

Small States and Foreign Policy Challenges: Foreign Policy of Lithuania and Estonia towards Russia

Abstract

This diploma thesis deals with the use of foreign policy strategies of small states by Lithuania and Estonia in the context of foreign policy towards Russia. In this regard, the work is focused on the analysis of foreign political disputes with Russia, which represented key challenges for these Baltic states with regard to sovereignty and territorial integrity following the collapse of the Soviet Union, specifically then on cases of the withdrawal of Russian military units, the delimitation of the Estonian-Russian state borders and the regulation of Russian transit to the Kaliningrad region. From a methodological point of view, the work is conceived as a case study aimed at developing knowledge about the phenomenon of foreign policy strategies of small states. Its first part is devoted to the presentation of the theoretical concepts of the small state and the foreign policy strategies of small states. The second part of the work is focused on the assessment of the use of the mentioned strategies by Lithuania and Estonia within the examined cases with the aim of ascertaining which of the foreign policy strategies of small states Lithuania and Estonia tried to apply in the context of the analyzed cases and with what results these Baltic states managed to fulfill their formulated foreign policy goals. The analysis of the examined cases revealed a correlation between the application of the strategy of forming alliances with great powers together with the strategy of using specific internal resources in relation to the successful fulfillment of all related formulated goals of the small state. The absence of the application of these two specific strategies, on the other hand, correlated with the inability of the small state to achieve the related set goals, while the combination of forming alliances with great powers with engagement within international institutions correlated with less efficient fulfillment of goals.