, visibility inside the EU itself rather than achieving the objects proposed (sometimes through silent diplomatic negotiation and cooperation) oftentimes became the driver of Lithuanian actions in the field. Indeed, Lithuania became visible inside the EU; however, not in the way it wanted, as it gained the unwelcome reputation of a "one-issue state" due to the repeated over-securitisation of any Russia-related issues.²⁶

Furthermore, it is worth noting that Lithuanian efforts in the Eastern Neighbourhood Policy, though not very effective in building a desirable reputation for Lithuania in the EU, have had quite an effect on making the country's foreign policy visible "at home" and legitimizing (not to say mythologizing) it in the eyes of national public by constructing the image of Lithuanian foreign policy as active, effective and value-oriented. Whether intentionally or not, Lithuanian diplomacy was quite persuasively presented by the country's media as a successful mediator between "old Europe" and the post-Communist area eastward from EU frontiers. For example, the popular belief inside the country was that Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus served as a pivotal negotiator during Ukraine's "Orange Revolution" in 2004, whereas the rest of the world seemed to be quite inclined to attribute this merit to the then Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski. Also, during the Russian – Georgian armed conflict in 2008 one could notice Lithuanian media fairly overestimating (though not to the extent of the previously mentioned case) the role of Valdas Adamkus in comparison to the contribution of the then Polish President Lech Kaczyński without even mentioning French President Nicolas Sarkozy. The posture of the latter in the resolution of this conflict was presented in the Lithuanian public sphere as too pragmatic and indulgent to the interest of Russia.

To sum up, there is substantial evidence grounding the hypothesis that values and norms serve instruments to fortify Lithuanian security and advance the country's strategic interests rather than a real driver of the foreign policy of Lithuania. Nevertheless, the next question to be approached developing the topic of the present article is this: How does Lithuanian foreign policy (whether normative indeed or only verbally) correspond to that of the EU?

²⁶ Nekrašas, „Kritiniai pamąstymai...“, p. 134-135.

3. The EU foreign policy of Lithuanian dreams: hardly acceptable, never achievable?

Being a small state, Lithuania cannot pursue its foreign policy goals alone and, therefore, counts strongly on the policies of the EU as a tool of promoting Lithuanian interests abroad. In her brief guidelines on foreign policy priorities, current President of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė put it as follows: "As we seek leadership in the East, we need to be more active, efficient and professional in the West. We have to find reliable partners within the European Union where decisions that are important for Lithuania are being made."²⁷ Thus, as the current Lithuanian Government Programme declares, Lithuanian "aspiration shall be a European Union speaking in one voice in defence of the fundamental European values of democracy and freedom".²⁸ This aspiration is presented more explicitly in the Strategic Guidelines of Lithuania's European Union Policy for 2008-2013 "More Europe in Lithuania and More Lithuania in Europe". These guidelines state that "Lithuania advocates consistency, effectiveness and greater visibility of EU external relations. The EU has to speak with one voice. Lithuania is interested in strengthening EU competence to ensure common approach towards external energy policy. Lithuania speaks for a strong, consolidated and influential EU, open for the membership of other countries that comply with the set criteria, eager to further transatlantic co-operation and promote the principles of democracy, free market and better regulation."²⁹ The chapter of the Guidelines presenting Lithuanian position on EU's foreign policy entitled "United Europe – strong voice in the world" explicates the aforementioned by setting Lithuanian priorities herein as follows: "to seek stronger co-operation with EU Eastern neighbours outside the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP); to support the European aspirations of these states and integration processes; to seek the perspective of further approximation of the countries to the EU and member-

²⁷ Policy priorities of the President of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė are announced at the official webpage of the President of Lithuania < http://www.president.lt/en/institution/president_dalia_grybauskaitė_399/priorities_401.html >

²⁸ Resolution of the Seimas On the Programme of the Government of Lithuania, p. 38.

