

How do European democracies react to Russian aggression?

Review of shifts in strategic & policy documents of EU28 following Russian aggression against Ukraine



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Kremlin Watch is a strategic program of the European Values Think-Tank, which aims to expose and confront instruments of Russian influence and disinformation operations focused against liberal-democratic system.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this review is to map out the EU member states' positions on Russia based on the latest national strategies, reports and official statements on foreign and security policy. Prior studies in this area have highlighted differences between member states that both inform and hinder the development of a common EU policy on Russia. Understanding the background and nature of each state's bilateral relationship with Russia, as well as its contribution to the EU-level policymaking, may help predict and inform important foreign policy developments that are underway.

However, each country case is so complex that such a review cannot hope to produce simple conclusions and clear answers to burning questions such as "to what extent does Russia exert an influence on the EU member states' foreign policy?" or "will a multilateral approach to securing common interests prevail over bilateralism and pursuit of immediate economic gain", or even "how much of a threat does Russia present to the EU today?". So what we chose to do instead is formulate several hypotheses and check them against individual countries' experiences, bringing an additional layer of detail into the discussion.

Each country file was compiled according to a similar structure and drawing from comparable sources. The section Relationship Parameters highlights several dimensions that determine the member states' different approaches to Russia: history, geography and culture (a range of experiences that vary in nature and importance); energy, trade and investment; military and security; normative dimension of foreign policy (relative importance of the European orientation, commitment to multilateralism, international law, human rights and democracy promotion, etc.); public opinion and internal political situation. As did prior such mapping exercises, this review highlights the balancing act between the pragmatic pursuit of immediate national interest and a more long-term, comprehensive and multilateral approach synergetic with a sound and coherent EU policy. One of the preliminary observations of the study is that in recent years, interests of member states that had traditionally been far apart, have been converging, mostly due to unilateral actions from Russia's side.

New challenges have emerged in the past years, especially in relation to conflicts in Georgia and Ukraine, that have shifted approaches to Russia within the EU. This review tracks the change by comparing official statements and expert assessments made throughout the last ten years. The Expert Assessment section draws from several sources such as ECFR's Power Audit of EU-Russia Relations (2007)¹, Views from the capitals on Russia policy (2014-2016)² and Foreign Policy Scorecards (2013-2016)³; book "National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?" (2013)⁴; EU-

¹ http://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/a_power_audit_of_eu_russia_relations

² http://www.ecfr.eu/debate/russia_in_2030_the_view_from_europe, http://www.ecfr.eu/debate/what_next_for_eu_russia_policy, http://www.ecfr.eu/debate/how_should_europe_respond_to_russia

³ <http://www.ecfr.eu/scorecard/2016/countries/>

⁴ M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

28 Watch Issue 11 on the Eastern Neighbourhood and Russia (2015)⁵, and a journalistic investigation by Ukrainian newspaper Zerkalo Nedeli on individual member states' responses to the Ukraine crisis (2015)⁶.

The most novel contribution of this study is found in the Policy Documents section which quotes the latest publicly available official positions of each member state. For this section, we studied each member state's foreign policy strategies or priorities, annual reports of foreign ministries and latest statements by the heads of state or foreign ministers on the one hand, and their security strategies and counter-intelligence / constitution protection / security service reports on the other. Some of the documents were only available in the state language and translations presented here are unofficial.

The review is in process of being completed, and the next step after compiling each country file will be to reassess the original hypotheses in the view of this new information.

⁵ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/>

⁶ <http://gazeta.zn.ua/international/pohischenie-evropy-1-.html>

2. Conclusions

- Russian aggression against Ukraine has led to EU28 sanctions, while Kremlin aggressive policies such as militarily threatening specific EU countries, or using hostile influence tools such as disinformation, and support of European extremists & radical leaders has alienated many European countries.
- Today, we can see:
 - **six countries which have held concerned views of Russian foreign policy and now are at the forefront of the European response to its aggression** (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, United Kingdom, Denmark)
 - **five countries have significantly shifted their policies** and concerns after the Russian aggression against Ukraine (Finland, Sweden, Netherlands, Czech Republic, Germany).
 - three countries are below-radar supporters of countering Russian aggression (Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria)
 - three states have virtually no relevant relations with Russia (Portugal, Malta, Ireland)
 - six countries are trying to stay away from the issues (Austria, Belgium, France, Luxemburg, Spain, Slovenia)
 - two governments are using the Russia-card for domestic reasons (Slovakia, Hungary)
 - and **three states still act Kremlin-friendly** (Greece, Italy, Cyprus)
- **13 EU countries are highly concerned with the Russian disinformation threat**, and are therefore participating in at least one of the three allied projects (EEAS East STRATCOM, NATO STRACOM COE, Finnish COE on Countering Hybrid Threats).
- **The game-changer in this situation will be the next German government coalition** which can shift European efforts to counter and mitigate the Russian aggression in both ways – it can either appease the Kremlin and effectively kill the EU28 response (potentially, if a “red” coalition is in place), or follow-up on the principled position held by the Chancellor Angela Merkel to devise a full-government policy on every level of the Kremlin aggression (from Ukraine to disinformation threats) and become the full-time prime defender of the liberal international order.
- **The group of 14 countries clearly concerned with Russian aggression is missing a leader.** The United Kingdom is on its way out, Germany still does not feel as an openly hawkish defender of the principled response, and Poland is missing out on the chance to be a genuine,

legitimate and a well-respected leader of this pack because of the unconstructive behaviour of its government.

- The position of the most reliable Kremlin friendly is now held by Italy, expressed for example by openly vetoing expansion of sanctions following Russia-sponsored atrocities in Syria. It might change after the French presidential elections, where Moscow might get a highly influential ally.

I. Recommendations

1. **The aggressiveness of the Russian Federation is based on internal factors**, while the kleptocratic regime needs to feed domestic audience with perception of the external threat. For this reason, Kremlin-orchestrated hostilities will continue until it implodes. It is important to **understand that this is not going to disappear overnight**, nor by European politicians being nice to Vladimir Putin.
2. Most of diplomatic efforts of the **concerned countries should focus on silently assisting Germany with adopting the position of the prime defender of the liberal international order**. German military is already assuming that role; now it is time for concerned allies to support Germany in assuming more assertive role against the ones who openly and systematically attack the rule-based order.
3. Given the amount and intensity of Russia-sponsored atrocities and the almost non-existent shift in approach of Kremlin' friendlies, **it is reasonable not to expect positions of Greece, Italy and Cyprus to significantly move**. There apparently is not much else Russia would have to do for them to change their long-term views.
4. European debate should **focus on how Russia uses energy to increase dependence of individual countries on Moscow's energies and to lure influential current or former politicians to lobby on its behalf**. European intelligence agencies openly warn against this tool Russia buys influence with.
5. Given the evidence and urgent warning by many European intelligence agencies and security experts, **European countries should develop their own national defence mechanisms & policies against hostile foreign influence and disinformation operations**. Many countries are now facing prospects of Russian hostile interference in their elections and it is most probably not going to disappear during the upcoming years. Elections should be considered a part of the national critical infrastructure as they are a cornerstone of sovereignty.
6. **13 EU states** clearly concerned with Russian disinformation **should ask EU HRVP Federica Mogherini to strengthen and reinforce the EEAS East STRATCOM Team**, which still consists almost only from seconded national experts, not from EEAS-funded specialists.

7. It would be in the great interest of countries concerned with Russia's aggression if **Polish government was able to act constructively in the allied structures and would become a respected leader** in spearheading actions to deter and mitigate the threat. So far, it has been a politically wasted opportunity by Warsaw.

II. Specific Conclusions

Threat perceptions

1. Looking through EU28 strategic and policy documents, we can distinguish three major ways how EU member states perceive the aggressive steps of the Russian Federation.
 - First, it is the Russian military aggression against Ukraine since 2014 and previously against Georgia in 2008. The Russian invasion of Ukrainian territory is by far the most influential event on how European security institutions see the security environment.
 - Second, it is the Russian efforts to bully or threaten EU member states by military power. It is very visible in the Baltic countries, while similar military threats have been visible in countries such as Denmark, Sweden or Finland.
 - Third, it is the Russian efforts and activities to disrupt European consensus on policy initiatives such as sanctions, or to support pro-Kremlin political leaders by hostile influence and disinformation operations. Many European intelligence and security agencies warn about Russian efforts to meddle in national elections. This threat has a growing importance in countries which do not feel directly militarily threatened, such as Germany
2. All of the EU member states have acknowledged the Russian military aggression against Ukraine at least by supporting the EU sanctions against Moscow. While the annexation of Crimea improved Putin's approval ratings at home, the Ukraine crisis has cost him a vast amount of goodwill and support among people and governments of the EU. Most of the EU member states have acknowledged this fact at least in national policy documents. It is needless to say that long-term worries about Russia voiced mainly by the Baltic states and Poland have been proved to be right by the reality.
3. In most Eastern and Scandinavian European countries, perceptions of threats coming from Russia are generally shared among national security establishments and the majority of the political class. In Western and Southern European countries, we can often see a divide between national security, defence & intelligence professionals and the majority of the political class, which sometimes adopts an appeasement or romantically naïve position towards the current Kremlin actions. For example, militaries of France and Italy are participating in work of NATO STRATCOM COE, despite their political leadership being very hesitant on the issue.

4. If we look at public annual reports of European intelligence and counter-intelligence agencies, there are two clear trends when comparing their reports in recent years:
 - European intelligence agencies tend to be more vocal in their warnings against Russian behaviour, mainly against the hostile interference in their domestic affairs (for example: France, Germany, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Czech Republic). There are European intelligence chiefs who have stepped out publicly to warn about these threats, which is often unusual in a local context where little public on-record engagement from them is expected.
 - The behaviour of the Kremlin is portrayed as worsening: domestically in Russia, in Eastern neighbourhood (not only in Ukraine, but also in Belarus or Moldova), and inside the EU member states.

Sanctions

5. The fact that EU member states have established and kept sanctions as a way of responding to the Russian aggression against Ukraine, is the furthest the EU can politically reach today.
6. Despite growing intensity of Russian-sponsored atrocities in Syria and continued aggressive steps inside the Ukrainian territory, there is very little support for deepening the EU sanctions. There are Kremlin-friendly countries, which openly block more sanctions, for example Italy in October 2016 following Russia-sponsored atrocities in Aleppo. Multi-layered Russian strategy using differentiated approach towards various EU member states is paying off.
7. In the current political environment with several EU member states openly voicing their wish to repeal the sanctions, it seems likely that the EU sanctions are politically interdependent with the U. S. position on sanctions. If Europeans would drop them, it is highly likely that Washington would follow, as this policy is seen as another way of American solidarity with the Europeans.
8. Without American efforts, Russia would not be deterred by Europe-only response. First, it would not be militarily sufficient since Russia is not concerned about potential European military action for example in Syria or Ukraine as it is highly unlikely to happen. Second, Russia has alienated many important EU countries, but it still keeps its friends around the European table so it can very well influence the European policy-making on some issues. Once the American support for sanctions would be gone, it is likely that the European part of sanctions would be lifted as well.

Trends identified in Russia' strategy

9. Russia's approach to bilateral relations with the EU states is based on "spheres of influence" thinking, differentiated by distance, history and recency of joining the EU and/or NATO. In case of sanctions, former members of the Socialist bloc and neutral states are criticized more harshly and subject to economic and military pressure, while former cold war opponents are courted and "excused" for following the sanctions policy against Russia due to strong economic ties with Washington and Berlin.

10. Key EU-Russia issues will remain to be energy (in)dependence, long-term vision for the future of Ukraine, response to the Russian attempts to redefine international law, ways in which Russian illegitimately tries to interfere in European internal affairs (hostile disinformation and influence operations), and securing the Eastern border.
11. There are clear Russian efforts to support “soft regime change” in various European countries, where Moscow clearly supports specific Kremlin-friendly politicians who – if elected – might tolerate the Russian “sphere of influence” in Eastern Europe (mainly over Ukraine today, possibly more in the future). The usual technique pointed out by Western intelligence agencies is to support a preferred candidate by attacking his challenger(s) – through disinformation attacks or cyber hacks. There are proven examples of direct Russian financing of Kremlin-friendly politicians and their teams– for example Marine Le Pen in France or the key advisor to the Czech President Martin Nejedlý.
12. Energy and business interests are central to most of the EU member states’ bilateral strategies, including their policy towards Russia. It is a dependency-linked phenomenon, which has the deepest significance in most of national policy documents. One of the most significant Russian influence efforts is seen in Germany, where it aims not only to increase German dependence on Russian energies, but also to lure in more current and former German politicians to work on the behalf of the Kremlin interests.
13. Russia’s position looks stronger than it really is:
 - The Kremlin’s series of “successful interventions” in international politics is more likely due to Putin’s “ideological” alignment with the wave of national-populism that is on the rise in the West and less likely due to Russia’s direct involvement. Alignment might be temporary. The Kremlin tries to align with far-right leaders who share the common enemy with Moscow – the moderate political parties in Europe.
 - Russian strategists believe a policy of unpredictability and destabilization is helping Russia “return its international status and sphere of influence”, while military posturing and a disregard for the rules shocks the international community and gives Russia short-term advantage. However, this is offset by a loss of goodwill and economic opportunities already felt by Russians. For example, Russia has clearly lost Ukraine for at least a generation.
 - More likely, Putin is interested in maintaining a simmering conflict with the West in order to easily dismiss internal dissenters as unpatriotic; and in making Western states and institutions look weak in order to justify his own kleptocratic regime in the face of internal unrest. For this reason, it is highly likely that this conflict that Moscow intentionally and systematically fuels will be here for times to come, until the Kremlin regime implodes. Military provocations towards European countries correlate more with internal legitimacy problems and to a lesser extent with external factors.

- This is not a sustainable long-term strategy if the Russian economy remains stagnant; business opportunities, investments and innovations are limited, and social spending continues to be cut in favour of the military. If Russia's own citizens do not rebel against Putin, the elites that form the backbone of his power might. So far, Putin has been successful in holding any opposition tightly oppressed.

Policy trends among EU member states

14. Normative issues (international law, democracy promotion, human rights, Eastern partnership), on the other hand, are often left for the EU to deal with. Exemptions are for example: Sweden, Poland, Czech Republic.
15. Member states may combine pragmatic bilateral relations with Russia with upholding common EU positions on key issues of common interest (e.g. on Ukraine). For example: Slovakia and Hungary.
16. It takes a strong coalition, usually led by a large member state, to change such positions. Now, we can see Italy trying to shift EU policies on Russia.
17. Perceived threat to national or regional security has caused some member states to turn away from a previously pragmatic Russia policy. These shifts are happening in Finland, Sweden, Netherlands, Denmark, Czech Republic, or partly in Germany.
18. Member states have different thresholds ("red lines") at which Russian behaviour is considered aggressive. It is hard to imagine what else would Russia have to do to change positions of Greece, Cyprus, or Italy. The occupation of Ukrainian territory, more than 10 000 dead Ukrainians as a result of Russian aggression, constant efforts to meddle in European domestic affairs through hostile influence and disinformation operations, or large scale atrocities in Syria have not.
19. There are three major potential threats to European unity as response to Russia's aggression:
 - Rise of an Eurosceptic mood and of (mainly) far-right political movements, which, if they come to power in some of the EU member states, would pursue an isolationist policy and might have less respect for international law themselves (for example tolerating Russian "sphere of influence" in Eastern Europe).
 - Russia's policy of bilateralising relations with the EU member states, making generous offers to some (e.g. through Gazprom) while putting pressure on others (mainly neighbours), making it seem like they have diverging national interests
 - Military destabilization beyond Ukraine would be a severe test of European (and Euro-Atlantic) solidarity.

EU28 individual approaches towards Russia

20. Based on the overview of their strategic and policy documents, we can categorize the EU28 member states in seven groups based on how they reacted to Russian aggression in recent years, in the context of the individual relationship the countries had with Russia:

Brief explanation	General trend	Countries
A. Principled defenders	Held concerned views of Russian foreign policy and now are at the forefront of the European response to its aggression	Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, United Kingdom, Denmark
B. The awoken	Significantly shifted their policies and concerns after the Russian aggression against Ukraine	Finland, Sweden, Netherlands, Czech Republic, Germany
C. Below-radar supporters	Concern about Russia but given complicated historical relations and local context, have most of the time stayed away from being vocal about the Russian aggression	Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria
D. No relations with Russia	Geographically distant from Russia and have almost no interest in any of the related issues	Portugal, Malta, Ireland
E. Trying to stay away from the issues	Historical, energy-related or economically special relations with Russia, do not feel threatened and do not acknowledge the threat, outside of the conflict in Ukraine	Austria, Belgium, France, Luxemburg, Spain, Slovenia
F. Governments using Russia-card for domestic reasons	Negative historical experience with Russia, but their governments use relations with Moscow for domestic political or economic reasons, or as a tool against the EU establishment	Slovakia, Hungary
G. Kremlin friendlies	Do not feel threatened and are advocating for better relations with Russia, often regardless what atrocities Moscow is responsible for. Those countries often support Kremlin's foreign policy objectives, such as stopping further sanctions under arguments related to appeasement or alleged business ties.	Greece, Italy, Cyprus

EU28 individual approaches in countering the threat of Russian disinformation

In a specific area of countering hostile influence and disinformation operations, we can identify the concerned nations also by their activities in allied structures:

EU28 Country	EEAS East STRATCOM team (Brussels)	NATO STRATCOM COE (Latvia)	Finnish COE on Countering Hybrid Threats
Estonia	has seconded-national expert in	sponsoring nation	
Latvia	has seconded-national expert in	founding and hosting nation	participating
Lithuania	has seconded-national expert in	sponsoring nation	participating
United Kingdom	has seconded-national expert in	sponsoring nation	participating
Sweden	has seconded-national expert in	partner country	participating
Finland		partner country	host of the COE
Czech Republic	has seconded-national expert in	had national expert in	
Germany		sponsoring nation	participating
Poland		sponsoring nation	participating
Netherlands		sponsoring nation	
France		joining nation	participating
Italy		sponsoring nation	
Denmark	has seconded-national expert in		

3. Methodology

The methodology of mapping the EU member states' views and positions towards Russia utilizes policy review, media analysis, and gathering of independent expert data, all presented in a relevant historical and geographical context to every country's stance. Each member state has a set of several relationship parameters, defining its relationship with Russia in a particular sphere. Additional to that is expert assessment, such as Power Audit, or EU-28 Watch, offering independent expertise on every member state. Expert assessment is followed by a list of policy documents, revealing the official stance of every country on a wide range of topics, including Russia and developments involving Russia.

Country parameters include the following typical set of parameters: 1. History, Geography; 2. Energy, trade, investment, sanctions; 3. Migration, fighting terrorism, Syria; 4. Military cooperation or tensions; 5. Secret services activity; 6. Normative issues, Euroskepticism; 7. Eastern Partnership; 8. View of Russia; and 9. Political meddling. Not all parameters may be available for every country, as every member state has a complex foreign policy and different opinion on Russia, as well as various reasons that motivate opposition to or cooperation with Russia.

The Expert Assessment section includes assessments from five sources: Power Audit (2007); National Perspectives (2013); EU-28 Watch (2015); Views from the capitals (2015-16); and European Foreign Policy Scorecards. Pre-2008 and pre-2014 assessments allow researchers to observe changes in stance on and opinion about Russia before the conflicts in Georgia and Ukraine, respectively. A wide time period like this is designed to demonstrate gradual shifts that occurred in the past decade.

Finally, the Policy Documents section illustrates the stance of a country's government through its ministry of foreign affairs, as well as other relevant institutions, such as intelligence services (where available). The documents in this section may vary from country to country, but the main criterion of their selection is their reflection of the official government's position on Russia, whether it considers it to be a threat or a reliable partner.

The majority of sources for the paper are available in open source form online, or from academic sources, particularly ones dealing with history and geography of a country. Thus, overall nature of the work is highly qualitative and adaptive to every case.

