

## **Abstract**

This thesis considers the role of the European Union in dealing with the problem of unrecognized states on the territory of Georgia. The aim of the thesis is to find out which tools the EU employs in solving this problem. Unrecognized states are rejected as partners of the international community, thus they lack the basis for entering international relations, the external sovereignty. Nevertheless, this doesn't prevent them from functioning internally and offering their citizens functions similar to ordinary sovereign states. Since the unrecognized states in Georgia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, are considered parts of Georgia, this thesis will also examine how the EU employs its tools in Georgia and in the unrecognized entities and the influence of the non-recognition of these states on the engagement of the EU in them. Abkhazia and South Ossetia were created shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the following ethnopolitical conflicts in the South Caucasus. Since then, the unrecognized states have developed and built a national identity which is opposed to the former central state, Georgia. They have become seemingly independent, however, their existence is dependent on several factors, most importantly, the presence of an external patron, in this case Russia. The engagement of the European Union in Georgia is based on the European Neighbourhood Policy whose aim is to support the internal reforms and democratization in the countries of the EU's neighbourhood. The support of democratic reforms, however, doesn't encompass the unrecognized states that are perceived rather as an internal problem of Georgia, whose territorial integrity the EU supports and, in accordance with this approach, rejects the state-building in the unrecognized states. Abkhazia and South Ossetia are nevertheless developing internally and democratization inside them could represent an important part of the conflict solution. However, as unrecognized states they are not eligible for this part of the European Neighbourhood Policy, the EU's engagement in the regions concentrates mainly on humanitarian assistance and reconstruction of the regions.