²⁹ Strategic Guidelines of Lithuania's European Union Policy for 2008-2013 "More Europe in Lithuania and More Lithuania in Europe", p. 5.

ship in the European Union; to create a single EU policy in relation to third countries; to seek the closest possible transatlantic co-operation; to make an active contribution to the development of security and stability area in the EU neighbourhood.”³⁰ Several aspects of Lithuanian expectations towards the EU’s foreign policy discrepant to the expectations of other (first and foremost, the founding) EU members may be highlighted from these goals as well as their further explications and implementation in practice.

First, as may have become clear in the previous sections of this paper, the geographical area of Lithuania’s biggest concern lies next to the Eastern border of the EU, consequently making the Eastern Neighbourhood Policy and the EU–Russia relations the main priorities of Lithuania. It is worth noting, however, that, from Lithuania’s perspective, democracy promotion eastwards is almost always mentioned in line with the Euro- and Euro-Atlantic integration of the ENP countries. A strong advocate of the EU enlargement, Lithuania sought to ensure that EU granted its neighbouring countries (first of all, Ukraine) a membership perspective, thus on the one hand, making the EU’s ENP more effective, but on the other hand, clearly engaging in the power-balancing with Russia in the region of high strategic importance to the latter. Such standpoint of Lithuania towards the ENP is hardly shared by any other EU member state because of two factors: (1) the doubtful readiness of the ENP countries to shift towards democracy and fully integrate into the EU and NATO; and (2) the unwillingness of the EU countries to openly confront Russia. Poland used to be a provisory exception; however, its stand was limited to rather cautious solitary sparks of optimism over Ukraine and Georgia during the peak of enthusiasm on their democratic turn several years ago; it is hardly to recur in the nearest future due to democratisation failures in these countries as well as considering the political orientation of the current Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski, *de facto* in office since April 2010.

Speaking of the latter, Lithuania, together with other new EU member states, strives to push the issues of EU–Russia relations up on the EU foreign policy agenda. Though at the strategic level Lithuania acknowledges the necessity of keeping these relations constructive and thus mutually fruitful, in practice, however, it often advocates the toughest line of the EU policy towards Russia. Lithuanian politicians, diplomats and officials are often incapable of

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

projecting Russia as an eventual partner and keep seeing it as a threat (the Russian issue is further elaborated on in the following section of this paper). This kind of confrontational policy towards Russia is not shared by the old EU members, and therefore, it can hardly be negotiable inside the EU.

In fact, this tough policy may be apt to tone down during Grybauskaitė's presidential term(s), since she indeed seems to make attempts at more constructive dialogue with Russia. A vivid example of this approach dates back to the very beginning of her term in August 2009, when the problems of Lithuanian dairy export to Russia emerged. Lithuanian trucks jammed at Lithuanian – Russian border due to the application of Russia's stringent phytosanitary standards and carrier checking procedures exceptionally to Lithuanian road carriers. The issue was resolved immediately after Grybauskaitė had made an official phone call to the President of Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev making it the first official conversation of the presidents of Lithuania and Russia since 2001. Whether or not this might be signalling the warming of relations between Lithuania and Russia, questions of energy dependence on Russia, informational and cyber-security and the stability of Lithuanian–Russian trade, nevertheless, top Lithuanian security agenda, and will probably do so for decades to come. Since relations with Russia remain one of the most important and sensitive vectors of Lithuanian foreign policy, the idea that Lithuania will keep its line on securitising issues of EU-Russian relations hardly raises any doubts, though it may be accompanied by some more or less significant changes in rhetoric.

All in all, probably the main problem herein is that, although Lithuanian strategic documents claim that “a balanced EU member states policy in relation to the Eastern and Southern ENP neighbours ensured”³¹ is among success indicators of Lithuanian foreign policy inside the EU, in practice, however, Lithuanian foreign policy-makers often seem to be trying to convince representatives of other states that the Eastern partnership is the most important vector of the EU's foreign policy. A natural question arises: why would, say, Spain or Portugal concede that the Eastern partnership is more important than the Southern one? It seems that the answer to this question has not yet been found, if at all.