4. Austria

Summary: Austria is a non-NATO EU member state with a long tradition of neutrality throughout the Cold War. The country's relations with Russia have not suffered significantly due to the events in Ukraine. Energy still shapes the two countries' relationship and remains an important cornerstone in Austrian diplomacy with Russia. Therefore, Austria is sceptical towards the EU sanctions against Russia and is less concerned with the threats that other EU members see emanating from Russia. However, a large Chechen diaspora in Austria is seen as a potential national security threat and a product of Russia's policy in the Northern Caucasus.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Neutrality was key to Austria's independence, demanded by the Soviet Union in exchange for the withdrawal of troops in 1955. During the Cold War, Austrian politicians tried to avoid any declarations and actions that could be interpreted by the Soviet Union as a violation of its neutral status, and at times pursued "active neutrality" or "a policy of opening and normalization" towards the Eastern bloc. The neutral status has "seeped into the Austrian identity, maintained even after the country joined the EU".⁷

Energy: Russian gas has been supplied to Austria since 1968 and in 2012 constituted 63% of the country's gas imports (supplying 14% of its total energy needs). Baumgarten gas hub is the entry point for nearly one third of Russian gas exports to Western Europe. Haidach gas storage, a joint project of Gazprom (66.7%), RAG (Austria) and WINGAS (Germany), secures Russian gas exports for consumers in Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary, Austria, Germany, Slovakia and Italy.⁸ OMV is Gazprom's main business partner in Austria, and the warm relationship has not been significantly affected by the events in Ukraine and the EU sanctions. In June 2014, they signed a deal for the Austrian section of the South Stream pipeline bypassing Ukraine.⁹ The project was eventually cancelled under the EU pressure, but Baumgarten remains the potential destination of proposed alternative projects¹⁰ (e.g. Tesla Pipeline¹¹). On September 4, 2015, Gazprom, BASF, E.ON, ENGIE, OMV and Shell signed a shareholder agreement to construct the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline system from Russia to Germany across the Baltic Sea. The joint venture was blocked by Poland's antimonopoly agency, concerned about its effect on competition in the Polish and EU gas markets. The EU companies withdrew but promised to "individually contemplate alternative ways to contribute" to the project, and Gazprom insists lines will be put in operation in 2019. In December 2016, OMV and Gazprom signed an

⁷ Malek, M. and Luif, P., Austria, Chapter 14 in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

⁸ <http://www.gazprom.com/press/news/2016/february/article258865/>

⁹ <http://www.dw.com/en/austria-defies-us-eu-over-south-stream-during-putin-visit/a-17734602>

¹⁰ <http://tass.com/economy/919356>

¹¹ <https://www.neweurope.eu/article/russia-pushes-tesla-pipeline-through-balkans/>

agreement swapping upstream assets in Norway and Western Siberia,¹² a deal thought to favour the Austrian side and bind the two companies even closer.¹³

Migration: Austria is one of the popular destinations for asylum seekers in Europe. This has impacted relations with Russia since the Chechen wars, as Austria is home to 20000-25000 Chechen refugees.¹⁴

Secret service activity: Vienna is thought to be the base of operations for a large number of Russian security service agents (from several dozens¹⁵ to several hundred¹⁶, according to different estimations). "From time to time, the Austrian media report (...) on Russian secret service activities in Austria. The Austrian side is usually overly keen to restore everything to normality as soon as possible: From its point of view, spy scandals must not spoil its 'good and cordial relations' with Moscow – and, especially, the natural gas supply". Gert René Polli, the former chief of the Austria's counter-terrorism agency, told the Telegraph "Vienna is a stock exchange of information. We have the most liberal laws governing spying activity in the world."¹⁷

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer, 28% of Austrians had a positive view of Russia.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Friendly Pragmatist. Austria has deep economic links with Moscow. It has signed long-term deals with Russia on gas supplies and storage, and plans to become a gas hub for Gazprom in the EU. Austria has also been known to speak up for Russian interests within the EU.

National Perspectives (2013): "The governments in Vienna and Moscow like to emphasize they are 'very close' in most of the issues of international politics, that there are very few differences between them, that their relations are 'trouble-free,' 'cordial' etc. The annual reports of the Austrian MFA are usually restrained and careful in their treatment of Russia. There is an obvious tendency in the statements of Austrian politicians, diplomats and businessmen to tell their Russian interlocutors just what they want to hear, in particular: that Austria will remain neutral; that Russia necessarily has to be a part of a new European security system or architecture; that Moscow's interests, especially in the realm of security policy, must be respected (meaning by NATO and the USA); that Austria – like Russia – is in favour of a 'multipolar world', consisting of several equal great powers. Austrian politicians find it difficult to say 'no' to Russia and/or to find critical words about its domestic, foreign, and security policy. Instead, it is a widespread argument that Russia is too important as a power – and

¹² <http://www.ogj.com/articles/2016/12/omv-gazprom-sign-asset-swap-agreement.html>

¹³ "Production costs in Siberia are about a fifth of what OMV is spending in the North Sea" – OMV CEO Rainer Seele <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-04-01/gazprom-omv-to-swap-upstream-assets-in-deepening-of-old-ties>

¹⁴ Malek, M. and Luif, P., Austria, in National Perspectives on Russia.

¹⁵ Malek, M. and Luif, P., Austria, in National Perspectives on Russia.

¹⁶ <http://www.matthewaid.com/post/151393343766/new-book-details-russian-spying-in-austria>

¹⁷ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/austria/11003898/>

especially as supplier of energy resources – so relations must not be spoiled under any circumstances.”¹⁸

Views from the capitals (2015): “Vienna was very sceptical of sectorial sanctions on Russia for fear of economic repercussions, and Austria was the first state after the annexation of Crimea to host Putin as an official guest (...) Austrian feeling towards Russia is a strange mix of fear and admiration for the fighting, underdog spirit. Being a young member of the EU and outside of NATO, Austrians have little trust in European solidarity and are not used to the idea of a common European approach to deter Russian aggression. Austrian behaviour reflects the habits of a small, isolated, and neutral country trying to get along in between rival political blocs. Moreover, Russia has not passed up the opportunity to meddle in Austrian domestic politics.”¹⁹

European Foreign Policy Scorecards: Slacker on diversifying gas supplies away from Russia (2015), relations with Russia on energy issues (2014).²⁰

III. Policy Documents

Long-term priorities for Austrian European, Foreign and Integration Policy (2014)²¹

As demonstrated by the Ukraine-Russia conflict, the EU and its members need a clear neighbourhood policy which saves our Eastern neighbours from having to choose between Russia or the EU (...) Sustainable safety and security in Europe can only be achieved in cooperation with Russia and not by working against Russia. Russia too, can only ensure long-term safety and security by working with and not against Europe.

Foreign and European Policy Report (2014)²²

- "Clear rejection" of Russia's actions in Ukraine as a violation of international law, "incompatible with the OSCE's fundamental values";
- The EU's Eastern neighbours should have the option to cooperate with both the EU and Russia;
- EU sanctions against Russia were necessary but are hurting Austrian economy;
- Serious concerns about human rights situation in Russia and Russia-controlled territories;
- Russia is a partner in Syria peace process.

¹⁸ Malek, M. and Luif, P., Austria, in National Perspectives on Russia.

¹⁹ http://www.ecfr.eu/debate/what_next_for_eu_russia_policy

²⁰ <http://www.ecfr.eu/scorecard/2016/countries/austria>

²¹ https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Ministerium/Schwerpunkte/HBM_long-term_priorities.pdf

²² https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Publikationen/AEPB/Foreign_and_European_Policy_Report_2014.pdf

Austrian Security Strategy (2013)²³

Russia is mentioned alongside the US as a “strategic partner” in the field of security for Austria, the EU.

It also aims at making a collective contribution to the implementation of the EU strategy for external action, particularly in the Western Balkans and in the Eastern neighbourhood.

Constitution protection report (2015)²⁴

Russia is mentioned in the context of North Caucasus conflicts, as the situation in Chechnya and Dagestan influence the security climate in Austria, which is home to a significant Chechen community. 2014 report states that “economic problems, hopelessness, the violation of human rights, organized crime, and ethnically or religiously motivated tensions contribute to the instability of this region.” Earlier reports mentioned Russian secret services activity in Austria. The latest incident was in 2011, when a Russian secret agent couple with Austrian identity documents was arrested in Germany. Investigation “significantly substantiated the suspicion of illegal activity.”

²³ <https://www.bka.gv.at/DocView.axd?CobId=52251>

²⁴ http://www.bmi.gv.at/cms/BMI_Verfassungsschutz/Verfassungsschutzbericht_2015.pdf

5. Belgium

Summary: Belgium is a highly important EU and NATO member state, hosting EU and NATO institutional centers. Though traditionally a pragmatist in relations with Russia, Belgium is growing more aware of the threat Russia poses to the European Union. The conflict in Ukraine made Belgium more eager to support Kyiv in the EU context and back the measures to counter Russian aggression. However, being far away from the Russian border and in the middle of internal political difficulties, as well as being a target of terrorism, makes Belgium less concerned with Russia as a security threat. Still, Belgium does not deny that such threats coming from Russia exist, and it shows a particular concern with Russian intelligence activity in the country.

I. Relationship Parameters

Distance: Belgium is located at a relative distance from Russia, so there are no direct border or neighbourhood issues. Security relations are still influenced by certain images and stereotypes of the Cold War, leading to perceptions of Russia being 'different'.²⁵

Energy: Belgium imports around 8 per of its gas from Russia. It once sought to become a storage and distribution hub for Gazprom in Western Europe²⁶ but lost out to a site in the Netherlands.²⁷ Belgium has been a vocal supporter of the EU's Third Energy Package ever since.²⁸

Trade: Belgium is a small export-oriented economy, and thus pursuing business opportunities is always a priority on its bilateral agenda. It has important economic relations with Russia, but no dependence. Belgium was thought to be one of five EU countries to experience net losses in exports due to sanctions imposed on Russia.²⁹ Russia's food import ban hit Belgian fruit and vegetable sector particularly hard.

Secret services activity: Belgium hosts international institutions such as the EU and NATO, which Russia considers an important element of the bilateral relationship that separates Belgium from other small EU member states.³⁰ It also makes Brussels the target of intelligence activities. The Belgian state security service regularly reports Russian "interest" in Euro-Atlantic defence policy, EU political decisions, EU economic policy, and the Russian-speaking community in Belgium.³¹ Spy scandals are not rare.³²

²⁵ Casier, T, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, Chapter 8 in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

²⁶ <https://jamestown.org/program/belgium-gazproms-next-hub-in-europe/>

²⁷ <https://www.ft.com/content/a60d0134-8dea-11de-93df-00144feabdc0>

²⁸ Casier, T, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, in National Perspectives on Russia.

²⁹ <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2015/Russia/sanctions-after-crimea-have-they-worked/EN/index.htm>

³⁰ Casier, T, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, in National Perspectives on Russia.

³¹ <https://euobserver.com/secret-ue/117564>

³² <https://euobserver.com/justice/117772>, <https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2015/03/154624>

European policy orientation: As a founding member of the European Coal and Steel Community and NATO, Belgium has traditionally pursued a pro-integrationist policy as the best guarantee to defend the interests of a small country. It is a proponent of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy and a common energy policy. However, lack of common views among the member states in certain areas (including relations with Russia) has led to a pragmatic shift towards 'proactive bilateralism'. On EU-Russia policy, Belgium consults with the Baltic states, the Visegrad countries, Romania and Bulgaria, although there are strong divergences in terms of historic experience, interests and preferences.

Normative issues: Belgium has attempted to emphasize 'ethical' issues in its foreign policy, but its credibility (e.g. on good governance) has been compromised by internal political crises. Pragmatic interests often prevail, while "normative or pro-integrationist arguments (...) are only used when they (...) pose no threat to the national interest", and more sensitive political issues are left to the EU.³³

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer, 26% of Belgians had a positive view of Russia.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Friendly pragmatist. Belgium has a rather limited agenda for cooperation with Russia – Russia is not its foreign policy priority. Belgium sought gas deals with Russia and was willing to become a gas distribution hub for Gazprom.

National Perspectives (2013): [In] security relations (...) there is no sense of imminent threat on either side.

The Benelux countries all have a pragmatic attitude towards Russia. They share the expectation that the best strategy to follow is stepwise constructive engagement or interlacing with Russia in different fields: business, culture, defence, technology, space programme. Relations with Russia are labelled as excellent. Key foreign policy documents refer to the fact that the Russia policy is situated within the EU's policy, but in practice ... it depends on the business interest at stake. First order issues, i.e. issues related to national interests and security are by preference dealt with bilaterally, while the responsibility for second order issues, i.e. ethical concerns, is left to the EU.

European Foreign Policy Scorecards: Leader on supporting free press in Russia (2015).

³³ Casier, T, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, in National Perspectives on Russia.

III. Policy Documents

Speech by Minister Reynders on the priorities of the Belgian diplomacy (2015)³⁴

The situation in Ukraine reminds us of the fragility of the (...) fundamental values such as protection of the Human Rights, the Rule of Law, the freedom of expression and opinion, the territorial integrity (...) and the need to reaffirm our strong commitment to protect them. (...) We want Russia to respect the territorial integrity of Ukraine. We will keep insisting on this essential principle. On the other hand, Russia remains an important partner and we think it is important to keep the dialogue open. In the longer run we should review the relationship between the EU and Russia independently from the present sanctions and visit together questions like human rights, trade relations, energy cooperation, and so on. In this respect, a coordination between the different European institutions (OSCE, EU, Council of Europe) is very needed. We need to speak with one (firm) voice if we want to succeed.

Activity Reports of the Public Federal Service on Foreign Affairs³⁵

(2014) The developments in and around the Ukraine and, linked to this, relations with Russia and the Eastern neighbours of the EU, remained in the spotlight for the entire year. The embargo that was implemented by Russia on the import of agricultural products from the EU hit the Belgian fruit and vegetable sector particularly hard. **(2015)** The department (...) continued to focus attention on the crisis in Ukraine. Minister Reynders, who had made it one of the priorities of the Belgian Presidency of the Council of Europe 2014-2015, visited Ukraine with his Benelux colleagues. On that occasion, he called for the continuation of reforms and the implementation of the Minsk agreements, and reaffirmed Belgium's support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Strategic Vision for Defense (2016)³⁶

Security situation on the Eastern periphery is "unprecedented since the end of the Cold War", as Russian invasion in the East of Ukraine, annexation of Crimea, military and disinformation actions in Transnistria and Georgia confirm that Russia did not resign itself to the extension of NATO/EU sphere of influence. Yet this extension is only the reflection of the sovereign wish of the former Warsaw Pact and the former Soviet Union countries. (...) Russia sees its status as a global power threatened by its economic and demographic situation... and aims to preserve it by investing in conventional and nuclear capabilities and by using political power. NATO collective defense and nuclear deterrence (...) and the vast toolbox of the EU (e.g. assistance to Ukraine) (...) are complementary in strengthening Eastern Europe against Russian interference. Russia is using a hybrid war approach to destabilize the Eastern European countries that are turning to the West to secure their future. Belgium as a NATO member is expected to actively contribute to security efforts in the region.

³⁴ http://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/Newsroom/news/press_releases/foreign_affairs/2015/01/ni_190115_speech_minister_reynders

³⁵ http://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/about_the_organisation/activity_report

³⁶ <http://www.vandeput.belgium.be/sites/default/files/articles/20160629-vision%20strat%C3%A9gique-Defense.pdf>

State Security Service (VSSE) Annual Report (2011)³⁷

Clandestine activities of intelligence officers under diplomatic cover and journalistic cover... remain at a high level. Investigations (...) led to the identification of several Russian intelligence officers who, for many years, operated in Belgium and / or abroad using falsified Belgian or other non-Russian identities, sometimes dating back to the 1960s. Several Belgian nationals were recruited and manipulated by the Russian (...) intelligence services. Political developments (electoral fraud, protests) in Russia and the region are closely monitored by the VSS, as they may have consequences for the Russian and Russian-speaking diaspora in Belgium, legitimacy of the future president and the bilateral relations.

³⁷ http://justice.belgium.be/sites/default/files/downloads/VSSSE_rapportannuel2011_FR_web.pdf

6. Bulgaria

Summary: Bulgaria is a new EU and NATO member, with deep historical and cultural ties to Russia. Bulgaria is highly dependent on Russian fossil fuels, but so far the Bulgarian government remained dedicated in following EU guidelines and rejected several Russian pipeline projects. Though not explicitly pro-Russian, the political mainstream in Bulgaria tries to reconcile a firm pro-EU and pro-NATO stance with maintaining friendly relations with Russia. Bulgaria sees sanctions as an obstacle for its own economy, but in the past few years it became more aware of threats posed by Russia to the rest of Europe.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Bulgaria has over 130 years of diplomatic relations with Russia, which is credited as the force behind Bulgaria's liberation from Ottoman rule. In 1945, the 'swallowing' of Bulgaria by the Soviet sphere of influence met little opposition from the West or from within. Shared Slavic heritage with Russia, a linguistic, cultural, religious and historic affinity encouraged Bulgaria's close approximation with the former Soviet Union. It became known as the most faithful Soviet ally within the socialist bloc, leaving the state with scarce civic and political opposition or reflection on the Soviet occupation.³⁸

Joining the EU and NATO: Foreign policy reorientation was motivated by the attractiveness of the Euro-Atlantic model and the "profound weakness" of Yeltsin's Russia. Accession to NATO and the EU led to calls for a measured, pragmatic approach in Bulgaria-Russia bilateral relations and the pursuit of a level-playing field in energy and trade negotiations, especially in light of Bulgaria's dependencies on the Russian Federation. Bulgaria has also tried to position itself as a strategic bridge between East and West on matters of energy, security, conflict mitigation and resolution in the EU's neighbourhood.³⁹

Energy: Bulgaria is dependent on Russia for 90% of its natural gas consumption and three-quarters of its primary energy resources.⁴⁰ Dependency is exacerbated by the infrastructure of Soviet design and restrictive long-term energy transmission contracts. This has caused problems: in 2006, Bulgaria was forced to renegotiate its supply contract with Gazprom earlier and on less favourable terms, and in 2009, its gas supply was cut off in the Russia-Ukraine dispute. Russia sought to solidify control through projects such as the proposed South Stream gas pipeline, Burgas-Alexandroupolis oil pipeline, and nuclear power plant at Belene. While initially cooperative, Bulgarian government eventually rejected all three projects (citing the EU's Third Energy Package, environmental regulations and lack of interest from investors), leading to tensions in the bilateral relationship. In 2016, Bulgaria made

³⁸ Bozhilova, D., Bulgaria, Chapter 12 in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

³⁹ Bozhilova, D., Bulgaria, in National Perspectives on Russia.

⁴⁰ <https://www.ft.com/content/4a413060-9a07-11e6-8f9b-70e3cabccfae>

progress towards liberalizing its electricity market⁴¹, building an LNG terminal in Greece⁴², interconnecting gas pipelines with neighbours and the Southern Corridor, creating a regional gas hub at Varna and eventual energy independence.⁴³

Trade: In a liberalized Russian market, Bulgarian products became non-competitive and their market share dropped. Throughout the past decade, Bulgaria relied on Russia for 14% of its imports (mainly energy), while only some 2-3% of its exports went to Russia. Development of bilateral trade was much talked about but hindered by conflicts over energy projects and the EU sanctions against Russia.

Sanctions: Views diverge among Bulgaria's politicians. "A high-ranking Bulgarian Foreign Ministry official recently stated they are not only in favour of the continuation of economic sanctions against Russia, but also support the idea of extending the duration of sanctions from six months to one year. There is no reason to have this discussion so often, when apparently nothing changes from the Russian side."⁴⁴ Newly elected president Rumen Radev proposed for sanctions to be dropped, but he doesn't have strong party support, and the decision in summer 2017 will be up to Bulgaria's next prime minister.⁴⁵

Elections: In Western media, it was widely reported that a "pro-Russian candidate won the elections in Bulgaria". Local observers noted the campaign was polarizing, the debate on Russia particularly heated,⁴⁶ propaganda and conspiracy theories rampant.⁴⁷ However, the election result was not all geopolitics: "Mr. Radev's triumph reflected widespread discontent with the government's poor record on tackling corruption and poverty".⁴⁸ Some observers believe Radev will not bring about radical change. "Will Radev turn Bulgaria toward Russia? Yes and no. The rhetoric will change, as President Plevneliev was a harsh critic of the Kremlin who wouldn't be out of place in Tallinn or Warsaw. However, the substance will not. Having won, Radev, an alumnus of the Air War College in Montgomery, Alabama, is sure to play his Western credentials. His message will be that Bulgaria can be a loyal partner in the EU and NATO while reaching out to Russia. That is not very different from the position advocated by Borisov".⁴⁹

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer, 72% of Bulgarians had a positive view of Russia. Another poll finds that Bulgarians "do not believe that Russia can be a model for development and provide more credible guarantees for prosperity and security than the membership in the EU and NATO."⁵⁰

⁴¹ <http://research.seenews.com/the-dawn-of-bulgarian-energy-sectors-liberalisation/>

⁴² <http://www.reuters.com/article/greece-lng-bulgaria-idUSL8N18S2QS>

⁴³ <https://www.ft.com/content/4a413060-9a07-11e6-8f9b-70e3cabccfae>

⁴⁴ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_view_from_sofia_in_the_shadow_of_elections7144

⁴⁵ <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/euoppblog/2016/11/14/rumen-radev-bulgaria-russia-president/>

⁴⁶ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_view_from_sofia_in_the_shadow_of_elections7144

⁴⁷ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_view_from_sofia_a_difficult_choice_between_russia_and_the_west31

⁴⁸ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-37972526>

⁴⁹ <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/euoppblog/2016/11/14/rumen-radev-bulgaria-russia-president/>

⁵⁰ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/public_opinion_poll311520

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Friendly pragmatist. Russian ambassador to the EU Vladimir Chizhov once claimed that: “Bulgaria is in a good position to become our special partner, a sort of a Trojan horse in the EU.” Indeed, Bulgaria has an increasingly important economic relationship with Russia and has been close to Russia on issues like the energy policy. On the other hand, Bulgaria has been a target of Russian energy pressure and supported a stronger political role for the EU in the Eastern neighbourhood.

National Perspectives (2013): History and geography mean Bulgaria can be a positive mediating influence [in the EU-Russia relationship], but its dependence on Russia for energy and failure to diversify to mitigate its worst effects mean that [Europeanization of] Bulgaria cannot necessarily be considered permanent. EU membership had failed to anchor the drive for reform, raising doubt over the direction and continuity of Bulgarian foreign policy. Without strategic direction and clear priorities on issues like security and energy, the Bulgarian state could face populist revolts. And that instability could undo the ties between the EU and Bulgaria, prompting a shift toward Russian political and economic interests.

European Foreign Policy Scorecards: Bulgaria was leader on diversifying gas supplies away from Russia in 2015 after being a slacker on relations with Russia on energy issues in 2014.

