

## **Abstract**

After gaining independence, Baltic states made great efforts to be integrated into the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance and finally to distance themselves from Russia. The relationship with Russia, and the fears (stemming from a common historical experience – the Russian occupation) of this great neighbour, have influenced and continue to influence not only the internal political situation in the individual states, but also their foreign policy orientation. The aim of this paper is to present the specific features of individual states during their integration into the European and North Atlantic structures using the concept of Europeanization as a process that did not end with the accession of states to the EU and NATO. Rather, incorporation into these organisations has enabled individual states to move from being mere 'norm takers' to being 'norm makers' and to promote their priorities at the supranational level. The willingness of the individual states to join the European space was illustrated by the number of radical reforms that the states adopted in a relatively short period of time to stabilise their economic situation and to be able to meet the EU accession criteria. Already as members of the EU and NATO, the Baltic states supported the Eastern Partnership and sought to share their experience with other republics of the former Soviet Union and bring them closer to Europe. Estonia, in particular, has developed the topics of digitalisation and cyber security. The issue of energy security was emphasised by Lithuania. Within the security framework, the Baltic States have sought to highlight the need to ensure Europe's collective security, emphasising that Russia is a security threat to Europe, as demonstrated in 2008 during the Russian war in Georgia and subsequently in 2014 and 2022, with the annexation of Crimea and the outbreak of war in Ukraine.