The only issue overstepping the ENP highlighted in the strategic documents on Lithuania's EU policy is the Euro-Atlantic relations. It is worth noting that

³¹ Strategic Guidelines of Lithuania's European Union Policy for 2008-2013, p. 26.

here, again, Lithuania's position does not correspond to the prevailing opinion inside the EU. Unlike old European democracies (with the exception of the United Kingdom), though similarly to the majority of the new EU member states, Lithuania is one of the most enthusiastic advocates of the presence (and influence) of American voice in the chorus of European foreign and defence policy. This stand against "Old Europe", the reasons of which were revealed in the previous sections, of course, hardly helps Lithuania achieve its goals in the context of the EU's foreign policy.

However, this problem seems to be getting self-resolved as Lithuanian posture on the American influence in Europe gradually becomes irrelevant due to the changes in the US foreign policy itself. The European course of Barack Obama (and especially the so-called reload of American – Russian relations) seems much less favourable to Lithuania than the European and the Russian policies of George W. Bush used to be. Thus nothing is there for Lithuania to advocate anymore. On the contrary, signs of Lithuanian opposition towards American policy in the region have started to emerge. In April 2010, Grybauskaitė was the only president of a CEE country to have rejected the official invitation of President Obama to the dinner held in Prague after signing the new American and Russian arms reduction treaty. The decision of the Lithuanian President to delegate Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius instead of herself was reasoned officially by Linas Balsys, spokesman for Grybauskaitė, who claimed that "the majority of the region's leaders who will participate there will be prime ministers. It is natural that Lithuania will be represented by the prime minister."³² The wiki-leaked correspondence of American diplomats, however, (which hardly surprised Lithuanian foreign policy experts) revealed that the true reason of Grybauskaitė's *démarche* was her disapproval of the American retraction from the anti-missile defence plan for Czech Republic and Poland in return for Russian pledge not to sell the anti-aircraft weaponry to Iran.³³ The somewhat unfavourable evolution of the United States' European policy does not diminish, however, the significance of American vector in Lithuanian foreign policy, keeping EU- American relations top priority of Lithuania though leaving almost no room for advocating America's interests in them.

³² Rokas M. Tracevskis, "Grybauskaitė rejects Obama's invitation", *The Baltic Times*, 7 April 2010.

³³ "Kol kas neblogos žinios Lietuvai", *Veidas.lt*, 08 12 2010. < <http://www.veidas.lt/politika/kol-kas-neblogos-zinios-lietuvai> >

4. “What is permitted to Jupiter is not permitted to an ox”? Lithuanian posture on norms, national interests and political conditionality in the EU’s external relations

When speaking on the role of norms and values in the foreign and security policy of a state, one of the eternal questions inevitably arising is what goes first: values or national interests. One could argue that the actualisation of the key norms and values both inside the country and abroad is one of the main national interests of any state *per se*. However, what if, in certain situations, this interest clashes with other interests, such as, for example, good economic relations with a foreign country, energy security, regional stability, the consensus inside the EU, etc? One of the best indicators of how deep is the country’s concern over norms and values when it comes to the question of the country’s strategic interest could be its determination and insistence on introducing and observing the principle of political conditionality in relations with others.

Lithuanian attitude towards integration of political conditionality in the EU’s policy towards neighbouring regions apparently lacks consistency. To be more precise, it is consistently different in respect to different countries. It often depends not so much on the issue discussed (say, the ability of a certain country to implement democratic changes in its domestic policy, or its compliance to international norms and contracts), but rather on its relations with the country in question – to put it simply, whether this country is a “friend”, or an “enemy”.