III. Policy Documents

Bulgarian Foreign Policy⁵¹

Bulgaria is keen on continuing to maintain stable, friendly and predictable relations with Russia. Bulgaria aims at more active trade and economic relations, and an increased presence of Bulgarian business on the Russian market; it strives to assist the enhancement of the EU-Russia cooperation with a view to consolidating energy security on the continent.

Foreign Minister’s interview on Bulgaria-Russia relations (2015)⁵²

Bulgaria seeks to develop good relations with any country that is respectful to our values and political priorities, including our membership in the EU and NATO. Regardless of the existing disagreements caused by the conflict in Ukraine, we believe relationship with Russia is crucial for the Black Sea region and Eastern Europe. Our priorities are cooperation on economy, education, science, culture, social policy, tourism. Our policy is pragmatic, but the defense of national interests should be based on the principles of respect for international law and the sovereignty of each country. That determines the position of Bulgaria and other countries of the EU towards Russia’s role in the conflict in Ukraine.

Main Activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Jun 2013-Aug 2014)⁵³

⁵¹ http://www.bulgarianembassy-london.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=35&Itemid=103

⁵² <http://www.government.bg/cgi-bin/e-cms/vis/vis.pl?s=001&p=0239&n=1139&q=>

With regard to the events in Ukraine, the main objective was to protect Bulgaria from negative consequences and to reduce the negative effect of sanctions on the Bulgarian economy and business. Bulgaria and Russia marked 135th anniversary of establishment of bilateral relations with a series of meetings and events. Bulgarian foreign minister visited Kiev and Odessa and expressed support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, as well as for the government efforts to return the country on the path of European integration. The two countries signed a Memorandum of Cooperation in the field of European integration and in the framework of NATO-Ukraine Commission. Bulgaria also supported NATO's open door policy and measures to ensure the security of its Eastern allies, including military exercises in the Black sea and co-funding strategic infrastructure for the new members.

National Security Strategy (2011-2020)⁵⁴

Bulgaria takes an active part in the shaping and implementation of the EU and NATO relations with the Russian Federation. It supports a comprehensive approach to security and cooperation that respects the objectives, principles and values of the UN, NATO, the EU, Council of Europe and the OSCE.

Yearly report on the state of national security (2015)⁵⁵

Security threats: annexation of Crimea and destabilization of East Ukraine; risk of appearance of new and escalation of existing (frozen) conflicts; intensive attempts by Russia to restore and expand spheres of influence through military, economic and cultural means, including pressure on other states' foreign policy; increase and modernization of Russian military capabilities and access to the Black Sea, including control of energy reserves, in breach of geostrategic and military balance in the Black Sea region; hybrid war: attempts of foreign countries to influence public opinion through disinformation, propaganda campaigns, media manipulation, use of social networks and populist parties; energy dependency.

⁵³ http://www.mfa.bg/uploads/files/Documents/Otchetnost/otchet-June2013-August_2014.pdf

⁵⁴ http://www.dans.bg/images/stories/Information/strategiya_zh_nacionalna_sigurnost-bul-2011.pdf

⁵⁵ <http://www.parliament.bg/pub/cW/20160602115417.pdf>

7. Croatia

Summary: Croatia is the most recent EU member state and the second ex-Yugoslav country to join both the EU and NATO. Croatia's relationship with Russia has been cold ever since the country's independence from Belgrade, with visible exceptions in the energy sector. Croatia has been a firm supporter of the EU sanctions against Russia in the aftermath of the annexation of Crimea, and remains close to the common EU position in the condemnation of Russian actions in Syria.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Since declaring independence in 1991, Croatia has had a positive, but somewhat wary relationship with Russia. Optimism came from the business side, while the source of wariness is Russia's strong involvement in Serbia, Croatia's rival against whom it fought in the armed conflict of 1991-1995. Recently, the tensions in the Balkans have been running high, fuelled by talk of secession in Bosnia's Serb-majority Republika Srpska (potentially backed by Russia), a series of diplomatic incidents, and an outright arms race between Croatia and Serbia. Croatian defence ministry said it would like to buy US artillery systems, while Serbia showed interest in Russian military planes and missile defence systems.⁵⁶ Croatia has also expressed concern about Russia's frequent joint military exercises with Serbia.⁵⁷

Energy: Croatia produces 60-65% of the natural gas it consumes and imports the rest from Russia. The country has been interested in becoming a regional energy hub and exporter. It currently has projects underway aimed to increase production (from recently discovered new gas and oil fields), build an LNG terminal on the island of Krk, and develop its pipeline network (to link with the proposed Southern and North-South Gas Corridors that would greatly increase energy independence of states in Central and South Eastern Europe). Gazprom sought to control the developments, competing for a stake in exploration of Croatia's offshore reserves, seeking to buy shares in the state's energy company, attempting to repurpose the LNG terminal project as a hub for Russian gas, and looking to undermine the EU's search for alternative suppliers through proposed South Stream (gas) and Druzhba-Adria (oil) pipelines. So far, these efforts have been unsuccessful, and, despite delays, Croatia is moving in the direction of becoming a source of alternatives to the Russian gas for the whole CEE-SEE region.

Trade: Russian market is important (but not crucial) for Croatian pharmaceutical, food, construction, and engineering industries. Bilateral trade volumes fell in 2015, but the drop-off was mostly explained by declining energy prices and devaluation of the ruble. Croatian high officials attended a trade and investment forum in Moscow a day after the EU broadened sanctions due to the escalating violence in

⁵⁶ <http://www.dw.com/en/serbo-croatian-rivalry-fueling-arms-race-in-the-balkans/a-18983163>

⁵⁷ http://www.b92.net/eng/news/region.php?yyyy=2016&mm=08&dd=05&nav_id=98826

Ukraine.⁵⁸ However, Russia cancelled a similar forum in 2016 because, according to the Russian ambassador in Zagreb, "Russian entrepreneurs are very patriotic and disagree with the European sanctions regime."⁵⁹

European orientation: Croatia joined NATO in 2009 and the EU in 2013. After the EU introduced sanctions against Russia in the wake of the Ukraine crisis, Croatian Ambassador to Moscow declared that, as a member state, Croatia shares the EU principles and does not recognize the annexation of Crimea: "As long as the EU maintains this position on Crimea, Croatia as a member state will share it". Croatian politicians held that, if the situation in Eastern Ukraine stabilizes and implementation of Minsk accords gets underway, sanctions can be softened, while further escalation would justify new sanctions. At the same time, Croatian president and foreign minister advocated working with Russia on other issues, such as the crisis in Syria, and furthering cooperation in areas not affected by sanctions.⁶⁰

Normative issues: With its own experience of occupation and war fresh in memory, Croatia reacted to the conflict in Ukraine by stepping up military-technical cooperation, vowing to continue "political and practical support to Ukraine on its EU path", and offering to share experience of peaceful reintegration of occupied territories.⁶¹ Russian Foreign Ministry reacted sharply, saying Croatia should instead "tackle its own deep-rooted problems" concerning the rights of Serbs and other ethnic minorities.⁶² Russia also protested as eight Croatian citizens were reported to fight on the side of Ukraine, and accused Croatia of aggressive nationalism and forcing Orthodox believers to convert to Catholicism.⁶³

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer, 49% of Croatians had a positive view of Russia.

II. Expert Assessment

EU-28 Watch (2015): Since the beginning of the Ukraine crisis, political relations between Croatia and Russia have grown more aloof. Aggressive Russian politics in its neighbourhood and the strengthening of its authoritarian rule at home only increased distrust. Croatia, as a member of the EU and NATO, criticized the annexation of Crimea and joined sanctions against Russia. Yet, at the same time, there were attempts to strengthen economic relations.⁶⁴

Abducting Europe: Russians have multiple interests in Croatia, from buying properties on the Adriatic coast, to blocking the EU's energy projects. Zagreb views Russia with apprehension, but does not want to quarrel. Croatia has chosen a careful line in relations with the Kremlin: to maintain the EU

⁵⁸ <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/high-croatian-representation-in-moscow-despite-eu-sanctions#sthash.9Qe0yJL2.dpuf>

⁵⁹ <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/croatia-russia-trade-unaaffected-by-political-disputes-11-30-2016>

⁶⁰ <http://gazeta.zn.ua/international/horvatiya-soyuznik-ne-stavshiy-drugom-.html>

⁶¹ <https://eb1news.com/news/europe/croatia-help-ukraine-peaceful-reintegration-occupied-territories-45268>

⁶² http://www.b92.net/eng/news/world.php?yyyy=2016&mm=11&dd=23&nav_id=99763

⁶³ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/croatia/>

⁶⁴ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/croatia/>

sanctions, but at the same time, attempt to increase the presence of their companies on the Russian market.⁶⁵

European Foreign Policy Scorecards: Slacker on relations with Russia on Energy Issues (2014).

III. Policy Documents

Croatian Foreign Minister's Strategic Plan (2016-2018)⁶⁶ / Foreign Policy Aims⁶⁷

Croatia wants to develop bilateral economic and political relations with [the US and] the rest of the big countries, namely Russia and China, which Croatia traditionally has friendly relations with.

Activity Report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2011)⁶⁸

In relations with the countries of the Eurasian area, especially with the Russian Federation, economic cooperation remains a priority, as evidenced by a series of bilateral economic and business contacts. Relations with the Russian Federation were marked by the resumption of talks on increasing business cooperation, with an emphasis on energy, a sector of strategic importance to overall relations. Croatia has continued to strengthen and enrich relationships with the countries of the Eastern Partnership in view of confirmed mutual interest, with an emphasis on the Euro-integration process.

Statements by the Foreign Minister (2015-2016)⁶⁹

Latest statements by foreign ministers Vesna Pusić (from December 2011 to January 2016) and Miro Kovač (from January 2016 to October 2016) also focused on the importance of economic and trade relations. Pusić was in favour of gradual phasing out of sanctions against Russia, while Kovač stated Croatia will support sanctions against Russia as long as parts of Ukraine remain occupied.

Public Report of the Croatian Security-Intelligence Agency (2015)⁷⁰

The Ukrainian crisis, which resulted in the Russian annexation of the Crimea and armed conflict between the Ukrainian forces and pro-Russian insurgents in the Donbas region, caused the most severe deterioration of relations between Russia and the West since the time of the so-called Cold War, including a particular form of war through economic sanctions. Economic and financial conditions in the Ukraine have deteriorated, and Russia is registering a decrease in investments and economic growth; at the same time, EU member countries, particularly companies working on the Russian market, some of them Croatian, have been affected by the sanctions regime.

The Ukrainian conflict illustrated the importance of energy security, and emphasised the fact that energy sources (gas), aside from contributing to competitiveness of national economies, are also a

⁶⁵ http://gazeta.zn.ua/international/horvatiya-soyuznik-ne-stavshiy-drugom-_.html

⁶⁶ <http://www.mvep.hr/files/file/dokumenti/150717-strateski-plan-mvep-2016-2018.pdf>

⁶⁷ <http://www.mvep.hr/en/foreign-politics/foreign-policy-aims/>

⁶⁸ http://www.mvep.hr/_old/custompages/static/hrv/files/godisnjak2011/pdf/MFEA_Yearbook_2011.pdf

⁶⁹ <http://www.mvep.hr/en/info-servis/press-releases/>

⁷⁰ <https://www.soa.hr/UserFiles/File/pdf/Public-Report-2015.pdf>

valuable foreign policy tool. Accordingly, Russia is using gas to realize its foreign policy objectives. In spite of the Ukrainian-Russian-European agreement on the repayment of the Ukrainian debt, there is still a possibility that gas supply to the Ukraine might be discontinued. Therefore, European countries are attempting to find alternative sources so that energy security is not endangered.

The announcement that the planned gas pipeline South Stream will not be built was a blow to some of the SE European countries, as they consider the energy sector an important initiator of economic recovery. This primarily relates to the states which are dependent on Russian gas. Their reactions show that dependence on Russian gas substantially contributes (along with political, cultural, religious and even military connections) to an inclinations toward Russian views (for example in regard to the conflict in the Ukraine).

8. Cyprus

Summary: Cyprus is seen as an EU country which has a very close relationship with Russia. The Cypriot government was a firm opponent of sanctions against Russia, fearing the outflow of Russian capital from the island. However, Cyprus had to yield to the dominant position in the EU on Russia. Cyprus is less concerned with the crisis in Ukraine and more focused on solving its own territorial and political issues. Russia has supported integrity of the island since the Soviet era, making Moscow a key foreign partner to Nicosia. Russian intelligence's activity in Cyprus continues, allegedly with the Cypriot government's support. However, in terms of energy, Cyprus is less dependent on Russia and reserves its role as an offshore for Russian finance.

I. Relationship Parameters

National issue: Cypriot bilateral relations with Russia are primarily driven by the Cyprus problem. Moscow has been a staunch supporter of Nicosia and used its veto power to block a draft UN Security Council resolution condemning the Cypriot government for rejecting the Annan peace plan in April 2004. However, as Cyprus is inching closer to a final settlement, there are worries over Russia's role. A peace deal would ease tensions between the European Union and Turkey, give Turkey a new source of natural gas imports, and hand Brussels a diplomatic success story, none of which is in Russia's interests. The fear on the Greek and Cypriot side is that Moscow is using social and mass media, as well as ties to fringe nationalist political parties and the Greek Orthodox Church, to undermine the settlement talks.⁷¹

Offshore status: Cyprus is Russia's primary offshore banking haven, home to 40.000 Russians, and a popular destination for Russian tourists. The relationship is supported by an extremely favourable Double Taxation Treaty between Cyprus and Russia. According to recent data, there are between 30–150 thousand companies of Russian origin registered in Cyprus, with Russia providing up to 10% of Cyprus' GDP and Cyprus ranked as one of the top investors in Russia.⁷² A 2013 Global Financial Integrity report went as far as saying Cyprus became "a major money-laundering machine for Russian criminals."⁷³

Bailouts: Russia offered Cyprus a 2.5 billion bailout loan in 2011. However, it did not prevent Cypriot banking system coming under severe strain in the wake of the Greek crisis and briefly shutting down in March 2013. A bailout package negotiated by the EU Commission and the IMF involved a levy on bank

⁷¹ <http://www.politico.eu/article/cyprus-fears-russia-could-wreck-reunification/>

⁷² <http://gazeta.zn.ua/international/kipr-sredizemnomorskiy-federalnyy-okrug-.html>

⁷³ <http://www.gfinegrity.org/report/country-case-study-russia/>

accounts and deposits, including those from Russia, briefly souring the relationship.⁷⁴ However, Russian capital returned as soon as Cypriot banking system rebounded.⁷⁵

Energy: Cyprus has a chance to become an important regional energy player after the discovery of the Aphrodite natural gas field off the island's coast and after the signing of the Energy Triangle agreement with Israel and Greece for joint extraction with the neighbouring Leviathan and Tamar fields. The parties plan to build a pipeline and liquefied natural gas plant by 2019, with implications for European energy independence. Russian companies competed for a stake in exploration and extraction, so far unsuccessfully.

Position on sanctions: The foreign minister of Cyprus, Ioannis Kasoulides, declared in an interview to Die Welt that Russia and Cyprus were so tightly economically intertwined that the sanctions "will destroy" the island's economy faster than they will affect Russia.⁷⁶ The sanctions did affect trade (mainly fruit exports), but the impact was limited (measured at €13 million, compared to billions in financial flows). Cyprus' economy was more affected by the falling energy prices and currency crisis which left Russians with less money to spend, as well as by the Kremlin's "de-offshorization" efforts. Nonetheless, in 2016, Cyprus' parliament adopted a resolution calling for lifting the EU sanctions on Russia.

Military cooperation: Russia and Cyprus signed an agreement on military and technical cooperation in 1996, followed by several arms procurement deals.⁷⁷ Cyprus was the only EU member state to maintain military cooperation with Russia after the Ukraine crisis. In 2015, a new agreement gave the Russian Navy regular access to Cyprus' Mediterranean ports (mainly for international anti-terrorism and piracy efforts) and permitted Russian Air Force to use the Papandreou air base (for humanitarian missions).⁷⁸ There was also a rumoured negotiation to set up a permanent Russian military base on the island. This caused tensions with the UK, which has two bases in Cyprus used for NATO operations, and the rumours were eventually dispelled by the government.⁷⁹ Cyprus has also been criticized for allowing Russian spies and weapon smugglers escape through its territory.⁸⁰

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer, 76% of Cypriots had a positive view of Russia. Most political parties and the powerful Orthodox Church openly declare their affinity with Russia.

⁷⁴ <http://www.globalresearch.ca/meltdown-of-russias-offshore-banking-haven-in-cyprus/5328063>

⁷⁵ <https://qz.com/178114/what-russian-money-sloshing-back-to-cyprus-teaches-us-about-tax-havens/>

⁷⁶ Servettaz, Elena. "A Sanctions Primer: What Happens to the Targeted?" World Affairs, vol. 177, no. 2, 2014.

⁷⁷ <http://mdb.cast.ru/mdb/2-2001/at/raegct/>

⁷⁸ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-cyprus-military-idUSKBN0LU1EW20150226>

⁷⁹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-31293330>

⁸⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jan/26/cyprus-russian-invasion>

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Trojan Horse. Within the European Union, Cyprus has opposed proposals for energy unbundling and blocked proposals for increasing European involvement in the post-Soviet space. For example, in February 2006, Cyprus joined up with eight other member states to oppose a possible contribution to a peace support operation in Moldova. Greece and Cyprus often take the lead in defending Russia's position on issues such as energy or the Eastern neighbourhood (allowing other EU member states to hide behind them), but they are careful not to become isolated inside the EU.

National Perspectives (2013): Cyprus, with its new-found political weight and status within the EU, has sought to establish bilateral relations with powerful states such as China and Russia in order to intensify their involvement and ensure their continuing and unequivocal support for a solution of the Cyprus problem. Indeed, whilst Russia has always been a strong supporter of Cypriot efforts through the UN to resolve the conflict on the island, it has also in the past sought to manipulate Cypriot non-membership of NATO in order to pursue policies that divided and fostered conflict between NATO members.

EU-28 Watch (2015): Russia is one of the closest political and economic partners for Cyprus and there is no evidence or inclination for that to change in the near future. During the tensions following the Ukrainian crisis, Cyprus had to maintain a balanced position between its support of the EU's course of action and its desire to perpetuate its good bilateral relations with Russia. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cyprus had to concede to the sanctions imposed by the EU on Russia following the Ukrainian crisis even at its own financial and potentially political cost. The administration's position is that the sanctions should not be used and aimed as ends in themselves, and that, in fact, the political and economic repercussions may have been disproportionately costly to EU member states rather than **Russia as the primary target of the sanctions.**

III. Policy Documents

Foreign policy objectives⁸¹

Cyprus maintains very good relations with a considerable number of countries and the objective of its foreign policy is to have an active involvement in processes that aim to promote international co-operation, peace, stability, and sustainable development. Cyprus has always been a dedicated supporter of human rights, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, and a strong advocate of international peace and security. Its geographic position enables it to play a role both in the Eastern Mediterranean region and within the European family. Its accession to the European Union initiated new era in its relations with third countries, thus becoming a bridge of communication between the European Union and these countries.

Bilateral relations with Russia⁸²

⁸¹ http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/mfa2016.nsf/mfa29_en/mfa29_en?OpenDocument

The friendly character of the bilateral relations is reflected in the same or similar position of the two states in important international issues, as well as in the consistent and valuable support of Russia in the efforts to find a just, viable and comprehensive solution of the Cyprus Question on the basis of the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council. With Cyprus' entry into the European Union on May 1st 2004, another dimension was added to Cyprus-Russia relations since the EU is a strategic partner of Russia. The trade and economic ties between Cyprus and Russia are on a satisfactory level. A large number of Russian entrepreneurs use Cyprus as their base for their business and investment activities. Cyprus imports from Russia mainly oil as well as iron, other metals, timber, etc. Cypriot exports to Russia include mainly agricultural products, foodstuff and pharmaceuticals. A significant number of Russian tourists also visit Cyprus every year.

Foreign Minister's statements after meeting with Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov (2016)⁸³

The high level meetings between the members of Governments of Cyprus and Russia attest to the excellent level of the bilateral relations, which, in my view, are considered to be historic and traditional and have survived over 55 years. Cyprus has its own existential problem with the invasion and the occupation of 37% of the island by Turkey, and we have never ceased to express our gratitude to a consistent and principled policy played by Russia, as a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council. We discussed our upcoming Presidency of the Council of Europe. Our theme is democratic security in Europe, particularly related to application of human rights in democracy and the rule of law, protection of minorities, and other matters of interest. We approach the presidency in a neutral and professional way, but we believe that all members of the CoE should work in order for this organization to maintain a certain standard. We are amongst those who believe that peace and stability in the European continent are possible if the EU and Russia maintain strategic relations, and that the dialogue should be always open, so that any problems that may arise can be resolved by diplomatic and political means. On Ukraine, for us, the only game in town is the Minsk Agreement, which has to be respected by all signatories and those who have undertaken to be guarantors of the Minsk Agreement. We want this to be implemented as soon as possible for the sake of peace and cooperation between Russia and the EU.

⁸²http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/embassies/embassy_moscow.nsf/moscow_embassy06_en/moscow_embassy06_en?OpenDocument

⁸³ <http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/mfa2016.nsf/All/EDB5E75CEFC401BFC225805E00366BF8?OpenDocument>

9. Czech Republic

Summary: The Czech Republic is a member of the EU and was one of the first former East Bloc countries to join NATO. The Czech stance on Russia remains ambivalent, but it is fully aware of threats Russia poses. The country's energy sphere remains highly dependent on imports from Russia, which is also its largest non-EU trade partner. Russian intelligence's presence in the Czech Republic is significant, and the country's intelligence services are aware of this issue. Still, the Czech Republic remains dedicated to NATO, and its close proximity to the former Soviet Union makes the country's government aware of threats Russia poses, particularly after the 2014 events in Ukraine.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Due to the communist-era legacy, Czech public is historically sensitive to direct Russian (or any other foreign) operations on its territory.⁸⁴ Attempts in the Russian Federation to rewrite or falsify history about the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 are particularly delicate to Czechs. Documentary *Warsaw Pact: Declassified Pages* presenting the invasion as a protection against NATO aggression that was broadcasted on Russian state channel Russia-1 in 2015 angers Czechs as well as Slovaks. Recently, a controversial Russian memorial honouring "the fallen soldiers, internationalists, and peacemakers" built by group of Russian veterans in Prague cemetery has been removed after the negative reactions it received.

On the other hand, a considerable portion of population shares a pro-Russian sentiment. The Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM) is, despite the past,⁸⁵ currently the third-most popular party in the country⁸⁶ and could return to power in coalition with the Social Democrats after the next parliamentary elections.

View of Russia: Neither the Czech elites nor the public have reached a consensus in their relationship with Russia. The Czech foreign orientation is trans-Atlantic, but the Czech government has no clear stance whether Russia is rather a threat or an important partner with whom cooperation needs to be enhanced. A strong and popular pro-Russian voice is the Czech president Miloš Zeman, on the contrary to the Czech Government, which defends the positions of EU and NATO.⁸⁷

The pro-Russian president: In the aftermath of the Crimea crisis, Miloš Zeman denied the presence of Russian troops in Ukraine and endorsed claims that Kiev is ruled by fascists.⁸⁸ He has repeatedly said that Czech Republic should call for a withdrawal of EU sanctions against Russia and claimed that

⁸⁴ <https://www.bis.cz/vyrocní-zpráva6c8d.html?ArticleID=1096>

⁸⁵ <http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/10/12/return-of-the-czech-communists/>

⁸⁶ http://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/media/com_form2content/documents/c1/a7652/f3/pv170127.pdf

⁸⁷ <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analyses/2015-04-01/czech-dilemmas-over-russia-and-nato>

⁸⁸ <https://euobserver.com/opinion/133789>

they have been damaging Czech farmers and the Czech industry.⁸⁹ Zeman, as well as former president Václav Klaus, has strong ties to Russian LUKoil. Both men maintain friendly relationship with Vladimir Yakunin, who is close to Vladimir Putin.⁹⁰

Dispute over the US missile shield: After the Czech government entered negotiations with the US on the deployment of a radar system of US missile defence shield in 2007, Russia threatened to place short-range nuclear missiles on the borders with NATO pointing at the Czech Republic.⁹¹ Russian president Vladimir Putin claimed it would lead to “an inevitable arms race”⁹² and threatened to withdraw from the Nuclear Forces Treaty of 1987. Just the day after the Czech Republic signed the agreement on establishing the radar, Russia curtailed oil supplies via the Druzhba pipeline in the country by 50% that had to be substituted by delivery through the TAL/IKL pipeline.⁹³ Accordingly, Russia considered the decision to drop the plans a diplomatic victory. Reactions in the Czech Republic were mixed.⁹⁴

Secret services activity: Russian spies are thought to be one of the most active foreign agents operating in the Czech Republic. According to the Czech counter-intelligence agency BIS, most of them operate under a diplomatic cover of the overstuffed Russian embassy in Prague, counting almost 140 employees.⁹⁵ Some estimates claim that two thirds of them could be spies.⁹⁶ In its annual report (2015), BIS warned against their activities comprising operations in the context of information war, political, scientific-technical, and economic espionage. Russian secret services are also trying to cooperate with the Russian community in the Czech Republic (2014).⁹⁷ Russian federation is mentioned alongside China as the biggest threat in a state-run or state-supported cyber espionage.⁹⁸ In the past, some spies had to be expelled from the country, but Czech diplomacy have not intended to escalate the conflict publicly because of the possible reciprocal action from Moscow.⁹⁹

Trade and investment: Russia is the largest non-EU market for Czech export and an important investor in the country. According to the Czech Export Strategy, it is among twelve priority countries.¹⁰⁰ Czech Republic is a common tourist destination for Russians as well. Currently, the economic exchange has been declining following the devaluation of ruble, recession of Russian economy, and economic sanctions. Especially the Ministry for Industry and Trade advocates for strengthening the

⁸⁹ <http://www.radio.cz/en/section/news/president-zeman-says-czech-republic-should-call-for-end-to-eu-sanctions-against-russia>

⁹⁰ <https://www.stratfor.com/analysis/czech-republic-shifting-toward-west>

⁹¹ <http://www.radio.cz/en/section/curaffrs/russia-threatens-to-aim-missiles-at-czech-republic-poland-if-us-installs-defence-shield>

⁹² <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/02/12/AR2007021200555.html>

⁹³ Černoch a kol. *The future of the Druzhba pipeline as a strategic challenge for the Czech Republic and Poland.*

International Institute of Political Science, Faculty of Social Studies. Muni Press, Brno 2012. ISBN 978-80-210-5926-9

⁹⁴ <http://www.inss.org.il/uploadImages/systemFiles/INSSMemo155.02.2.Kalhousova.ENG.pdf>

⁹⁵ Number can vary by several employees.

⁹⁶ <https://www.respekt.cz/video/ondrej-kundra-v-cesku-jsou-stovky-ruskych-spionu>

⁹⁷ <https://www.bis.cz/vyrocní-zprava6c8d.html?ArticleID=1096>

⁹⁸ <https://www.bis.cz/vyrocní-zprava890a.html?ArticleID=1104>

⁹⁹ <http://praguemonitor.com/2016/09/06/in-expelling-russian-spies-hard-czechs>

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.mpo.cz/dokument103015.html>

economic cooperation with Russia.¹⁰¹ The dark side is the penetration of Russian capital connected to the grey market into the Czech economy and the strengthening the Russian political influence in the Czech Republic.¹⁰²

Energy: Approximately 73% of Czech gas and 68,5% of oil imports come from Russia, therefore, energy dependency on Russia is a key security issue. In the context of oil supplies curtailment in 2008, the Czech Republic has negotiated more oil to flow in via the Western European TAL pipeline when there are problems with the Druzhba pipeline.¹⁰³ Gazprom's long-term contract with RWE Transgas runs through to the end of 2035.¹⁰⁴ The Czech Republic was active in the settlement of the Russia-Ukraine gas transit-fees dispute in 2009. Nevertheless, Russia's reputation as a reliable supplier was damaged. Consequently, during its presidency in the Council of the EU in 2009, the Czech Republic was a vocal supporter of projects aimed at reducing the negative impacts of energy dependency on Russia, such as the so-called South corridor or the Third Energy Package.¹⁰⁵ Over the past few years, Russian Gazprom has continued in its efforts to control the transport, storage, and trade in the region. It has started to supply Czech customers with gas through the company Vemex owned by Gazprom and together with its Czech partner KKCG has increased the capacity of gas storage. Czech energetic sector is also of interest for Russian espionage in the country.

Regarding the nuclear energy dependency on Russia, TVEL, a subsidiary of Russian nuclear energy giant Rosatom is an exclusive supplier of fuel for the Temelin nuclear plant until 2020.

Military tensions: The Czech Republic has traditionally been trying to avoid exacerbation of its tense relations with Russia. In the context of the Ukraine crisis, the country has been more willing to boost military cooperation with its NATO allies.¹⁰⁶ 82% of Czechs approved the NATO convoy (Operation Dragoon Ride) drive through the country.¹⁰⁷

Normative issues: Czech Republic is active in raising democracy and human rights issues at the EU level and supports a value-based approach on Russia, but it is rather passive in shaping EU policy on Russia. Activism is visible only when interests are at stake.

Eastern Partnership was launched at the Prague Summit in 2009. The Czech Republic shows support for the EU action in the region, including Minsk peace process and following economic sanctions, but does not take a active role in shaping common position.

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer, 39% of Czechs had a positive view of Russia.

¹⁰¹ <http://www.mpo.cz/en/guidepost/for-the-media/press-releases/minister-mladek-the-met-with-representatives-of-business-community-and-diplomacy-of-china--russia-and-azerbaijan-at-the-ie-fair-in-brno--153777/>

¹⁰² <https://www.bis.cz/vyrocní-zpráva890a.html?ArticleID=1104>

¹⁰³ Černoch a kol. (2012), pg. 37

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.gazpromexport.ru/en/partners/czech/>

¹⁰⁵ http://www.eu2009.cz/assets/czech-presidency/programme-and-priorities/achievements/cz-pres_vysledky_cs_2.pdf

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.stratfor.com/analysis/czech-republic-shifting-toward-west>

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.radio.cz/en/section/curraffrs/czechs-ready-to-join-operation-atlantic-resolve>

STRATCOM: The Czech Republic has a seconded national expert working at the EEAS East STRATCOM Team. The Czech Republic have also sent its national expert to the NATO STRATCOM COE in late 2016.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007):¹⁰⁸ Frosty pragmatists. The Czech Republic is oriented towards its business interest, while permanently raising concerns about democracy and human rights issues. For example, in 2006, it joined up countries supporting potential peace support mission in Moldova that, in the end, was not even discussed at the EU level. It is also active when Russia violates its commercial interests or diplomatic norms.

National Perspectives (2013): The Czech Republic follows a pragmatic 'business as usual' approach. Fear of Russia in the country is vastly overshadowed by their economic and energy relations. The government is sensitive to attempts of Russian companies to buy strategic Czech firms such as Czech Airlines or Transgas.

The Czech Republic directly supports the eastern dimension of EU external relations and prioritize countries such as Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, and Belarus. There is a degree of a 'Russia-first' principle regarding support for their EU and NATO aspirations.

Anti-Russia/Russia-cautious political parties: The Civic Democratic Party (ODS). Pro-Russia - the Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD).¹⁰⁹

European Foreign Policy Scorecards: Leader on support for a strong declaration at the Riga Eastern Partnership summit and for ratifying and implementing Association Agreements with Georgia and Moldova (2016), supporting democratic reforms in EaP countries through bilateral assistance, promoting political freedom in Russia (2015), pushing visa liberalization for Russia, Ukraine and Moldova (2013).¹¹⁰

III. Policy Documents

The Czech Republic's Defence Strategy (2017):¹¹¹

The security situation in Europe got significantly worse since 2012. The Russian Federation openly realizes its power ambitions on the east of Europe, with the use of military force. Yet it does not hesitate to break the norms of the international law, including violation of territorial integrity of neighbouring countries. It uses a set of hybrid campaign tools against the member countries of NATO and EU, including targeted disinformation activities and cyber attacks.

¹⁰⁸ http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR-02_A_POWER_AUDIT_OF_EU-RUSSIA_RELATIONS.pdf

¹⁰⁹ Dangerfield, M., Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia, chapter 11, in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

¹¹⁰ <http://www.ecfr.eu/scorecard>

¹¹¹ http://www.mocr.army.cz/images/id_40001_50000/46088/OS.pdf

Concept of the Czech Republic's Foreign Policy (2015):¹¹²

Russia destabilizes the European security architecture. But as a permanent member of the UN it remains a significant player in addressing numerous international issues, therefore we need to cooperate with it. Czech policy towards Russia will depend on the Russian Federation's respect for international law and for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of its neighbours. Russia is potentially an important political and economic partner for the Czechia, as well as for the EU. In addition, Czech will seek to establish cultural cooperation and contacts with Russian civil society.

Security Strategy of the Czech Republic (2015):¹¹³

No direct mention of Russia, but indirect references. Declining security and stability in Europe's flank regions and immediate neighbourhood could pose direct threat to the NATO or EU. It might be of classis military nature or in the form of hybrid warfare. Attempts of some states to carve out spheres of influence or to achieve a revision of existing international order through a military as well as non-military tools (including disinformation intelligence operations, unmarked military personnel, etc.) may be considered a threat.

Annual report of the Security Information Service (2015):¹¹⁴

As in previous years, Russian intelligence services were the most active foreign intelligence services in the Czech Republic. Many Russian intelligence officers were active under diplomatic cover of the Russian Embassy. Russian activities focused on the information war regarding the Ukrainian and Syrian conflicts and on political, scientific, technical and economic espionage. Information operations aimed to weaken the Czech media, influence perceptions, confuse the audience, promote tensions, disrupt NATO and EU alliances, isolate Ukraine. Russia and China pose the gravest threat to the Czech Republic as far as state-led or state-sponsored cyber-espionage campaigns are concerned. Russia was also mentioned in the context of offering information support to right-wing extremists, and violation of tax, regulatory and contract provisions by companies partly owned or directly controlled by Russian state administration.

Speeches by Foreign Minister (2015-2017):

According to Czech foreign minister Lubomír Zaorálek, Russian aggression and illegal annexation of Crimea is threatening Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and stability. Czech Republic supports reforms and visa free regime for Ukraine.¹¹⁵ Anti-Russian sanctions are effective.¹¹⁶

¹¹² http://www.mzv.cz/file/1574645/Concept_of_the_Czech_Republic_s_Foreign_Policy.pdf

¹¹³ http://www.army.cz/images/id_8001_9000/8503/Security_Strategy_2015.pdf

¹¹⁴ <https://www.bis.cz/vyrocní-zpráva890a.html?ArticleID=1104>

¹¹⁵ http://www.mzv.cz/jnp/cz/udalosti_a_media/tiskove_zpravy/x2017_02_06_ministr_zaozalek_na_fac.html

¹¹⁶ http://www.mzv.cz/jnp/cz/o_ministerstvu/archivy/clanky_a_projevy_ministru/clanky_a_projevy_ministra_zaozalka_2015/valku_s_ruskem_nehceme.html

10. Denmark

Summary: Denmark is one of the founding NATO countries and a firm supporter of the alliance. After the annexation of Crimea, Denmark was quick to voice its condemnation of the illegal act conducted by Russia. Relations between Russia and Denmark have been relatively cool ever since Putin's rise to power, spoiled either by the war in Chechnya, human rights concerns, or environmental issues connected with Russia's pipeline building activities in the Baltic Sea. Today, Denmark keeps facing constant military and diplomatic pressures from Russia but remains a firm supporter of the international sanctions against Russia.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Unlike other Scandinavian countries, Denmark has never been formally at war with Russia. Due to its strategic location as the gateway to the Arctic, Denmark has long been engaged in a power balance with both Sweden and Russia, frequently allying with the Russians against the Swedes. The relationship weakened in the 20th century with the Bolshevik revolution in Russia and Denmark's waning influence. During Cold War, Denmark was initially neutral but later joined both NATO (in 1949) and the European Communities (in 1973). Thus, while Sweden and Finland were positioning themselves 'in between' the East and the West, Denmark has anchored itself fully in the West.

Economy: Russia's ties with Danish economy are negligible as the two countries both export fossil fuels, whereas other economic activity remains extremely small, though Denmark used to send aid to Russia's Kaliningrad oblast.¹¹⁷

Energy: Denmark manages to maintain energy independence from Russia by exploiting its own North Sea fossil fuel reserves¹¹⁸. Furthermore, Denmark plans to become entirely fossil fuel-free by 2050, however, as the fossil fuels are expected to start running out by 2022, it may begin importing them instead¹¹⁹, which poses a risk of Russian influence growing in the future.¹²⁰

Tensions: In the past, Russian aggression against Georgia in 2008 and the war in Chechnya were met with criticism and condemnation by Denmark. The two countries' bilateral relations were particularly strained over Denmark's refusal to extradite the leader of Chechen separatists Akhmed Zakayev, which forced the EU-Russian talks on the communication between Kaliningrad oblast and the Russian mainland via the EU to be moved from Copenhagen to Brussels.¹²¹ As the Russian Navy's patrols in the Baltic Sea started to rise in intensity in the past few years, Denmark began to expand its

¹¹⁷ Etzold, T., & Haukkala, H., Denmark, Finland and Sweden, Chapter 9 in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

¹¹⁸ Etzold, T., & Haukkala

¹¹⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2014/pdf/ocp196_en.pdf

¹²⁰ Etzold, T., & Haukkala

¹²¹ Etzold, T., & Haukkala

cooperation with non-NATO Sweden in the face of a common perceived threat.¹²² In 2015, a Russian military jet was spotted approaching the Danish Baltic island of Bornholm,¹²³ with Russia mounting a military exercise near the island three months later, while 90,000 people – including the majority of the country's political elite – were present on the island for a local festival.¹²⁴ Also in 2015, Russia threatened to target Danish warships if the country joins NATO's anti-missile defence system.¹²⁵ Furthermore, Denmark's decision to send troops to the Baltic in 2016 caused a backlash from Russian ambassador, who accused Danes of leading an "anti-Russian campaign", calling Denmark a "hostile" country.¹²⁶ In 2017, Denmark's Defense Minister Frederiksen warned that the country faces cyber and nuclear threats coming from Russia¹²⁷. Meanwhile, Denmark's Center for Cyber Security raised the issue of the threat posed by Russia, calling Russia a leading cyber security threat, being a country that has heavily invested in its hacking capabilities.¹²⁸

Human Rights: Denmark prioritizes the issue of human rights, fight against corruption, and rule of law in former Soviet states in accordance with the Eastern Partnership program.¹²⁹ Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs makes it clear that promoting democracy and human rights abroad is a priority for the country's foreign policy.¹³⁰ In terms of relations with Russia, the issue of human rights in Russia's Chechen republic is of a particular controversy as Danish government continues to highlight lawlessness and human rights violations in the region.¹³¹

View of Russia: According to Eurobarometer, Danish population expressed either somewhat negative or very negative view of Russia (42% and 41% respectively), with only 10% having somewhat positive and 1% very positive view.

STRATCOM: Denmark has a seconded national expert working at the EEAS East STRATCOM Team.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Frosty Pragmatist. Denmark became the first EU state to engage in a diplomatic fallout with Russia following Putin's rise to power. Its decision to allow Chechen separatists to hold a congress in Denmark and its refusal to extradite Akhmed Zakayev cooled relations between two countries considerably.

¹²² <http://www.ibtimes.com/sweden-denmark-build-closer-defense-ties-russian-threat-baltic-rises-1941861>

¹²³ <http://www.thelocal.dk/20150324/russian-fighter-jets-spotted-near-bornholm>

¹²⁴ <http://www.thelocal.dk/20150625/russia-rehearsed-takeover-of-denmark>

¹²⁵ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-denmark-russia-idUSKBN0MI0ML20150322>

¹²⁶ <http://www.thelocal.dk/20160527/russia-lashes-out-at-hostile-denmark>

¹²⁷ <https://financialtribune.com/articles/international/57571/denmark-braces-for-military-buildup>

¹²⁸ https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2017/02/09/world/europe/ap-eu-denmark-russia-cyber-security.html?_r=1

¹²⁹ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/denmark/>

¹³⁰ <http://amg.um.dk/~media/amg/Documents/Policies%20and%20Strategies/Democracy%20and%20human%20rights/Democratisation%20and%20human%20rights%20for%20the%20benefit%20of%20people/DemocratisationandHumanrightsforthebenefitofpeople.pdf?la=en>

¹³¹ <https://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/662FD8CA-B89C-438C-B532-591500571951/0/ChechnyaFactfindingreport26012015FINALinkforside.pdf>

National Perspectives (2013): A lack of substantial trade relations and past diplomatic quarrels, as well as Denmark's concern for human rights in Russia, made bilateral relations between two countries chilly. However, a potential for expanding the two countries' partnership emerged in 2009, followed by the 2010 state visit by then-president Medvedev. Compared to the Baltics and Sweden, Denmark has been called a more pragmatic partner by Russia at the time, showing far less opposition to the Nord Stream pipeline project, despite the pipeline going through Danish territorial waters. However, as the interest in the Arctic and its potential resources rises, so do the tensions between the two countries, both of which have extensive possessions beyond the Arctic Circle.

EU-28 Watch (2015): Denmark has shown strong support for imposing sanctions on Russia in the aftermath of Russia's aggression in Ukraine. As Denmark prepares to meet Russia's challenge in the military sphere, it has maintained its opt-out stance on European defence policy, sticking with NATO instead. However, Denmark makes it clear that it is ready to re-establish good relations with Russia, once Russia finds a compromise with the Ukrainian government to normalize the situation in Ukraine. At the same time, Denmark remains open to the idea of European integration and expansion, given that new members will be prepared for it through undergoing substantial reforms.

European Foreign Policy Scorecards: Leader on support for Ukraine (2016).

III. Policy Documents

Review of Denmark's Foreign and Security Policy (2016)¹³²

Russia's annexation of the Crimea and destabilization of neighboring Ukraine is challenging the European security order and established principles of autonomy and territorial integrity of recognized states. With regard to Russia, Denmark should support the EU position on a common, robust and principled stance externally, as well as cohesion and resilience internally. This is to be accomplished especially through joint EU sanctions and NATO commitments, including Danish participation in training exercises in the neighboring area. Firmness should not stand alone, but must be backed by dialogue with Russia on the basis of established principles and cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

MFA Annual Report (2015)¹³³

The Ukraine crisis will continue to constitute a significant foreign and security policy challenge. Compliance with the Minsk Agreement is deemed to have particular importance for ensuring peace and stability in Ukraine. In 2016, Denmark will continue its engagement to support Ukraine's territorial integrity and the reform process... Russia seeks a key role in managing important international security issues. Denmark will strive to maintain the EU pressure on Russia to contribute constructively to a political solution to the Ukraine crisis and, at the same time, seek critical dialogue and engagement,

¹³² http://um.dk/~media/UM/Danish-site/Documents/Udenrigspolitik/Aktuelle%20emner/148396_udredning_UK_summary.pdf?la=en

¹³³ <http://um.dk/~media/UM/English-site/Documents/About-us/Ministry%20of%20Foreign%20Affairs%20of%20Denmark%20Annual%20Report%202015.pdf?la=en>

including in relation to the conflict in Syria, Iran's nuclear programme, the fight against terrorism and the Arctic.