Hence, as regards the EU-Russia relations, Lithuanian politicians and diplomats are among (and quite often – to the fore of) the toughest advocates of implementing political conditionality. Lithuania is definitely not the only European country criticising failures of democracy in Russia. However, the criticism by the rest of the EU members towards Russia is in most cases rather tactful and does not hinder pragmatic and fruitful cooperation with the latter. Meanwhile, Lithuanian position on Russian issues is distinguished among the EU member-states by the exceptionally savage and uncompromising manner, often leaving no room for diplomatic manoeuvring and almost taking a form of universal normative purism.³⁴

³⁴ Laurinavičius, Lopata and Sirutavičius, p. 99.

One of the most recent and vivid examples of Lithuania's harsh posture on the political conditionality towards Russia could be observed during and after the Georgian – Russian armed conflict in spring 2008. Before the EU – Russia summit on the resumption of their partnership agreement, even Poland, Lithuania's closest ally in its Eastern policy endeavours, left alone Lithuanian diplomats who stubbornly kept insisting on sanctions to be imposed on Russia due to the latter's noncompliance to its international commitments.³⁵

It goes without saying that this kind of policy should have led (and indeed did) not only to an open confrontation with Russia, but what is even more unwelcome, – to denigrating any EU member-state that did not want to involve in this confrontation together with Lithuania. In other words, the deportment of Lithuania concerning the conditionality in the EU-Russia relations reveals the paradox of the construction of Lithuania's identity as a regional leader or the centre of regional initiatives, in which the "other" becomes two-fold – on the one hand, Russia, and on the other hand, the old EU members. Lithuania not only points onto Russia's failure to implement democratic changes, but also often goes as far as to blame "old Europe" for not understanding Russia's political realities, assuming a passive role in promoting democracy eastwards and disregarding the non-democracy of Russia for the sake of economic and energy interests in the EU–Russia relations.³⁶

According to some analysts, this kind of Lithuania's self-destructive behaviour in the international arena is hardly explicable by any political, economical or moral logic and leads nowhere, but toward the eventual political isolation of Lithuania inside the EU.³⁷ This could prompt the observers' assumption that Lithuania puts its concern over values high above its other strategic interests. One should not be misled, however, since Lithuania is not always that avid an advocate of political conditionality in the EU's relations with its neighbours. Unlike its position in the EU- Russia relations and as concerns the so-called "friendly" states, such as Ukraine or Georgia, however, Lithuania is ready to turn a blind eye to problems of democratic governance and advo-

³⁵ Laurinavičius, Lopata and Sirutavičius, p. 92; Raimundas Lopata, Apie M. Saakašvilio ir R. Glucksmanno laisvę“. In *Poliologija*, 2009 2(54), p.150; Nekrašas, „Kritiniai pamąstymai...“, p.132.

³⁶ Miniotaitė, "Europos normatyvinė galia...“, p.41-42; Laurinavičius, Lopata and Sirutavičius, p. 107; Nekrašas, „Kritiniai pamąstymai...“, p. 132, 135, 141.

³⁷ Laurinavičius, Lopata and Sirutavičius, p. 150 and 107.

cate their membership in the Euro-Atlantic community disregarding their failures to implement the shift towards democracy. This, again, strengthens the presumption expressed in the previous chapter that, in Lithuania's foreign policy, values tend to play the role of a *façade* rather than that of a driver.³⁸

5. Do political prisoners in Belarus and in Burma differ? Human security – still “not an issue” in Lithuania's foreign policy

The finishing touches on portraying the role of norms and values in Lithuania's foreign policy can be made by answering the question of how global and far-reaching is Lithuanian concern (be it real or nominal) over the country's promotion of norms and values. Or, to put it simply: What do we really care about the rest of the world? This may be revealed by an analysis of the integration of the human security dimension in the foreign and security policy of a state.