Danish Defence Agreement (2013-2017)¹³⁴

Russia is mentioned only in terms of "confident cooperation" on missile defense and the Arctic. (the document was adopted before the Ukraine crisis, and also before the Russian ambassador said Danish warships will become targets for Russian nuclear missiles if Denmark joins NATO's missile defense system.)

DDIS Intelligence Risk Assessment (2015)¹³⁵

Terrorism, Russia's conduct and the extensive cyber espionage will continue to constitute the most serious risks to Denmark. Russia's ambition is to restore its role as a great power with decisive influence on major international issues. Russia attempts to re-establish its dominant influence over the non-NATO member states in the post-Soviet space. Russia has demonstrated capability and willingness to use military means to achieve its strategic objectives. Russia continues to develop its armed forces for rapid deployment in local wars or conflicts along the Russian periphery, and is trying to sway the strategic balance in the Baltic Sea region. Russia has invested intensively in the expansion of its cyber capacities and now holds sophisticated capabilities to launch extensive cyber espionage campaigns against political and military targets in the West.

¹³⁴ <http://www.fmn.dk/eng/allabout/Documents/TheDanishDefenceAgreement2013-2017english-version.pdf>

¹³⁵ https://fe-ddis.dk/SiteCollectionDocuments/FE/EfterretningsmaessigeRisikovurderinger/Risikovurdering2015_EnglishVersion.pdf

11. Estonia

Summary: Estonia is a post-2004 EU and NATO member state, which is known to have generally cool relations with Russia. Estonia has suffered from cyber-attacks and agitation of its Russian minority by Russia in the past, and it is often seen as one of the first victims of the “hybrid war” tactics. Its sizeable Russian minority and the Estonian government’s naturalization policies are often brought up by Russian diplomats in order to paint Estonia as a human rights violator, despite the situation being far more complex than that. Russia plays a significant role in shaping Estonian national security policy, and the events of 2014 only assured Estonia that its fears were justified and more EU member states will raise awareness of the Russian threat.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Estonia became an independent republic soon after the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, following centuries of Russian, Scandinavian and German dominance. It remained independent during the interwar period but suffered Soviet occupation at the outbreak of the WWII. During the Nazi Germany’s invasion, many Estonians joined the Estonian Waffen SS legion, either as volunteers or conscripts. After the war, some Estonian patriots, nicknamed the “Forest Brothers” (Est. *metsavennad*) continued to fight the Soviet government well into the 1950s. Estonia became one of the first Soviet republics to declare its independence from the USSR, after nearly five decades of Soviet occupation that was never recognized in the West. Estonia still considers it a period of foreign occupation and refuses to recognize Russians who moved to the country from the Soviet Union at that time as Estonian citizens.

Trade: Russia is one of the biggest trade partners of Estonia, along with Finland, Sweden, Germany, and Latvia. However, amongst the Baltics, Russia’s trade share is the smallest in Estonia.¹³⁶ In the past, Russia has reacted to internal events in Estonia, such as the 2007 decision to move the “Bronze Soldier” Soviet war memorial from Tallinn city centre to the outskirts, by limiting trade with the Baltic country.¹³⁷

Energy: Unlike the two other Baltic States, Estonia managed to diversify its energy supply relatively quickly,¹³⁸ lowering its dependency on Russian natural gas and oil. Estonia established an energy link with Finland and invested in shale oil projects in Jordan and the US, at the same time looking at its own shale oil resources.¹³⁹

Tensions: Estonia’s national border with Russia is still a matter of dispute, since the 2005 treaty between two countries has not been ratified by Russia, and Russia accused Estonia of harbouring

¹³⁶ Lasas, A. and D. J. Galbreath, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, Chapter 10 in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, ‘National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?’, Routledge 2013.

¹³⁷ Lasas, A. and D. J. Galbreath.

¹³⁸ Lasas, A. and D. J. Galbreath.

¹³⁹ Lasas, A. and D. J. Galbreath.

claims on Russian territory due to reference to the 1920 Tartu peace treaty in the Estonian parliament's preamble to the treaty's ratification.¹⁴⁰ The Tartu peace treaty defined Pechory (Petseri) and Ivangorod (Jaanlinn) and their outskirts as parts of Estonia, however, they were ceded to the RSFSR after the WWII. Furthermore, the 2007 "Bronze Soldier" controversy led to riots caused by the Russian minority in Tallinn, which coincided with an anti-Estonian sentiment rising in Russian media, as well as hacking of Estonian's government websites. This is sometimes seen as the first instance of Russia's "hybrid war" tactic, short of a full-scale military aggression. Another serious tension between the two countries arose in September 2014 when an Estonian KaPo (Internal Security Service) agent Eston Kohver was kidnapped by FSB and sentenced to 15 years for espionage.¹⁴¹ However, Kohver was soon released in exchange for Aleksei Dressen, a former KaPo officer who was previously sentenced as a Russian spy¹⁴².

Military cooperation: Estonia is a member of NATO and a long-term defence partner of Finland, as well as of its Baltic neighbours. Estonia and Finland both protested violation of the two countries airspace by Russian jets, however, whereas Finland seeks bilateral defence agreements with other countries, Estonia seeks assurances as a member of NATO.¹⁴³ Estonia joined Finland in a plan to purchase South Korean K9 Thunder howitzers in February 2017.¹⁴⁴ Estonia has shown solidarity with Georgia and deepened military cooperation with that former Soviet republic in recent years, sharing a mutual goal of preparing for potential Russian aggression and preserving each other's territorial integrity. During the Georgian minister of defence's visit in January 2017, Estonian officials voiced support for Georgian bid to join NATO and promised to maintain extensive military cooperation between the two countries.¹⁴⁵ However, Estonia cannot rely on its allies alone, and it has shown in 2016 that it is ready to engage in insurgency tactics in case of a full-scale Russian invasion,¹⁴⁶ raising a question of how much other NATO member states are ready to sacrifice for Estonia's security.

Russian minority: Estonia is home to one of the largest Russian ethnic minorities in the EU, which has been a point of contention with Russia. The Russian minority in Estonia is not uniform and shows internal divisions along the lines of knowledge of Estonian language and loyalty to the Estonian state, with the least loyal to be found in the Ida-Virumaa and its easternmost city of Narva.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, even though Russia emphasized ethnic Russians' status in Estonia as a human rights violation, it has discouraged assimilation and integration of Russians in Estonia in order to use them to isolate Estonia in the international arena as a country at odds with European values.¹⁴⁸ Moreover, the majority of

¹⁴⁰ <http://news.postimees.ee/1250918/estonia-russia-to-exchange-128-6-hectares-of-land-under-border-treaty>

¹⁴¹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29078400>

¹⁴² <http://news.err.ee/116833/kohver-released-and-back-in-estonia>

¹⁴³ <http://www.dw.com/en/russia-accused-of-estonia-airspace-violations-as-finland-signs-defense-pact-with-us/a-35994791>

¹⁴⁴ <http://www.upi.com/Defense-News/2017/02/09/Estonia-partners-with-Finland-for-K9-howitzer-buy/5561486672458/>

¹⁴⁵ <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=29817>

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/01/world/europe/spooked-by-russia-tiny-estonia-trains-a-nation-of-insurgents.html>

¹⁴⁷ <http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/russians-estonia-twenty-years-after>

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

ethnic Russians do not wish to move to Russia, mostly because they cannot expect the same rule of law and freedoms in Russia as they can in Estonia, even if they remain in Estonia as non-citizens.¹⁴⁹

View of Russia: 36% of Estonians hold a somewhat negative view of Russia, 25% somewhat positive, 24% very negative and 7% very positive.¹⁵⁰

STRATCOM: Estonia has a seconded national expert working at the EEAS East STRATCOM Team. Estonia is a sponsoring nation of the NATO STRATCOM COE.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Frosty Pragmatist. Russia has allowed pro-Kremlin youth groups, such as “Nashi” to enter and besiege Estonian embassy in Moscow during the Bronze Soldier crisis in Tallinn. Furthermore, Russia is the likely culprit behind cyber-attacks against Estonian government websites, and it has engaged in trade wars with Estonia every time the two countries’ relations hit a low point. Furthermore, Estonia blocked construction of the Nord Stream pipeline in its territorial waters and it has shown support to a more active Eastern neighbourhood policy.

National Perspectives (2013): Estonia and Russia’s relations have been frosty ever since Estonia’s independence has been restored. Russia continues to insist that Estonia should stop any discriminatory policy against the country’s Russian minority, while Estonians believe that ethnic Russians who came to the country during the Soviet occupation are obliged to prove they are loyal and fit to be Estonian citizens. The newly elected PM Ansip’s decision to move the Bronze Soldier memorial from the Tallinn city centre caused condemnation by the Russian government, riots in Tallinn, cyber-attacks, and trade sanctions imposed by Russia. As a result of this, Estonia was one of the first countries to link NATO’s Article 5, which obliges NATO members to help one member against foreign aggression, with cyber-security.

EU-28 Watch (2015): Estonia sees the recent events in Ukraine as a sign that it was correct in warning other EU member states against trying to compromise with Russia. Estonia expressed not only support for institutional reforms in Ukraine but also supported supplying Ukraine with NATO arms. The majority of Estonian public believes that Russia is a mortal enemy to Estonia. However, the country’s substantial Russian minority provides a voting base for more moderate elements, such as the Centre Party, and some MPs, including EUP MPs from Estonia, criticized sanctions against Russia and the EU stance on the annexation of Crimea.

¹⁴⁹ <https://qz.com/344521/in-estonia-life-is-good-maybe-too-good-for-ethnic-russians/>

¹⁵⁰ https://ec.europa.eu/finland/sites/finland/files/ebs_451_anx_en.pdf

III. Policy Documents

International Security and Estonia (2017)¹⁵¹

In a situation where the Kremlin continues to probe the boundaries of what is permitted and what is not, the vitality of the transatlantic security system based on trust and shared capabilities is at a critical stage, which is why close watch must be kept over any efforts by Russia to fracture European unity in the context of elections held in various countries as well to ensure that the sanctions remain in place. A test of strength is taking place every day in cyberspace as well.

International Security and Estonia (2016)¹⁵²

The Russian ruling elite is convinced that, in communication with the West, Moscow can only defend its interests from a position of strength, which includes a constant demonstration of military threats. The Russian leadership considers NATO's security reinforcement measures and the growing number of NATO members as an existential threat, and views the European Union's integration policy as damaging to its interests. This threat assessment was the basis for the aggression against Georgia and Ukraine: an attempt to obstruct any Western integration of countries within the sphere of Russia's perceived privileged interests, without any hesitation, and using any means necessary.

KaPo Annual Review 2016¹⁵³

One of the characteristic factors that had a security impact on Estonia and Europe was a deepening contrasting with the West owing to an aggressive Russian foreign policy. In the Kremlin-controlled Russian-language information space, the West is depicted as an enemy, or at least a threat to Russian interests. These interests are no longer clearly and openly defined, but it is effectively a spheres of influence policy attempting to maintain the legacy of the Soviet Union, the grounds for which were worded as early as 1992 in the Karaganov Doctrine. This document is the source of "the near abroad" concept, the countries of which should not have an independent policy for their internal, foreign or security issues. The same doctrine is the source of Russia's objective to use Russian-speaking minorities in other countries as a tool of political manipulation. More recent developments have demonstrated, however, that Russia is also ready to instigate aggression in order to implement its spheres of influence policy.

KaPo Annual Review 2015¹⁵⁴

Media projects are the most visible part of Russia's influence operations, while its core arsenal has remained unchanged and its foreign policy and military activities played an important role in the conflicts in both Ukraine and Syria. The main messages of anti-Estonian influence operations did not change much in 2015. Estonia was again accused of favouring Nazism and discriminating against the

¹⁵¹ <https://www.teabeamet.ee/pdf/2017-en-c482143c.pdf>

¹⁵² <http://teabeamet.ee/pdf/2016-en.pdf>

¹⁵³ https://www.kapo.ee/sites/default/files/public/content_page/Annual%20Review%202016.pdf

¹⁵⁴ https://www.kapo.ee/sites/default/files/public/content_page/Annual%20Review%202015.pdf

Russian-speaking population. Among the messages disseminated by Russian influence operations, an important role is played by the large proportion of inhabitants in Estonia with undetermined citizenship and the transition of upper secondary schools with Russian as the language of tuition to Estonian. As a notable addition, the migration crisis was used to instigate tensions in both Estonia and the entire European Union. It was mainly due to the refugee crisis that the contrasting of the Western and so-called Russian civilisations, and instigation of opposition to the EU and NATO, intensified.

12. Finland

Summary: Finland is a non-NATO EU member state with a great significance in Russia's recent history. Finland has always tried to find a compromise with Russia due to its dependence on Russian fossil fuels and deep economic ties with Russia. Still, Finland is aware of the threats posed by Russia and engages in military co-operation with NATO in order to counter them. At the same time, Finland still sees hope in rebuilding EU-Russia relations.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Finland achieved independence from the Russian Empire in 1918, after over a century of Russian rule. The USSR and Finland fought each other in 1939-40 in a Winter War, with Finland preserving its independence but ceding Karelian Isthmus, Ladoga, and the Petsamo corridor to the USSR. Although Finland joined the Axis at the outbreak of war between Nazi Germany and the USSR in 1941, it quickly switched sides in 1944 and avoided a prospect of Soviet occupation in the aftermath of the war. During the Cold War, Finland chose to stay neutral in the East-West divide, and, as a result, never joined NATO. Moreover, Finland's capital Helsinki was chosen for the signature of the Helsinki Accords and the creation of the OSCE, which catalysed the dissident movements in the Eastern bloc at the time and offered assurances for the USSR and its satellites that post-war borders in Europe will not be changed.

Economy: For a short time during the 2008 financial crisis, Russia became Finland's largest trading partner, but since sank to the third place.¹⁵⁵ By 2015, Russia is the fifth largest exports and the third largest import partner of Finland.¹⁵⁶

Energy: Finland is heavily dependent on Russian natural gas and oil. Finns traditionally saw Russia as a reliable energy supplier, despite their progress towards diversification of energy sources.¹⁵⁷

Military cooperation: Though Finland tries to maintain friendly relations with Russia, it has encouraged NATO enlargement and it has always engaged in a deep partnership with the alliance.¹⁵⁸ Finland reserved the right to apply for NATO membership once such option will appear beneficial to the country.¹⁵⁹ Finland is concerned about Russia's military build-up in the Arctic zone¹⁶⁰ and the security of its autonomous Åland islands, lying in the northern Baltic right between Sweden and Finland. Though the islands remain demilitarized, Finnish military expressed a view that re-

¹⁵⁵ Etzold, T., & Haukkala, H., Denmark, Finland and Sweden, Chapter 9 in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

¹⁵⁶ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/fi.html>

¹⁵⁷ Etzold, T., & Haukkala

¹⁵⁸ Etzold, T., & Haukkala

¹⁵⁹ http://vnk.fi/documents/10616/1093242/J0113_FinnishSecurity_net.pdf/f7d0b3db-f566-4d32-af19-68a7064e24ee?version=1.0

¹⁶⁰ <http://forin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=348060&nodeid=49540&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>

militarization of Åland is necessary for the country's security.¹⁶¹ In contrast to Russia, NATO is seen by Finland as a stabilizing factor in the Baltic Sea region, but unlike other Nordic countries, Finland maintains generally good relations with Russia, even though Finns have grown more and more disillusioned with hopes that Russia and EU will deepen their cooperation.¹⁶²

Secret service activity: In 2015, SUPO for the first time publically dubbed Russia as a surveillance state. Since 2013, Finland's MFA has reported on monthly cyber-attacks from Russian groups with state-level cyber capabilities. Russian land purchases near strategic sites in Finland have raised security concerns. In April 2015, the Finnish Navy detected a Russian submarine in its territorial waters near Helsinki; Russian aircrafts continue violating Finnish airspace; exercises etc.

View of Russia: According to Eurobarometer, 55% of Finns maintain a somewhat negative view on Russia, with 26% having a very negative view, but only 17% somewhat positive and only 1% very positive¹⁶³.

STRATCOM: Finland is a partner country of the NATO STRATCOM COE.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Friendly Pragmatist. Finland puts its economic and business interests above political goals in terms of relations with Russia, which reflects its history of being the USSR's only immediate non-NATO European neighbour. However, Finland's economy gradually shifted away from reliance on Russia, particularly focusing on Germany as its primary trade partner instead. A particular point of dispute between two countries, however, was the discriminatory tariff policy imposed on Russian wood exported to Finland and Sweden, introduced following the EU's WTO accession.

National Perspectives (2013): Both countries proximity have contributed to generally pragmatic and relatively warm relations, however, Finland's attempts to improve relations with Russia during Finland's 2006 EU presidency have failed to reach that goal. Traditionally less critical of Russia, Finns gave birth to the term "Finlandization", which does have a pejorative connotation of tolerating Russia's idiosyncrasies. Moreover, Finland encouraged the NATO enlargement, but so far it remains outside NATO itself. In the past, Finland has shown activism in trying to mediate conflicts where Russia was involved, such as the Chechen wars or – less successfully – the 2008 war in Georgia. However, as time went on, Finland's position on Russia continued to side with other Nordic countries, particularly that of Sweden or Denmark, both of whom are traditionally much more critical of Russia. Furthermore, expanding Finnish presence in the former Soviet Union through Finland's foreign aid program did little to appease Russia.

¹⁶¹ <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analyses/2016-10-26/gotland-and-aland-baltic-chessboard-swedish-and-finnish-concerns>

¹⁶² Etzold, T., & Haukkala

¹⁶³ https://ec.europa.eu/finland/sites/finland/files/ebs_451_anx_en.pdf

EU-28 Watch (2015): Although Finns generally see Russia as an unstable partner; Finland has nonetheless demonstrated eagerness to re-establish functional relations with Russia. Still, Finland has been supportive of Ukraine's right to decide its own affiliations, yet it is fearful that hasty inclusion of Ukraine and other Eastern Partnership program into EU membership candidacy lists would be unwise. Finns insist on fulfilling all necessary criteria before EU membership accession, criticizing the decision for inclusion of Bulgaria and Romania in the EU as too hasty. In terms of economic partnership with Russia, Finland tries to balance its EU commitments along with its own bilateral relations with Russia. This is exemplified by Finland's support of anti-Russian sanctions following Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and the Finnish government's approval of building several new nuclear power plants with Russia's Rosatom's participation in the projects, despite EU's policy of lowering the union's energy dependence on Russia.

III. Policy Documents

Government's Defence Report (2017)¹⁶⁴

The military-strategic importance of the Baltic Sea region has risen and military activity has intensified in the area. Simultaneously, the military footprint in the Arctic region has grown. As it is a base with strategic weapons, the Kola Peninsula retains its importance to Russia. [...] Russia aims to strengthen its great-power status, and it has expressed the goal of a sphere-of-influence based security regime. It has demonstrated the ability to take swift strategic decisions and to employ coordinated military force and a wide range of other instruments in pursuing its objectives. Alongside the protracted conflict in Ukraine, Russia has specifically demonstrated its sophisticated and wide-ranging air power in the Syrian War. Russia is developing the capabilities of its armed forces and is also maintaining the capacity to manage a major military crisis. All security authorities' capabilities can be used for military purposes. Russia has bolstered its western defences as well as its response and readiness in the Arctic. Much as in the West, Russia focuses the material development of its armed forces on long-range strike capability and precision-guided weapons, manned aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicles, robotics, nuclear weapons, air and space defence as well as digital command & control and intelligence systems (C4ISR).

Government Report (White Paper) on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy (2016)¹⁶⁵

Russia's leadership perceives international relations a geopolitical zero-sum game and has mostly abandoned cooperation-based security thinking. Instead, it has publicly promoted its goal of a sphere-of-influence-based security regime and demonstrated the will and capacity to employ military force in pursuing its objectives. In its relations with Russia, Finland promotes cooperation and is guided by the EU's common positions. Improved cooperation between the EU and Russia would strengthen the security and economy of all of Europe; Russia's isolation does not serve anyone's interests. The precondition for such improvement is, however, that Russia comply with international law and its other

¹⁶⁴ http://www.defmin.fi/files/3688/J07_2017_Governments_Defence_Report_Eng_PLM_160217.pdf

¹⁶⁵ <http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=348060&nodeid=49540&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>

international obligations. The implementation of the Minsk Agreement is vital for better EU-Russia relations.

SUPO yearbook (2016)¹⁶⁶

The intelligence targets related to current phenomena vary, but also they are underpinned by foreign states' long-term interest in Finland. In relation to Finland's population, there is a considerable amount of foreign intelligence personnel in the country. Especially Russia sees Finland as an interesting intelligence target but also other major powers find our country important.