The concept of human security was first explicitly articulated in the United Nations Human Development Report 1994³⁹, in which it was defined as follows: “human security can be said to have two main aspects. It means first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life – whether in homes, in jobs or in communities.”⁴⁰ Though recent academic as well as political definitions of human security have often been extensive and vague, most of them, however, meet agreement on the emphasis of welfare of ordinary people in opposition to the understanding of security as (military) defence of the interests or territory of a certain state.⁴¹ Human security is, by definition, a universal concern, relevant to people all over the

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 108.

³⁹ United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report 1994*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. < <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr1994/chapters/> >.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 23.

⁴¹ Roland Paris, “Human Security: Paradigm Shift of Hot Air? *International Security*, 26 (2), 2001, 87-88.

world⁴². Thus it is bound with the global, or at least, the regional approach in the foreign policy of a state.

Whereas it is increasingly becoming an issue of concern of the EU and topping foreign policy agendas of Scandinavian countries, in Lithuania, the human security dimension as such is not yet present in any strategic documents on either foreign or security policy. Lithuanian foreign policy is officially oriented towards ensuring national security, but not human security worldwide. The objectives of Lithuania's foreign policy are described in the Government Programme as "to ensure national security from any external threat that might arise from the policies of other nations, to support democratic development in the geopolitical environment of Lithuania, to promote democratic values in the sphere of international relations and to achieve a favourable external environment for the country's safe existence."⁴³ The current President of Lithuania claims her policy (both foreign and domestic) to be focused on the security and welfare of the individual. "The individual person must be the first consideration and the only measure of progress across all institutions and policies. The same goes for foreign policy." She adds, however, "We may discuss the techniques and tactics of diplomatic work, but the strategic direction is one and unquestionable. It is the representation of the interests of the people of Lithuania and their goals, the assertion of national dignity on the international arena."⁴⁴ Thus, the individual who this policy concerns is apparently an inhabitant of Lithuania, but not someone around the globe.

In Lithuanian public sphere, the debates on human security issues of global scope are also rare and fragmentary, emerging mostly under the efforts of international information campaigns and individual NGO initiatives. One of the salient examples of such campaigns enjoying some resonance with Lithuanian public was the Burma campaign which took place in November 2009, and was supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania. The campaign managed to garner a full house (comprising mainly students and young intellectuals) for the screening of the award-winning doc-

⁴² *Human Development Report 1994*, 22.

⁴³ Resolution of Seimas on the Programme of the Government of Lithuania, p. 37.

⁴⁴ State of the Nation Address by H.E. Dalia Grybauskaitė, President of the Republic of Lithuania (8 June 2010) <http://www.president.lt/en/activities/speeches/state_of_the_nation_address_by_h.e._dalia_grybauskaite_president_of_the_republic_of_lithuania.html>

umentary "Burma VJ: Reporting from a closed country" in Vilnius and resulted in the initiation of the Facebook group "Burma Campaign Lithuania"⁴⁵. Symptomatically enough, however, public interest in Burma issues faded out as soon as one or two weeks after the end of campaigning in Vilnius.

The inability of Lithuania to shift from the local or (at best) the regional towards the global approach in foreign policy and to speak the same language with the rest of the EU is testified by the example of Lithuanian interpretation of the EU Development Cooperation Policy. Although, according to the above-mentioned *Human Development Report 1994*, human development is a wider concept than human security and the two are not to be confused⁴⁶, the Development Cooperation Policy is, however, the main EU tool of raising human security worldwide. The EU Development Cooperation Policy is unambiguously oriented towards promoting democracy, the rule of law and respect of human rights in the least developed and poorest countries of the world with a clear focus on African, Caribbean and Pacific states⁴⁷. Meanwhile under the title of the Development Cooperation Policy, Lithuania keeps pursuing democracy promotion projects which target primarily the Eastern Neighbourhood area⁴⁸ (doubts on their normative orientation have already been expressed in this paper). The Decision of the Government of Lithuania *On Confirmation of Policy Provisions of Development Cooperation of Lithuania in 2006-2010* decrees that the priority regions for Lithuanian development cooperation policy be Eastern Europe (Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine), the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) and the only two countries which do match the EU's concept of development cooperation, namely Iraq and Afghanistan. The declarations of Lithuanian diplomats and NGO representatives at Europe-wide events on democracy promotion initiatives in the Eastern neighbourhood countries in terms of development cooperation thus often make their Western and Northern counterparts raise their eyebrows.

⁴⁵ "Burma Campaign Lithuania" group on Facebook, <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=182718558726>

⁴⁶ *Human Development Report 1994*, 23.

⁴⁷ See for comparison the information provided on the official website of Lithuanian Development cooperation < <http://www.orangeprojects.lt/site/?page=10> > and the official website of the EU's DG Development < http://ec.europa.eu/development/geographical/regionscountries_en.cfm >

⁴⁸ The Decision No. 561 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania On confirmation of policy provisions of Development Cooperation of the Republic of Lithuania in 2006-2010.

The other important means of contributing to enhancing human security worldwide (in line with development cooperation projects) is taking part in crisis management and peacekeeping operations. The goal is set in the Government Programme of Lithuania to “plan and, within the competence of the Seimas, ensure the participation of Lithuania’s troops in international operations and missions with a special focus on the mission in Afghanistan and with a preference given to the operations and missions headed by NATO as well as the USA, a strategic partner of Lithuania. We shall continue building civil capacities enabling participation in international civil missions of the EU.”⁴⁹

The scale of Lithuanian contribution to promoting human security through the involvement of military and peacekeeping forces in international operations, however, is minimal. Moreover, Lithuania does not contribute at all to the UN crisis management missions. The country’s contribution to the EU-led operations usually comprises one or two individual non-combatant professionals and officers per solitary operation.⁵⁰ However, even this kind of involvement is constantly diminishing. Throughout the recent decade the biggest portion of Lithuanian military has been involved in the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the coalition-led operation “Iraqi Freedom”, both carried out together with Danish and Polish forces. The only long-term mission in which Lithuania is still taking an active and noticeable part is NATO’s International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. Since July 2003 Lithuania has sent relatively numerous troops to Afghanistan and led the Provincial Reconstruction Team of Ghor.⁵¹

The rationale behind Lithuanian participation in the military and peacekeeping operations might be easily grasped from the quote of the Government Programme given above, which stresses that preference will be given to Lithuanian involvement in actions initiated and headed by its main strategic partner, the United States, as well as by NATO, the pivot of which the USA still are. This is stated even more clearly in the opening sentences of a section devoted to Lithuania’s involvement in NATO operations on the official website of the

⁴⁹ Resolution of Seimas on the Programme of the Government of Lithuania, p.41.

⁵⁰ Gricius and Paulauskas, p. 86. Data source: Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania.

⁵¹ Gricius and Paulauskas, p. 86; official websites of the Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania and NATO International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

Ministry of National Defence of Lithuania: "Involvement in international operations is an important instrument for the implementation of Lithuanian foreign and security policy. By participating in peace-keeping and stability promotion operations in various regions of the world, Lithuania establishes its position as of the trustworthy and active member of the Alliance."⁵² It is worth noting that this text is only present in the Lithuanian (but not the English) version of the website; therefore, it is apparently oriented towards explaining the reasons of involvement in peacekeeping operations to domestic, but not foreign audience.

To sum up, although Lithuania's involvement in international operations does contribute to some extent to safeguarding human rights and individual freedom worldwide, the promotion of human security seems to be Lithuania's secondary goal, yielding ground for the need to fortify Lithuanian position in NATO and to maintain strong ties with the USA, both referable to the "hard" dimension of national security. Together with the discussion in the previous sections, this leads to the conclusion that the question of why it seems to be more important for Lithuania to conduct the mission impossible of bringing democracy to Belarus than to promote human rights and the rule of law to, say, Burma or African countries, can hardly be answered in normative terms and is likely to become clear by giving insight into the strategic priorities (frequently alongside security threats) of Lithuania.