Strategic Priorities of the Foreign Service (2015)¹⁶⁷

The tightened security situation, brought on by Russia's actions and the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, has far-reaching impact on relations between the EU and Russia and on Europe's security. Finland contributes to resolving the crisis in Ukraine. Finland also supports the stabilisation of Ukraine and the reforms it requires. The improvement of relations between the EU and Russia is desirable, but cooperation must be based on respect for international law and international commitments. Finland complies with the European Union's Common positions on Russia. Finland maintains relations with Russia that are as broad and functional as prevailing conditions allow.

Finnish Security and Defence Policy (2012)¹⁶⁸

Finland develops its relationship with Russia through close interaction and cooperation at the political level, between the authorities, through the economy and at the level of citizens. Furthermore, Finland encourages Russia to participate in regional cooperation in its neighbourhood. It is Finland's goal that Russia strongly commit to international cooperation and multilateral treaty regimes and global burden-sharing. Finland actively promotes a broad-based development of the EU-Russia relationship. EU-Russian cooperation should also be developed in the field of foreign and security policy. Positive developments in NATO-Russia relations promote stability in the region.

Security Intelligence Service (SUPO) Yearbook (2015)¹⁶⁹

In relation to Finland's population, there is a considerable amount of foreign intelligence personnel in the country. Especially Russia sees Finland as an interesting intelligence target but also other major powers find our country important.

¹⁶⁶http://www.supo.fi/instancedata/prime_product_julkaisu/intermin/embeds/supowwwstructure/72829_SUPO_2016_ENG.pdf?304cc2d77276d488

¹⁶⁷ <http://formin.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=327068&nodeid=49221&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>

¹⁶⁸ http://vnk.fi/documents/10616/1093242/J0113_FinnishSecurity_net.pdf/f7d0b3db-f566-4d32-af19-68a7064e24ee?version=1.0

¹⁶⁹ http://www.supo.fi/instancedata/prime_product_julkaisu/intermin/embeds/supowwwstructure/67074_2015_Supo_ENG.pdf

SUPO Operating Environment (2015-2016)¹⁷⁰

Finland is a constant target for structured and long-term foreign intelligence activity. In relation to Finland's population, there is a considerable amount of foreign intelligence personnel in the country. Especially Russia sees Finland as an interesting intelligence target. The key objectives of foreign intelligence activity include anticipating and influencing Finnish policy-making and recruiting individuals who could be used to influence political decision-making and shape public opinion. The main targets of political intelligence are the Finnish foreign and security policy, the country's actions as an EU member, and the cooperation with NATO. In the field of military intelligence, it is Finland's military capability, the society's resilience to crisis, and the security of supply of the country... During the crisis in Ukraine, Russia and its intelligence agencies are trying to influence the outside world views and decision-making in many different ways - including by spreading disinformation... including in Finland.

¹⁷⁰http://www.supo.fi/instancedata/prime_product_julkaisu/intermin/embeds/supowwwstructure/64088_Suojelupoliisin_toimintaymparisto_vuosina_2015-2016.pdf?63bfcddeb81cd388

13. France

Summary: France is a founding member of the EU and NATO and a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Though traditionally friendly towards Russia, France's stance towards Russia grew chillier after the 2014 events in Ukraine. French politics are not without allegations of financial or intelligence ties to Russia, even though the government's stance suffered through a radical U-turn on Russia following the annexation of Crimea. France was one of the key countries to initiate the EU sanctions against Russia, but also one of the main countries to participate in negotiations between Russia, Ukraine, and pro-Russian separatists. Facing other issues than Russia, France's national security focus is less concerned with Russian threats to the EU bloc and more with terrorism. Meanwhile, eurosceptics and the far-right remain relatively popular, even with the alleged support by Russian intelligence.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Since the fall of the Soviet Union, France has pursued a rather warm approach towards Russia. In 1989, the French president Francois Mitterand stressed the special responsibility of France and Russia for European stability. The two countries become even closer after Vladimir Putin took office, partly thanks to the personal friendship between Putin and the then president Jacques Chirac, who wanted to reinforce the EU-Russian relations. Chirac's successor Nicolas Sarkozy concentrated more on the new EU member states than on Russia, but the 2008 Russo-Georgian conflict, which took place during the French EU presidency, forced him to focus on Russia as well. France played a role of a mediator during the conflict and, eventually, Sarkozy managed to negotiate a ceasefire deal. Nevertheless, France has been criticized for being "too soft" on Russia. Until the events in Ukraine and Syria, the bilateral relations seemed to be improving and in the case of Syria, furthering military cooperation against ISIS started to take place, although it did not last long and the tensions escalated with France criticizing the intense bombing of Aleppo by the militaries of Russia and Syria.¹⁷¹

Military cooperation: A well-known example of recent military "cooperation" between France and Russia is the case of Mistral ships. Since 2010, there had been discussions about the possible sale of those French military ships to France and in 2011, a \$1,7 billion deal was made. According to the deal, two ships should have been built in France and two in Russia afterwards. However, Russia eventually did not receive any of the ships because France decided to call off the sale due to the activities of Russia in Ukraine and mounting pressure from NATO. France refunded Russia \$1 billion and sold the two already constructed vessels to Egypt.¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ Le Noan, Rachel, France, Chapter 3 in National Perspectives on Russia, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/17/problem-russia-syria-greenpeace-kremlin-europe-eu>, <https://euobserver.com/foreign/135459>

¹⁷² https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2015/09/23/egypt-to-buy-french-mistral-landing-ships-originally-intended-for-russia/?utm_term=.178006aeb7d0

Energy: As far as energy is concerned, Russia is only a minor player in France. French imports of natural gas are highly diversified, Norway having the biggest share (only 13% of French natural gas comes from Russia).¹⁷³ The dependence on Russia is even weaker when looking at the oil imports – just under 7% of French oil is Russian.¹⁷⁴ About 75% of French electricity is generated by nuclear power, using uranium imported mostly from Canada and Niger.¹⁷⁵

Trade: In 2014, France was the third largest European supplier of Russia. France's trade balance with Russia is structurally in deficit due to the very large share of oil and refined petroleum products in French imports (83%). Most of the French exports to Russia are high value-added goods. Russia was one of the top three recipients of French foreign direct investment flows in 2013. Nevertheless, the bilateral trade relationship has deteriorated due to the EU sanctions.¹⁷⁶

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer, 26% of French had a positive view of Russia.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Strategic partner. For several decades, France's approach to Russia has been motivated by a wish to strengthen its own position and, occasionally, Russia has been a useful ally. The political relationship does not have much of an economic foundation, however, links are growing in the energy sphere.

EU-28 Watch (2015): As for public opinion, French citizens in their majority hold unfavourable views of Russia's current government and geopolitical role. Regarding political parties, the picture is a lot less clear. In each political party, we find staunch supporters of the "Russian cause", while the pro-Russian network is stronger on the political right and amongst eurosceptics. The far-right Front National has a strong affinity with Putin's Russia. Turning to civil society, France traditionally has a dense network of associations working on developing relations with Russia in a variety of fields. Frequently, descendants of Russian immigrants are strongly involved in such organisations, their work being complemented by cultural diplomacy from the Russian side, with the news website "sputnik" as one of its instruments. As to economic relations, they have suffered considerably from the repercussions of the Ukrainian crisis. Franco-Russian political relations were affected by the EU sanctions and disagreement over the Syrian war.

National Perspectives (2013): As a founding member of the EU, France has always been a key player in European politics and the desire to contribute to European security can thus be considered as a natural objective of French foreign policy. French leaders have always been very keen on advancing their goals within the EU framework as long as it clearly benefited French national interests. There are various interpretations of Russia in France. On one hand, the French press and academia are divided between the defenders of human rights, those who fear a revival of imperialism and those

¹⁷³ <http://www.gasinfocus.com/en/indicator/sources-of-natural-gas-consumed-in-france/>

¹⁷⁴ http://atlas.media.mit.edu/en/visualize/tree_map/hs92/import/fra/show/2709/2014/

¹⁷⁵ <http://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/country-profiles/countries-a-f/france.aspx>

¹⁷⁶ <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/russia/france-and-russia/>

concerned about Russia's ambiguous position on proliferation and arm sales. On the other hand, the political elite seems divided between those who value Russia as a strategic partner, those who see Russia as an emerging market and thus a major opportunity to boost the economy and finally those who admire Putin as a defender of Russian interests and independence in the mould of Charles de Gaulle, the last 'real statesman' on the international stage. The French authorities do not see any contradiction between both supporting the EU and establishing further co-operation with Russia; rather, a partnership with Russia should be an element of an effective European foreign policy. France remains strongly attached to the EU. The French authorities are aware that relations with Russia should not eclipse this. But France has also become a vector for Russian interests to be heard within the EU.

Views from the capitals (2016): France's involvement in pushing forward sanctions run counter to its previous efforts at developing economic relations with Russia. What's more, France now finds itself committing its diplomatic resources to a region that is traditionally absent from its foreign policy radar, and at a time when threats emanating from some of its usual zones of focus – in the Middle East and Africa - are particularly acute. Such a response from France was, above all, prompted by the nature and magnitude of Russia's actions in Ukraine.¹⁷⁷

European Foreign Policy Scorecards: Leader on maintaining a strong and united sanctions policy and slacker on commitment to Eastern Partnership countries (2016). Leader on developing sanctions towards Russia (2015). Leader on pressuring Russia to use its leverage to stop conflict in Syria and engage new Iranian government in nuclear negotiations (2014). Leader on persuading Moscow to support EU positions on Syria (2013).

STRATCOM: France is joining the list of countries participating in the NATO STRATCOM COE.

III. Policy Documents

President Hollande's foreign policy speech (2015)¹⁷⁸

When the very foundations of collective security are called into question, a swift and firm response must be provided. That's what we did with Chancellor Merkel (...) We must be clear-sighted: the ceasefire isn't being fully observed, the withdrawal of heavy weapons hasn't been completed and the Ukrainian people's living conditions are tragic (...) The Ukraine crisis is having detrimental effects politically. Economic relations between Russia and Europe are frozen, with sanctions that are having consequences for Russians, but also for Europeans. France wants to maintain a sincere dialogue with Russia, in keeping with history and with the nature of our relationship and the common interests we have in the world (...) In September 2014, I suspended the delivery of the first Mistral ship to Russia. In the present context, France clearly couldn't deliver a force projection instrument to Russia.

French country files: France and Russia (2015)¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_russia_2030_potential_impact_of_french_policies

¹⁷⁸ <http://www.ambafrance-uk.org/President-Hollande-outlines-French-foreign-policy>

Political dialogue between France and Russia has been limited following the annexation of Crimea, by the introduction by the European Union of sanctions against Russia and Russia's suspension from the G8. However, the authorities maintain regular dialogue at the highest level with Russia, in particular for the resolution of the crisis in Ukraine. The presence of President Putin in France on 5 and 6 June 2014 to commemorate the D-day landings was an important step to renew dialogue with Russia and established the Normandy Format (France, Germany, Russia, Ukraine) for resolving the Ukrainian crisis. Further meetings between President Hollande and President Putin opened the way for negotiations and the signing of the "Package of Measures for the implementation of the Minsk Agreements" adopted in Minsk on 12 February 2015.

French White Paper on Defence and National Security (2013)¹⁸⁰

Russia's military budget is growing rapidly, it is modernising nuclear arsenal and working to provide its conventional forces with enhanced intervention capabilities. This rearmament is accompanied since 2006 by increasing displays of strength: political exploitation of its energy resources, pressure on its neighbours and recognition of secessionist entities in Georgia. Warmer relations with the western nations have not achieved all the declared objectives, as shown by continuing disputes over NATO, disarmament and the resolution of the Syrian crisis. Russia is trying to establish a monopoly over energy supply routes, thus complicating European efforts to diversify their imports. Russia is equipping itself with the economic and military clout to engage in power politics.

Report of the National Assembly Delegation on Intelligence (2015)¹⁸¹

Public documents of the intelligence committee and agencies (DGSE and DGSI) only mention Russia as a partner in fighting terrorism, since it is also a target of recruitment and disinformation by terrorist groups: "These groups have, as never before, relied on a modern propaganda machine, using the most advanced techniques of communication, including social networks, video, and the Internet, to convert to their cause many foreigners worldwide, but particularly in the francophone and Russophone world."

"Cooperation with Russia is strong, not least because 7-8% of people wishing to leave France for Syria or return are Chechens, some of whom are involved in the planning or financing of attacks."

French National Digital Security Strategy (2015)¹⁸²

The document does not mention Russia at all.

¹⁷⁹ <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/russia/france-and-russia/>

¹⁸⁰ http://www.defense.gouv.fr/content/download/215253/2394121/file/White_paper_on_defense_2013.pdf

¹⁸¹ <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/rap-off/i3524.asp>

¹⁸² http://www.ssi.gouv.fr/uploads/2015/10/strategie_nationale_securite_numerique_en.pdf

14. Greece

Summary: Greece is one of the oldest NATO member states and the first Balkan state to join the EU. Greece's difficult history with Turkey urged it to look to Russia for support. Therefore, Greece was typically in opposition to EU measures that could raise Russian disapproval. The current Greek government, finding the country in the middle of an economic and financial crisis, was hopeful to find aid from Russia instead of Brussels. Greece remains, nonetheless, supportive of the EU and NATO, but it always makes sure to underline its aim to keep bilateral relations with Russia at a warm level.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Greece has a long and close history with Russia dating back to the 19th century and the WWI. During the WWII Greece has suffered from occupation by Axis forces, but it was liberated by the British. A brief civil war between Greek Communists and pro-Western forces followed, with the former abandoned by Stalin, but many maintaining hope that they will turn Greece into a Communist state. Though the two countries have been on the opposite sides during the Cold War, the fall of the Soviet Union brought them closer.

Cyprus: Greece keeps looking for Russia as a counterbalance to Turkey in the aftermath of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, and the island being divided between the Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. During a Turko-Cypriot missile crisis in 1997¹⁸³, Greeks reinforced its contingent on the island (ELDYK) in order to reassure Cypriots of Greek support, following Cypriots' decision to deploy Russian S-300 air defence missiles. Though Turkey and Greece remain members of NATO, a threat of direct confrontation between two hostile countries' armies on Cypriot soil is not completely out of the question. Therefore, Russia's position as a balance against Turkey is relevant in Greek military strategy and foreign policy.

Energy: Greece has been engaging in bilateral energy talks with Russia for over a decade. Greece has backed the 2007 South Stream project in the past, which faced criticism from the West because it went against the Nabucco pipeline project.¹⁸⁴ The 2015 meeting between President Putin and PM Tsipras shifted talks from financial aid from Moscow to energy questions, and Putin proposed a natural gas pipeline to Greece in order to help Greece in solving its debt crisis.¹⁸⁵

Military partnership: Greece has been purchasing Russian military equipment since the 1990s, and conducting military exercises in close partnership with Russia as late as 2009¹⁸⁶. In 2016 Greece has

¹⁸³ <http://www.aparchive.com/metadata/TURKEY-TANSU-CILLER-CYPRUS-MISSILE-CRISIS-INTERVIEW/fa5aff45763878a38dbe69b90783b004>

¹⁸⁴ Christow, G. Cyprus and Greece, Chapter 17 in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

¹⁸⁵ <https://www.usnews.com/news/business/articles/2015/06/19/greece-signs-deal-with-russia-to-build-gas-pipeline>

¹⁸⁶ Christow, G. Cyprus and Greece, Chapter 17 in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

signed a defense partnership treaty with Russia, claiming it is necessary to preserve Greek defense industry at the time of a continuing economic crisis in Greece.¹⁸⁷ During a conflict between Putin and Turkish President Erdogan over downed Russian plane in Syria, Russian state media have emphasized its military partnership with Greece, as a way to show a common stance against Turkey.¹⁸⁸

Sanctions: The Russian ban on EU food products affected Greek farming industry, with many farmers having been oriented towards exporting up to 90% of their produce to Russia for many years. Manolis Glezos, a WWII veteran and a left-wing Greek MEP wrote a letter to President Putin pleading not to impose “counter-sanctions” on Greek food imports to Russia.¹⁸⁹

Economic crisis: Greece has yet to fully recover from the financial crisis that wrecked the Hellenic Republic’s economy. There were fears that PM Tsipras would look for financial aid from Moscow after achieving victory in the elections¹⁹⁰ but that did not come to pass so far.

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer, 66% of Greeks had a positive view of Russia.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Greece is one of the “Trojan horses” that often defend Russian interests in the EU system, and are willing to veto common EU positions. Over the years, Russia has provided Greece with useful support in its dealings with Turkey and a ready supply of military equipment. It also serves as an increasingly important partner in the energy sphere. European diplomats from other member states argue that, in exchange, Greece has sought to position itself as a ‘promoter’ of Russian positions within the EU on issues ranging from EU involvement in the Eastern neighbourhood to the regulation of energy markets. One senior official from another member state claims that “every possible EU step in the eastern neighbourhood that might even theoretically upset the Russians has been opposed by Greece.” This pattern has applied to EU policy on Belarus, the Black Sea region and Georgia. For example, in 2007, it stopped the EU from extending the mandate of the EU Border Support Team in Georgia to include the secessionist region of Abkhazia.

National Perspectives (2013): For Greece, good bilateral relations with Russia are important, but they are not independent of its commitments to and membership of the multilateral EU arena.

EU-28 Watch (2015): Notwithstanding that a comfortable majority of the Greek people is united by the idea of belonging to the European Union and the Eurozone, the government shows a certain tendency towards intensifying and deepening its relations with Russia. This is due to the historical and cultural relations between the two countries, to the possibilities offered by Russia to make Greece an important point of energy transit towards Central and Western Europe, but above all, Russia serves as a

¹⁸⁷ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/0/natos-united-front-under-threat-after-greece-signs-arms-deal-wit/>

¹⁸⁸ <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201605261040281235-russia-turkey-greece-military/>

¹⁸⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/13/greece-farmers-russian-sanctions-rotten-fruit>

¹⁹⁰ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-eurozone-greece-russia-idUSKCN0PD0YH20150703>

counterbalance to the pressure exerted by the creditor institutions, regarding the austerity policy promoted by the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Furthermore, in June 2015 Greece and Russia examined the possibility of extending the Turkish Stream project to Greece through a South European pipeline, but the discussions have remained stagnant, in view of the recent political developments in Greece. There has even been an attempt to investigate the intentions of Russia on the prospect of a loan, while the possibility of Greece's participation in the New Development Bank is currently under examination.

Views from the capitals (2015-16):¹⁹¹ The initial hope of the Greek government in early 2015 to find alternative financing in Moscow in order to improve its negotiating position with EU and IMF creditors was dashed by July of that year. SYRIZA's decision to sign the third Greek rescue package demonstrated not only the failure of its negotiating tactics with the country's creditors but also the limits of the Greek-Russian bilateral relationship. Since the signing of the so-called 'Agreement' the government has shown a remarkable degree of alignment with EU policies. This can be expected to continue, with Greece unlikely to oppose the consensus of other member states in the upcoming European Council discussion on Russia. The period when Athens contemplated imposing a veto in order to exert pressure on its partners is now over. But the new reality of Greek acquiescence to EU policy hides deep ideological differences between Athens and the majority of its fellow member states. EU sanctions against the Kremlin, for example, run counter to Greek interests. On the whole, SYRIZA does not see Moscow as 'the problem' in EU-Russia relations and is advocating for a more constructive approach. Accordingly, it takes a positive view of the suggestion of 'selective engagement'. On occasion the Greek government has been vocal in its support for Russia more broadly, such as during the Warsaw NATO Summit in July.

European Foreign Policy Scorecards: Slacker on Relations with Russia on Energy Issues (2014).

III. Policy Documents

Bilateral Relations with Russia (based on Greece-Russia Joint Action Plan 2015-16)¹⁹²

Greek-Russian diplomatic relations were established 185 years ago. Greece is linked to Russia by strong historical ties of friendship based on shared spiritual and cultural values. Contacts between the two countries are frequent and include reciprocal visits of the ministerial and political leadership. By joint decision of the two sides, 2016 will be a 'Year of Greece' in Russia and a 'Year of Russia' in Greece.

¹⁹¹ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_view_from_athens_towing_the_line7148

¹⁹² <http://www.mfa.gr/en/blog/greece-bilateral-relations/russia/>

Statements by the Foreign Minister (2016)¹⁹³

In the EU, more or less in NATO, there are two trends on handling Russia: one tough, one more realistic. Deterrence and dialogue. The main question is whether the West wants to consolidate the security architecture in Europe against Russia or with Russia. I am in favor of the second option, as long as the other side helps through its choices. There are two types of sanctions: those imposed to bring the opponent to its knees – a lost cause – and those aimed at bringing the opponent to the negotiating table. As a rule, sanctions do not have significant results. In the EU, we should discuss why and whether the EU wants to renew the sanctions against Russia.

White Paper on Defense (2014)¹⁹⁴

Russia that is on its way to re-establish its position as the second pole of the international power system, with an increasing influence on the European and Asian affairs and a continuous and particularly active military and economic policy... Greece gives great importance to the strengthening of bilateral defence cooperation with EU and NATO member states... and also the smooth course and development of bilateral defence cooperation with the Russian Federation and other countries in the historical & geographic environment.

¹⁹³ <http://www.mfa.gr/en/current-affairs/top-story/foreign-minister-kotzias-interview-in-sundays-real-news-with-journalist-vasilis-skouris.html>

¹⁹⁴ http://www.mod.mil.gr/uploads/Dnsi_enimerosis/Pdf/White_Paper.pdf

15. Germany

Summary: Germany is a key EU and NATO member state. Though traditionally more sceptical about the threat posed by Russia than its eastern neighbours, Germany supported tough EU measures against Russia in the aftermath of the annexation of Crimea. Like France, Germany has undergone a significant deterioration of relations, intensified by Russian attempts to spread “fake news” in Germany and influence the country’s internal political affairs. Russia remains Germany’s largest energy supplier, even though Germany was one of the first countries to advocate for a better energy security during Russia’s natural gas disputes with Ukraine in the past decade. However, Russian meddling in Germany’s internal affairs remains a bigger threat than the energy dependence on Russia so far.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Relationship between Germany and Russia has deep roots and was influenced by the Cold War era and the division of Germany into two states, which encouraged West Germans to adopt a stance of pragmatic cooperation with Russia. After the reunification of Germany, the bilateral relations were influenced by Ostpolitik (the normalization of relations between West and East Germany – therefore with USSR/Russia as well) and cooperation in the energy sphere. During the chancellorship of Gerhard Schröder, Putin’s close friend, the ties between the two countries deepened. The good level of cooperation can be seen in the construction of the Nord Stream pipeline, which was criticised by several EU member states. Overall, German policy during Schröder’s chancellorship was more oriented on national rather than European interests. On the contrary, Angela Merkel has been more critical towards Putin, even though not significantly.¹⁹⁵ After the 2014 Ukraine crisis, the bilateral relations has worsened to a large extent. However, neither the politicians nor the public in Germany share the same attitude towards Russia. Nowadays there are two concepts for Germany’s approach towards Russia – one considers Russia to be Germany’s strategic partner and makes reference to Ostpolitik, the other doubts the significance and sees Russia as a state with a substantial potential for destructive action. Generally speaking, the first concept is popular amongst Social Democrats, the Left Party and Alternative for Germany; while the second amongst Merkel’s Christian Democrats and the Greens.¹⁹⁶

Energy: Russia is Germany’s largest energy supplier, roughly 22-23% of German’s primary energy comes from Russia. Germany imports nearly 40% of its natural gas from Russia (making it by far the biggest importer of Russian gas) and around a third of its oil and coal as well.^{197 198} The two countries

¹⁹⁵ Stewart, Susan, Germany, Chapter 2 in National Perspectives on Russia.

<http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21635010-two-big-parties-differ-germans-are-hardening-their-views-russia-new-ostpolitik>

¹⁹⁶ <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2016-11-07/dreaming-normalisation-germany-vs-russia>

¹⁹⁷ <https://energytransition.org/2014/03/closer-look-at-german-energy-dependence-on-russia/>

¹⁹⁸ <http://untrusted.markkit.net/untrusted/https://www.cleanenergywire.org/factsheets/germanys-dependence-imported-fossil-fuels.html?s=rpfrmrq7ps572eicdo9b1m4kr4#>

cooperated on the construction of the Nord Stream pipeline, which transfers Russian gas to Western Europe, chiefly Germany. In connection with this project, Germany has been criticized for lack of solidarity with several EU member states in Eastern Europe since these transit countries were bypassed by the pipeline which allows Russia to cut off their gas supplies without affecting the flow to Western Europe.¹⁹⁹ A proposed expansion of the pipelined called Nord Stream 2 has been under a lot of criticism as well.²⁰⁰

Trade: In 2014, Russia was Germany's eleventh biggest export market and Germany was Russia's seventh biggest buyer of goods and services.²⁰¹ Even though the trade between Russia and Germany was damaged by the sanctions, the bilateral foreign direct investment landscape shows no signs of decline. The investments of German firms in Russia has been increasing significantly in the recent years, Germany being the second-biggest investor in Russia in 2016.²⁰²

Secret service activity: German foreign intelligence service sees a substantial threat in Russia in connection with the spreading of fake news and cyber-attacks, by which Russia could try to influence the outcome of 2017 general election. "We have evidence that cyber-attacks are taking place that have no purpose other than to elicit political uncertainty," said the president of the Bundesnachrichtendienst, Bruno Kahl. According to Hans-Georg, president of the domestic BfV intelligence agency, Russian secret services has been conducting cyber-attacks "aimed at comprehensive strategic data gathering".²⁰³ How serious can the Russian disinformation efforts in Germany be was well illustrated by the "Lisa case", one of the major topics in German public discussion in January 2016. The 13-year old Russian-German girl had gone missing for 30 hours and, according to a Russian TV channel, she has been raped by Arab migrants. Even though the German police debunked the story, it was intensively reported in Russian media and ended in diplomatic tensions between Germany and Russia.²⁰⁴

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer, 23% of Germans had a positive view of Russia. Polls conducted by the Körber Foundations shows that 69% of Germans favour lifting the economic sanctions imposed by Russia and the EU.²⁰⁵

Number of Russian diplomats: 108 (196 with spouses).²⁰⁶

¹⁹⁹ Stewart, Susan, Germany, Chapter 2 in National Perspectives on Russia.

²⁰⁰ <https://www.ft.com/content/72bd7ecc-f29a-11e6-8758-6876151821a6>

²⁰¹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-28423733>

²⁰² <https://www.wsj.com/articles/german-firms-place-new-bets-on-russia-1481193003>

²⁰³ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/29/german-spy-chief-russian-hackers-could-disrupt-elections-bruno-kahl-cyber-attacks>

²⁰⁴ <http://www.nato.int/docu/Review/2016/Also-in-2016/lisa-case-germany-target-russian-disinformation/EN/index.htm>

²⁰⁵ https://www.koerber-stiftung.de/fileadmin/user_upload/koerber-stiftung/mediathek/pdf/2016/Survey_Russia-in-Europe.pdf

²⁰⁶ <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/cae/servlet/contentblob/332540/publicationFile/158033/VertretungenFremderStaatenListe.pdf>

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Strategic partner. Strong economic relations, especially in energy. Political relations remain strong as well, even though Angela Merkel is more critical towards Russia than her predecessor, Gerhard Schröder.

National Perspectives (2013): “Considering its overall weight within the EU and its developed relationship with Russia, Germany is often seen as a potential motor for revitalizing EU-Russia relations. However, the perception of Germany as too inclined to cater to both Russian and its own national interests, fuelled in particular by the Nord Stream project, makes it unlikely that Germany could take on this role alone. Germany’s strong pursuit of its economic interests in its relationship with Russia will likely remain constant, leaving it vulnerable to criticism within the EU. If, though, as appears increasingly possible, Russia becomes weaker internally due to its failure to modernize on a variety of fronts, it may grow less attractive as an economic partner for Germany. This could bring other aspects of Germany’s Russia policy to the fore, ones that are more compatible with broader EU interests. In this scenario, the idea of Germany (together with Poland) as a driver of the EU’s Russia policy appears probable.”

EU-28 Watch (2015): In general, the relations to Russia are viewed as very important in Germany and are widely discussed. Overall it is seen that after a phase of complementary interests between the EU and Russia, the relations deteriorated until the deep crisis they are in now. When discussing the future relations with Russia, there is a forward-looking approach in Germany going beyond the immediate Ukraine crisis and an overall understanding that Russia is crucial for a peaceful and prosperous Europe. However, it is also becoming increasingly clear that Russia under the present government is an extremely difficult partner to achieve this goal. There is an increasing impression that Putin is untrustworthy and unpredictable. This leads to the continuous debate on how dialogue can be continued with Russia without failing European values.

Views from the capitals (2016):²⁰⁷ Economically speaking, Germany is actually much less dependent on Russia than generally perceived, and experiencing little blowback from the EU sanctions and counter-sanctions, it will be willing to use them as a tool to contain Moscow. Regarding its role in Europe, Germany has learned through the recent crises that its hegemony will not be tolerated. Without a multilateral framework to accommodate the interests of other European states, Germany alone cannot shape European politics. Therefore, if the role of the EU and NATO is diminished, this would greatly reduce Germany’s influence in practice. As for public opinion, sympathy both for Russia and Putin has plummeted in Germany in recent times, with Russia becoming more nationalistic. These negative attitudes towards Russia will continue and sympathy is likely to fall even further. Russia’s support for far-right forces will cause more unease than its military adventures do, however, these forces will remain an isolated community – for now, at least.

²⁰⁷ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_managing_the_unmanageable_germany_and_a_resurgent_russia

European Foreign Policy Scorecards: Leader on maintaining a strong and united sanctions policy, slacker on commitment to Eastern Partnership countries (2016). Leader on developing sanctions towards Russia (2015). Leader on supporting European Commission in resisting Russian pressure on Eastern Partnership countries; supporting strong European position on rule of law, human rights and press freedom; pressuring Russia to use its leverage to stop conflict in Syria and engage new Iranian government in nuclear negotiations; while slacker on relations with Russia on energy issues (2014). Leader on promoting human rights in Russia; co-operating with Russia to solve protracted conflicts and persuading Moscow to support EU positions on Syria (2013).

III. Policy Documents

Review 2014: A Fresh Look at German Foreign Policy²⁰⁸

Annexation of Crimea: Following the address of President Putin, the Kremlin signed the Treaty of Accession of the Crimea and the city of Sevastopol to the Russian Federation. This unlawful step has led to the most serious crisis in Europe since the end of the Cold War... Together, as the EU, we have clout in the world – the Ukraine crisis shows how important joint action is.

White Paper on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr (2016)²⁰⁹

Russia is openly calling the European peace order into question with its willingness to use force to advance its own interests and to unilaterally redraw borders guaranteed under international law, as it has done in Crimea and eastern Ukraine. This has far-reaching implications for security in Europe and thus for the security of Germany.

The crisis in and surrounding Ukraine is the concrete manifestation of long-term internal and external developments. Russia is rejecting a close partnership with the West and placing emphasis on strategic rivalry. Internationally, Russia is presenting itself as an independent power centre with global ambitions.

This is reflected, for example, by an increase in Russia's military activities along its borders with the EU and NATO. In the course of extensively modernising its armed forces, Russia appears to be prepared to test the limits of existing international agreements. By increasingly using hybrid instruments to purposefully blur the borders between war and peace, Russia is creating uncertainty about the nature of its intentions. This calls for responses from the affected states, but also from the EU and NATO.

Germany continues to support the long-term goal of a strategic partnership between NATO and Russia. For the time being, the Russian Federation's current policies, which are reflected in the annexation of Crimea and the present doctrine declaring NATO a threat, necessitate a dual approach: credible deterrence and defence capability as well as a willingness to engage in dialogue.

²⁰⁸ <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/download/37355057/41950-2259c-f1521-4fb59-25a9d-9b0ea-eafd8-214c9>

²⁰⁹ <http://www.new-york-un.diplo.de/contentblob/4847754/Daten/6718445/160713weibuchEN.pdf>

2015 Annual report on the Protection of the Constitution²¹⁰

Now as before the Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China and the Islamic Republic of Iran are the major players behind espionage activities directed against Germany. Russian espionage continues to be essentially influenced by the conflict between the West and Russia in regard to Ukraine. Not least, the Russian services are also attempting to present their point of view to the public and to use their contacts to exert influence.

The interest of the Russian intelligence services continues to be focused on the traditional target areas: politics, industry, science, the energy industry, technology and the military. The Ukraine conflict has, however, resulted in a clear shift of their priorities: This issue with all its political, economic and military ramifications is increasingly in the focus of their intelligence activities. Russia's primary interest is to obtain early information on the stance taken on the Ukraine crisis by the Federal Government, the political parties and institutions, on the way they intend to handle it and on their future policy towards Russia.

Apart from intelligence gathering the services also attempt to influence decision-makers and public opinion in Germany according to their interests. In this context it is of particular interest for them to get an insight into decision-making processes and to find out to what extent it is (still) possible to influence them. Also, Russia increasingly disseminates pro-Russian propaganda through various public media (TV and radio stations, the Internet, high-profile events, etc.). For example, in their German-language broadcasts, Russian international broadcasting stations which are close to the Russian government present facts in a way which reflects a pro-Russian view. In most of these cases it is, however, hardly possible to prove a direct involvement of the Russian intelligence services.

Cyber Security Strategy for Germany (2011)²¹¹

The document does not mention Russia at all.

²¹⁰ <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/embed/annual-report-2015-summary.pdf>

²¹¹ https://www.bsi.bund.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/EN/BSI/Publications/CyberSecurity/Cyber_Security_Strategy_for_Germany.pdf?__blob=publicationFile

16. Hungary

Summary: Hungary is a EU member state, and it was one of the first former Eastern Bloc countries to join NATO. Though Hungarians maintain generally hostile attitude towards Russia, not least due to two countries' troubled past during the Communist era, the current government of PM Orban uses good relations with Russia as a leverage in Hungary's relations with Brussels. Hungarian politics are dominated by right-wing and far-right elements, which are known to have been supported by Russia. Energy-wise, Hungary has no need to fear dependency on Russia, but it has used its transit status to cut-off the reverse supply of natural gas to Ukraine in 2014. Russian financial ties with Hungary are also strong. Nonetheless, Hungary remains dedicated to NATO, even though its stance towards the EU is far more negative, even though it does not fiercely oppose EU sanctions against Russia.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Russia's image in Hungary was traditionally not favourable due to the communist past and memories of Russian military occupation. Hungary experienced harsh repressions that led to the revolution of 1956 crushed by a joint military operation of the Warsaw Pact. Thereafter, relations between both countries were damaged until breakup of the USSR. In the 20 years following the regime change, Hungarian left parties maintained some contacts with Russia, but the overall diplomatic relations between both countries were limited to trade. However, every government is forced to have a working relationship with Kremlin due to the energy dependency.²¹² Deepening of political ties between Hungary and Russia since 2010 (policy of "Eastern Opening" during the second Orbán-cabinet). Current rapprochement is being justified as an attempt to "recapture eastern markets".²¹³

Foreign policy: Interest-based policy. Hungary does not have a conceptual approach to Russia that would provide a ground for a clear foreign policy programme. Currently, it is becoming more value-laden since Hungary follows the footsteps of the Kremlin based on common values of "conservatism" and autocratic methods of power. Pragmatism is used to mask the shared value-set.

Putin's man: PM Victor Orbán used to be the most fervent anti-Russian politician in the post-transition Eastern bloc. Nowadays he is labelled as "Putin's man". He is openly admiring Mr. Putin as a strong national leader. After annexation of Crimea, he declared his support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine, but at the same time accused Kyiv of discriminating ethnic minorities (Hungarian minority in Zakarpattia Oblast) and claimed that the Kyiv's government was not democratic. Accordingly, Orbán has sought to weaken European sanctions. During his government, Russia has gained influence over Hungarian politics.²¹⁴ All in all, pendulum politics is pursued as Hungary has been avoiding any friction in relations with Russia.

²¹² <http://www.origo.hu/itthon/20080228-gyurcsany-a-deli-aramlat-megelozte-a-nabuccot.html>

²¹³ http://www.politicalcapital.hu/wp-content/uploads/PC_SDI_Boll_study_IamEurasian.pdf

²¹⁴ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_hungary_in_the_grip_of_a_bear_hug_7019

Far-right: Kremlin-friendly stance of the Hungarian far-right due to the Jobbik party which made the initial “Eastern Opening” after Béla Kovács entered the party in 2005 and steered it towards Moscow. Jobbik is country's largest opposition force and the loudest promoter of Kremlin in Hungary. It reportedly receives Russian financial support. MEP Béla Kovacs is considered a Russian lobbyist in Brussels where he was allegedly spying on EU institutions. In addition, he was invited by Russia to monitor the Crimean referendum.²¹⁵ The paramilitary organization's pro-Russian stance is just a late consequence of the Jobbik's foreign policy line.

Energy: Intensive “gas diplomacy” and energy dependence on Russia. Approximately 57% of its gas and 89% oil demand is provided by Russian imports. However, Hungary does not have to fear a sudden cut-off, since it has the largest underground gas storage infrastructure in CEE²¹⁶ and thanks to the strategic partnership with Russia. To enhance its relations, Russia is offering price discounts on oil and gas deliveries. The long-term gas procurement agreement with Gazprom guarantees supplies up to the 2019. Hungary agreed on building the South Stream pipeline in cooperation with Russia and Gazprom despite the negative opinion of the European Commission (2015). Currently backing Nord Stream II, despite the fact it might suffer economically due to the lost in transit fees.

Nuclear energy dependency on Russia.²¹⁷ A nuclear deal on the expansion of Paks Nuclear Power Plant by the Russian company Rosatom was concluded in 2014 without holding a tender. It had led to an infringement proceedings by the European Commission for a lack of compliance with EU public procurement, but after a lengthy probe, the Commission approved the project.²¹⁸ This creates enormous economic interest for both sides.

Energy blackmail: After meeting in Budapest between the PM Viktor Orbán and the head of Gazprom Alexei Miller in 2014, Hungary unexpectedly stopped gas supplies to Ukraine. This happened at the time of growing tension in Eastern Ukraine and as Russian-Ukrainian-EU gas talks were held in Berlin. "Hungary cannot get into a situation in which, due to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, it cannot access its required supply of energy," Mr Orban said on the state radio. His statement followed threats from Moscow that it could cut off countries that have been re-exporting gas to Ukraine avoiding its energy sanctions.²¹⁹

Economy and trade: Russia is Hungary's third largest import partner and 13th trading partner.²²⁰ Hungary's export to Russia has started to decrease in 2011, this trend has been accelerated due to the EU sanctions and nosediving of Russian Ruble. In 2015 it reportedly decreased by more than 40

²¹⁵ http://www.politicalcapital.hu/wp-content/uploads/PC_SDJ_Boll_study_lamEurasian.pdf

²¹⁶ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_hungary_in_the_grip_of_a_bear_hug_7019

²¹⁷ <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/eastern-europe-s-russian-energy-dependence-deeper-than-you-think>

²¹⁸ <http://www.reuters.com/article/eu-hungary-nuclearpower-idUSL5N1GJ2VD>

²¹⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/26/hungary-suspends-gas-supplies-ukraine-pressure-moscow>

²²⁰ http://www.politicalcapital.hu/wp-content/uploads/PC_SDJ_Boll_study_lamEurasian.pdf

per cent.²²¹ Anyway, as an important buyer of Hungarian state bonds, Russia practically finances Hungarian state debt.²²²

Eastern Partnership: Not very enthusiastic or proactive, focusing on Moldova and the partly Hungarian-populated Transcarpathian region in Ukraine.²²³ Hungary is pushing for deepening of energetic cooperation with Azerbaijan, therefore neglecting human rights situation in the country.²²⁴ Hungary would not risk alienation with Moscow because of Eastern neighbourhood.²²⁵

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometr, 37% of Hungarians had a positive view of Russia.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007):²²⁶ Friendly pragmatism: maintains a close relationship with Russia and tends to put business interests above political goals. Hungary supports EU's role in the Eastern neighbourhood.

National Perspective (2013): Pragmatic 'business as usual' approach. Directly supporting eastern dimension of EU external relations. Prioritized countries: Ukraine and Moldova. Point of discord: support for the EU and NATO aspirations of certain EaP countries.

Anti-Russia/Russia-cautious camp represented by Fidesz. Pro-Russia - Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP).²²⁷

EU-28 Watch (2015): Pro-Russian domestic party landscape. PM Victor Orbán has turned leading political party Fidesz to a vocal defender of Russia's action in Ukraine. The second strongest right-wing party Jobbik pursues engagement with Moscow even more. Public pools indicate rather balanced view, coupled with more sceptical stance toward Russia. All in all, Hungarian foreign policy is determined by utilitarian considerations of economic ties with Russia.²²⁸

Hungary is supporting strengthened NATO presence in face of a threat from Russia. In addition, Hungarian defence and special forces has started to pay attention to Russian hybrid warfare.

European Foreign Policy Scorecards: Opponent of sanctions, but eventually subscribed to the common approach (2015). Leader on the relations with Russian on the EaP, supporting European Commission in resisting Russian pressure on EaP countries, promoting visa liberalization with

²²¹ <http://www.kormany.hu/en/ministry-of-foreign-affairs-and-trade/news/russia-a-priority-economic-partner-of-hungary>

²²² http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_how_should_europe_respond_to_russia_the_hungarian_view406

²²³ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/hungary/>

²²⁴ http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR73_SCORECARD_2013_AW.pdf

²²⁵ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/hungary/>

²²⁶ http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR-02_A_POWER_AUDIT_OF_EU-RUSSIA_RELATIONS.pdf

²²⁷ Dangerfield, M., Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia, chapter 11, in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

²²⁸ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/hungary/>

Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine after being a slacker on diversification of gas supply routes to Europe (2015, 2014).²²⁹

View from the capitals (2016): Fidesz government opposes automatic prolongation of sanctions, but it would not veto it. It estimates that the sanctions have resulted in lost export opportunities worth 4-4,5 billion \$. Orbán has advanced his Eastern Opening toward Russia and bilateral meetings between political representations are now regular.²³⁰

III. Policy Documents

Foreign minister statements (2016):

Russia is a priority economic, trade and energy partner of Hungary, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó said after the meeting of the Hungarian-Russian inter-governmental economic committee on Wednesday in Budapest. [...] The Minister, who is also co-chair of the committee, reiterated at the press conference: a decision was adopted on Tuesday on the extension of the sanctions against Russia. Hungary is of the opinion that this decision was made in an incorrect and anti-democratic manner, as the Member States should have discussed the matter at the highest possible level. [...] Regarding energy issues, he said: the Paks 2 project is the single most important project from the respect of Hungary's energy security. They are currently discussing whether MVM Magyar Villamos Művek Zrt. can be involved in a few projects to be implemented by Rosatom elsewhere so that the company can gain relevant experience in the field, he explained. He also reiterated that they have altered the long-term gas procurement agreement which provides for the drawdown of 25 billion cubic metres of gas, and as a result, the country's safe gas supply is guaranteed up to the end of 2019. The pricing mechanism has been changed in Hungary's favour, and the parties also decided on the purchase by Hungary of an additional 600 cubic metres over and above the contracted quantity, he said.²³¹

National security strategy (2012):²³²

Hungary today enjoys an unprecedented level of security as the result of Euro-Atlantic integration. However, military force may still play primary role in a regional conflict in Europe and its neighbourhood. The stability of Hungary's Eastern and Southern neighbourhood and the spreading of democratic values are of paramount importance for the country's security. Hungary employs active foreign policy and is strongly interested in EU and NATO continuing to pay eminent attention to these regions, offering membership or the strongest possible partnership. Hungarian communities living outside the borders of Hungary have a particular place in the country's security policy.