Conclusions

Since its accession to the EU in 2004, Lithuania, on the one hand, can take advantage of projecting its foreign policy in the context of normative power Europe, and, on the other hand, should also contribute to raising and exercising of this power by its foreign policy and its posture on the international stage. According to most analysts, however, after six years of being an EU member, Lithuania does not seem to be successful in either of the two. Lithuanian foreign policy seems stuck in the search of a niche in Europe and in its unfortunate efforts to be(come) a visible and influential member of the EU.

⁵² Article "Lietuva NATO operacijose" at the Official website of the MND of Lithuania (in Lithuanian): < http://www.kam.lt/lt/tarptautinis_bendradarbiavimas/nato/lietuva_dalyvavimas_nato/lietuva_nato_operacijose.html >

This paper highlighted some of the discrepancies of Lithuanian foreign policy in the context of the EU normative power that might have prevented Lithuania from becoming a beneficiary of the exercise of EU's normative power, not to mention accumulating it. These discrepancies are best seen in the implementation of the idea of Lithuania as a regional leader or the centre of regional initiatives in the EU Eastern Neighbourhood.

For an international actor like Lithuania characterized by relatively low economic and political power, this aim is only achievable through becoming a regional "success story" of democratic transformation and through helping (in strong cooperation with the partners inside the EU) countries in transition to implement democratic shifts. Thus, by its substance, regional leadership is supposed to be the vector of Lithuanian foreign policy which, from the theoretical viewpoint, is most remote from the *Realpolitik* way of thinking and is most directly linked to the normative dimension of the EU power and policies. A deeper analysis of the rationale behind this policy and means of its implementation, however, reveals the opposite.

Though Western values are definitely present in Lithuanian foreign policy, and quite numerous attempts of promoting them beyond the EU frontiers (mainly towards the Eastern Neighbourhood Area) are being made, as of now, Lithuanian foreign policy can hardly be referred to as value-driven for a number of *Realpolitik* reasons (often of high strategic importance). In other words, in Lithuanian foreign policy, norms and values play a vital role. However, this role is quite often that of an argument and validation rather than that of a driver or the ultimate goal. With respect to the integration of political conditionality into the EU's relations with its Eastern neighbours, Lithuanian position is one of the best illustrations revealing the trend.

Lithuanian foreign policy obviously lacks global approach, which is quite often the case among the new EU member states. However, this, again, raises doubts about how genuine and deep is Lithuanian concern in promoting democracy and human rights *per se* if the emergence of human security-related issues in the Lithuanian foreign policy discourse and actions goes hardly beyond the boundaries of the EU's Eastern neighbourhood and calling into question the violation of human rights in Belarus or the problems of freedom of speech in Russia. In addition, it is also questionable whether these concerns are value-driven, or are rather based on other security interests.

All this leads to the conclusion that, under the normative *façade* of Lithuanian foreign policy, the *Realpolitik* way of thinking in terms of ensuring energy security and diminishing the threats of Russia (be they exaggerated, or not), is hiding. The normative dimension of Lithuanian foreign policy obviously lacks credibility and, therefore, can hardly be achievable through the normative power of the EU, not to mention making contribution to the latter.

Finally, as has been mentioned above, the value-based liberal approach to foreign policy only works if there is an objective to be realised with other states. In the case of Lithuanian foreign policy, the paradox is that it often opposes both Russia as a perceived threat and the old EU members as the ones that “do not understand” this threat, or are too pragmatic in their relations with Russia and not sympathetic enough towards the other ENP countries. This kind of Lithuanian inability or unwillingness to speak the common language with the rest of the EU jeopardises the probability of success of Lithuanian foreign policy in the European context.