²²⁹ <http://www.ecfr.eu/scorecard>

²³⁰ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_view_from_budapest_the_status_quo_might_just_do7147

²³¹ <http://www.kormany.hu/en/ministry-of-foreign-affairs-and-trade/news/russia-a-priority-economic-partner-of-hungary>

²³² <https://www.eda.europa.eu/docs/default-source/documents/hungary-national-security-strategy-2012.pdf>

17. Ireland

Summary: Ireland is a non-NATO EU member state, lying at the westernmost fringe of the European Union. Ireland's position towards Russia is barely identifiable, but in most questions of international relations Irish politics tend to seek a common ground with the United Kingdom. The only interest Ireland has in Russia is primarily commercial, but when it comes to defense measures, Ireland tends to rely heavily on the UK's military, but so far Ireland remains uninterested in abandoning its neutrality policy.

I. Relationship Parameters

Geography: Ireland is located in the westernmost part of Europe, and it is the only Atlantic EU member state that has never joined NATO. Ireland lies far from Russia, making its relations with Russia a low priority, in comparison with priorities given to its only neighbor, the UK, and Brussels, since the country is both an EU and Eurozone member state.

War in Syria: Ireland's Taoiseach Kenny demanded new sanctions to be imposed against Russia in response to bombing of Aleppo, supporting British PM May's condemnation of Russia's actions in Syria.²³³

Tensions: Russian aircraft and ships occasionally approach the UK's and Ireland's airspace and territorial waters, causing the UK's Royal Air Force to be on guard. The latest such incident occurred in February 2017.²³⁴ However, this issue remains largely that of Britain, not Ireland. Instead, Ireland's policy has been that of neutrality, which some still believe to be a wise choice, evoking the warning of President de Valera, who called for caution in alliances that can lead a country like Ireland to go to war.²³⁵ One important event that chilled Ireland's relations with Russia was the 2011 spy scandal, which revealed that Russian spies in the US have been using false Irish passports, and led to a Russian diplomat being expelled by Irish authorities.²³⁶

View of Russia: 39% of the Irish hold a somewhat negative view about Russia, 23% somewhat positive, 19% very negative and 8% very positive.²³⁷

²³³ <http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/taoiseach-demands-sanctions-on-russia-over-aleppo-devastation-426864.html>

²³⁴ <https://www.thesun.ie/news/557941/typhoons-scrambled-to-intercept-two-russian-bombers-near-uk-a-day-after-putin-warned-to-prepare-for-time-of-war/>

²³⁵ <http://irishcatholic.ie/article/neutrality-%E2%80%93-foreign-policy-which-has-served-us-well>

²³⁶ <http://www.irishtimes.com/news/diplomat-expelled-from-russian-embassy-after-revelations-on-spies-irish-passports-1.560623>

²³⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/finland/sites/finland/files/ebs_451_anx_en.pdf

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Frosty Pragmatist. Ireland's economic relations with Russia are insignificant. In its dealings with Russia, Ireland prioritizes the issue of protection of human rights in Russia, using international organizations as the platform of discussion.

National Perspectives (2013): Ireland's relationship with Russia has had a commercial accent ever since the fall of the Soviet Union. The rapid growth of the small nation's economy, even though it ended abruptly following the 2008 financial crisis, always made Ireland a place of economic interest for Russia. As the two countries experienced an impressive growth in mutual economic relations in the early 2010s, Ireland was one of the few European countries that maintained a trade surplus with Russia all at the same time.

EU-28 Watch (2015): n/a

View from the capitals (2015): "Dublin's position is that restrictive measures against Russia, coupled with open dialogue and continued political and economic engagement with the various sides in the conflict, offer the best way of creating the conditions for a breakthrough."²³⁸

III. Policy Documents

Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World (2015)²³⁹:

Russian actions to destabilise eastern Ukraine and exert economic pressure on other Eastern Partnership countries have strained regional stability and political and economic relations with Russia. These actions disregard fundamental principles and obligations of international law, including respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. While sanctions have been imposed on Russia by the EU and others in response to these actions, it is uncertain how these tensions will be managed or may evolve. The reverberations have been felt in Russian incursions into the airspace and territorial waters of a number of EU member states, and are likely to continue to be felt both in relations with Russia and in approaches to regional security and stability. An immediate priority will be a peaceful and negotiated resolution to the crisis in Ukraine, which respects its right to freely determine its future without external interference or pressure. This would open the way to resuming an open and constructive relationship with Russia, an important economic partner for the EU as well as on efforts to address regional and international challenges.

Defense Strategy (2015-2017)²⁴⁰:

²³⁸ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_view_from_dublin_a_wait_and_see_approach311368

²³⁹ <https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/alldfawebsitemedia/ourrolesandpolicies/ourwork/global-island/the-global-island-irelands-foreign-policy.pdf>

²⁴⁰

[http://www.defence.ie/WebSite.nsf/72804bb4760386f380256c610055a16b/1f3141532ba9083380257e0d00587018/\\$F](http://www.defence.ie/WebSite.nsf/72804bb4760386f380256c610055a16b/1f3141532ba9083380257e0d00587018/$F)

The conflict in Ukraine in 2014, following on from the events in Georgia in 2008, has challenged perceptions about the stability of the broader European region. The probability of a conventional military attack on Ireland's territory from another state is currently assessed as low. However, potential conflicts affecting member states of the EU present serious security concerns for Ireland and the future outlook is likely to remain unpredictable.

White Paper on Defense (2015)²⁴¹:

Tensions have arisen in the European neighbourhood within and between some states which were formerly part of the Soviet Union. Russia has sought to re-assert its influence over these states. Certain of these states have sought greater integration with the West and others have moved to strengthen links with Russia. The conflict between Russia and Georgia in 2008 and the conflict that has emerged in Eastern Ukraine in 2014, have illustrated the potential for the escalation of military confrontation in the region.

[ILE/Department%20of%20Defence%20and%20Defence%20Forces%20Strategy%20Statement%202015-2017%20English%20Version.pdf](#)

²⁴¹ <http://www.defence.ie/WebSite.nsf/WP2015E>

18. Italy

Summary: Italy is one of the founding members of the EU and NATO. Though traditionally a country with deep economic ties to Russia, Italy showed a strong support for a common EU and NATO stance on Russia. At the same time, Italy does not wish to completely alienate Russia, and it believes that a dialogue is possible. Still, Italy has shown disapproval towards Russian actions in Syria, but its national security is more concerned with the refugee flow over Mediterranean, than any immediate threats Russia may pose to Italy. Italian politics is full of pro-Russian elements, however, and many politicians believe that the EU sanctions are harmful to Italy, and therefore they should be lifted.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: The relationship between Italy and Russia has strong historical roots. Italy's Partito Comunista Italiano was the most influential Western communist party during the Cold War era with a strong electorate and, naturally, a pro-Russian stance. After the fall of the USSR, the relations between the two countries grew even stronger. Putin has maintained a good relationship with Italian leaders, especially with the former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi. Nowadays, the two countries have strong bilateral institutional and economic links.²⁴²

Energy: Russia is Italy's biggest supplier of natural gas, supplying 47% of Italian gas imports. As for oil, Italy purchases around 20% of oil from Russia. Italians see a reliable supplier in Russia and do not hesitate to give preference to it over others (e.g., Algeria).²⁴³

Trade: Despite the bad economic situation in Russia and the EU sanctions, the economic relations between Italy and Russia remain at a substantial level. Italy is Russia's third largest trade partner and seventh supplier. The Italian and Russian business sector are connected to a large extent. Berlusconi, a successful businessman himself, has profited significantly from deals with Russia. Italian and Russian firms in the industrial and high-tech sectors often collaborate with each other. Italian Unicredit Bank is the top foreign bank in Russia. Considering the interconnectedness of the Russian and Italian economy, the anti-Russian sanctions imposed by the EU are viewed quite negatively in Italy and many Italian politicians want them to be lifted.²⁴⁴

European policy orientation: As for the EU policy on Russia, Italy shows rather reluctant support for it and its main objective is to maintain good relations with Russia. In addition to its negative view on anti-Russian sanctions, there are more examples when Italy prefers its own stance on Russia to the one of the EU. For instance, Silvio Berlusconi described in 2008 some NATO actions as "U.S.

²⁴²Alccaro, Ricardo, Italy, Chapter 5 in National Perspectives on Russia,
<http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21646626-italy-trying-straddle-widening-rift-between-russia-and-west-relatively-friendly>

²⁴³http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_a_marriage_of_convenience_the_future_of_italyrussia_relations,
http://www.esteri.it/mae/en/politica_estera/aree_geografiche/europa/i_nuovi_rapporti.html

²⁴⁴ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/it-forrel-ru.htm>

provocations” of Russia. Italian multinational oil and gas company ENI once commented that the real threat to Western Europe’s energy security was not Russia, but Ukraine.²⁴⁵

Cultural relations: The two countries cooperate together extensively on the cultural level as well, for example, they signed the Executive Cultural Collaboration Programme 2016-2018, which aims to promote their cooperation in education, culture, and art. Also, youth exchange programmes are very popular.²⁴⁶

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer, 47% of Italians had a positive view of Russia.

Number of Russian diplomats: 79 (without spouses).²⁴⁷

STRATCOM: Italy is a sponsoring nation of the NATO STRATCOM COE.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Strategic partner. Italy has deep trade and energy links with Russia. As for political relations, the relationship between the two countries was influenced by an extreme warm personal relationship between the former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi and Putin. Even after Berlusconi left office, the political relations remain strong.

EU-28 Watch (2015): Italy has aligned with the EU and NATO in condemning Russia’s annexation of Crimea and its destabilising role in Eastern Ukraine. However, the government rejects the idea of a new Cold War and has been rather vocal in advocating a diplomatic solution to the Ukrainian crisis, as well as the continuation of a critical dialogue with Russia. Indeed, Italy is trying to develop a distinctive approach towards the issue, combining resoluteness on the Ukrainian dossier with stressing the importance for the EU as a whole to keep the dialogue with Russia open. Italian opposition parties, part of the business sector and a significant portion of the Italian public calls for lifting or at least mitigation of the EU sanctions.

National Perspectives (2013): The starting point of Italy’s Russia policy – that Russia needs to be part of the European political-security equation – is commendable, as it is hard to envisage a fully stabilized Europe without Russia being a committed member of it. Italy is therefore wise to avoid unnecessary confrontation and to work toward a sustainable *modus vivendi* between Russia and the West. However, its inability to make better use of its leverage on Russia – enshrined in the potential of common EU policies – risks making its long-term objective unattainable. Therefore, the set of policies that make up Italy’s Russia policy do not deserve the name of strategy, as bilateral action and EU action proceed on different tracks, at different speed, and sometimes even in different directions.

²⁴⁵ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/it-forrel-ru.htm>

²⁴⁶ http://www.esteri.it/mae/en/politica_estera/aree_geografiche/europa/i_nuovi_rapporti.html

²⁴⁷ <http://www.esteri.it/mae/doc/lda.pdf>
http://www.esteri.it/mae/doc/20130422_idc_22_aprile_2013.pdf

Views from the capitals (2016):²⁴⁸ Italy sees its role as providing a reality check for EU policy on Russia. It believes that, given Moscow's strategic centrality in the neighbourhood, the EU must move towards a more constructive, pragmatic dialogue, and that EU measures concerning Russia should be debated instead of simply adopted. However, Russia's role in the Syrian tragedy has made it more difficult for Italy to maintain this stance. Rome and Moscow have a relatively strong and deep-rooted partnership that is likely to stand the test of time, barring the worst-case scenario of a "hot war" between NATO and Russia. This peculiar partnership between a regional power and a former superpower works on the basis that neither Russia nor Italy interferes in the domestic affairs of the other, and they recognise their respective spheres of influence. This means that Italy's Russia policy does not fit well with the EU's overall approach. It also helps to explain Rome's reluctant support for EU sanctions against Russia. When it comes down to it, Italy's only real interest in the eastern neighbourhood is to avoid the most dangerous scenario of NATO involvement in the Ukraine crisis – something that could have a disastrous impact on its relations with Russia.

European Foreign Policy Scorecards: Slacker on relations with Russia on energy issues, leader on pressuring Russia to use its leverage to stop conflict in Syria (2014).

III. Policy Documents

National Strategic Framework for Cyberspace Security (2013)²⁴⁹

The document does not mention Russia at all.

White Paper for International Security and Defence (2015)²⁵⁰

The document does not mention Russia at all.

²⁴⁸ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_view_from_rome_reflection_before_renewal7142
http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_a_marriage_of_convenience_the_future_of_italyrussia_relations

²⁴⁹ https://www.enisa.europa.eu/topics/national-cyber-security-strategies/ncss-map/IT_NCSS.pdf

²⁵⁰ http://www.difesa.it/Primo_Piano/Documents/2015/07_Luglio/White%20book.pdf

19. Latvia

Summary: Latvia was one of the first ex-Soviet states to join the EU and NATO in 2004, and it remains a key NATO member state, sharing a border with Russia and Belarus. Latvia is the most Russified of the Baltic States. Like Estonia, it has a sizeable Russian minority, including non-citizens, living in the country. Due to its geographic location and existing infrastructure, Latvia was traditionally dependent on Russian fossil fuels. Large percentages of Russian speakers increase threats posed by Russian intelligence, fake news and disinformation – something that the Latvian government is very aware of. Still, Latvia is highly active in the EU and NATO efforts to counter Russian threats, and it was highly supportive of closer ties between the EU and Ukraine, as well as the sanctions against Russia for the annexation of Crimea.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Latvia gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 but it had to cope with the presence of Russian troops on its soil for a few more years. Since then, Latvia has been orienting more westward and joined NATO and the EU in 2004. In 2007, Latvia and Russia signed and ratified a border treaty agreement. The relationship between the two countries is negatively affected by their different views on history (for example, many politicians in Moscow dispute the fact of occupation of the Baltic states) and the question of Russian minority living in Latvia.²⁵¹

Energy: Regarding natural gas, currently the only player in the Latvian gas market is the Gazprom-controlled Latvijas Gaze and Russia is Latvia's sole gas supplier. Latvijas Gaze also imports some gas from Lithuania but only for sales in Estonia. However, the sales monopoly of Latvijas Gaze will expire in April 2017 and Latvian gas market will become more open and, therefore, able to decrease its dependence on Russia, most probably by using gas imported through the Lithuanian Klaipeda LNG terminal.²⁵² As for oil, Russia is Latvia's third biggest supplier (after Lithuania and Finland) with a 23% market share.²⁵³ Latvia has a very high share of renewables in its energy consumption mix (36%).²⁵⁴ The Baltic states want to decrease their overall dependence on Russia, which is why they also want to link their electricity network to one of the EU member states at the expense of Russia. This particular intention makes Moscow worry that the Baltic electrical emancipation would cut off Kaliningrad.²⁵⁵ Latvia opposes the proposed construction of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, as it would be against Latvia's energy policy oriented on diversification of suppliers.²⁵⁶

²⁵¹ Lasas, Ainius and Galbreath, David J.; Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, Chapter 10 in National Perspectives on Russia, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/lv-forrel-ru.htm>

²⁵² <http://af.reuters.com/article/energyOilNews/idAFL8N15O3RX>, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/andras-simonyi/why-energy-more-than-ever_b_8832354.html

²⁵³ <http://atlas.media.mit.edu/4k2804>

²⁵⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/2014_countryreports_latvia.pdf

²⁵⁵ <http://www.politico.eu/article/baltics-threaten-to-unplug-russian-region-power-kaliningrad-electricity-interconnectors-lithuania-poland-sweden/>

²⁵⁶ <http://www.dw.com/en/baltic-states-oppose-nord-stream-2-pipeline/av-37726734>

Trade: Trade with Russia accounts for 8% of Latvia's foreign trade. Latvia's biggest trading partners are the other two Baltic states, and 74% of Latvian exports goes to the EU.²⁵⁷

Russian minority: Ethnic Latvians account only for 61% of all Latvian population and the second largest ethnic group are Russians with 26%. If we consider the total number of Russian native speakers in Latvia, the number gets even higher.²⁵⁸ Similarly to Estonia, there is a significant gap between the two groups in terms of views on many political issues. Moscow's rhetoric often focusses on an alleged discrimination of ethnic Russians in the Baltics, which is a sensitive topic considering Russia has used the pretext of protecting ethnic Russians in its "near abroad" for territorial expansion.²⁵⁹ Latvia's Russian minority is being heavily targeted by the propaganda spread through Kremlin-owned or supported media, which are the most important source of information for local Russian speakers. Moscow also supports various local Russian initiatives. In 2012, there was a referendum whether Russian should become Latvia's second official language which turned out unsuccessful.²⁶⁰ 12% of Latvian society are non-citizens because to become citizens they would have to pass a test of Latvian language, history, and government, which many of them resent.²⁶¹ There is also a rational calculation, because people with non-citizen passport can go to Russia and the EU without visa, which makes sense economically.

Secret service activity: According to Latvia's security police, the main counter intelligence risks faced by Latvia come from Russia, which not only organizes espionage activities against Latvia but also conducts information operations.²⁶²

Disinformation and propaganda: Latvia has been heavily targeted by Russian disinformation and propaganda. In 2016, Latvian authorities shut down Russia's pro-Kremlin news site Sputnik for being a "propaganda tool".²⁶³

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer, 43% of Latvians had a positive view of Russia.

Number of Russian diplomats: 32 (53 with spouses).²⁶⁴

STRATCOM: Latvia has a national seconded expert working at the EEAS East STRATCOM Team. Latvia is a founding nation of the NATO STRATCOM COE

²⁵⁷ <http://www.liaa.gov.lv/en/trade/foreign-trade-statistics>

²⁵⁸ <http://www.li.lv/upload/files/10022015/45a7f901fa17199f9918fad52a3f80b9.pdf>

²⁵⁹ <http://time.com/3456722/latvia-election-russia-ukraine/>

²⁶⁰ <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/6/13/latvia-resists-russian-soft-power.html>

²⁶¹ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/lv-forrel-ru.htm>

²⁶² <http://www.mfa.gov.lv/arpolitika/sabiedribas-integracija-latvija/pilsoniba-latvija/pilsonibas-likums>
<http://www.dp.gov.lv/en/?rt=documents&ac=download&id=15>

²⁶³ <http://www.stopfake.org/en/latvia-blocks-russian-sputnik-site-as-kremlin-propaganda-tool/>

²⁶⁴ <http://www.mfa.gov.lv/images/protocol/DipList.pdf>

II. Expert Assessment

National Perspectives (2013): Despite having a lot in common with other Baltic states, Latvia may be a bit more pragmatic in its stance towards Russia.

EU-28 Watch (2015): For several years prior, Latvia has adhered to a cautiously positive approach towards Russia, not ignoring disagreements, but heavily focusing on economic cooperation. However, after Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Russia became a threat once again, even though economic cooperation is still important for the government. At the same time, Latvia's active participation in the sanctions against Russia shows that it is ready to bear with even grave economic losses. Latvia believes that sanctions can be softened only when the situation in Ukraine's eastern regions improves, and lifted only after the annexation of Crimea is resolved. It does not stand for complete isolation of Russia but also rejects appeasement as a failed strategy that led to World War II.

Power Audit (2007): Frosty pragmatist. Latvia has increasingly sought a more moderate tone in its relations with Russia and, in fact, Russia tends to cultivate good relations with at least one of the three Baltic states at any given moment, and Latvia dissociates itself from the two others. However, Latvia has also had its oil supplies cut off and been exposed to political pressures.

European Foreign Policy Scorecards: Leader on "maintaining a strong and united sanctions policy" and on "commitment to Eastern Partnership countries" (2016). Leader on "developing sanctions towards Russia" and "supporting a free press in Russia" (2015).

III. Policy Documents

Annual Report on accomplishments and further work with respect to national foreign policy and the European Union (2017)²⁶⁵

In 2016, Russia continued pursuit of foreign policy that fuels conflicts and escalates tensions internationally. Russia's violation of international norms and the use of military force to achieve political goals have created insecurity for all of Russia's neighbours.

Latvia will be insisting that a prerequisite for the review of restrictive measures is full implementation of the Minsk agreements. Latvia will advocate consistent compliance with the policy of non-recognition of Crimea and stand up for retaining this issue on the agenda of EU-Russia relations until there has been a return to full compliance with international law.

The dynamics of bilateral cooperation between Latvia and Russia is shaped by Russia's political and economic course, the overall climate of EU-Russia relations and current security conditions. Concurrently, Latvia will move ahead with practical cooperation with Russia at the expert and sectoral level on matters which are not related to sanctions and in which Latvia is clearly interested.

²⁶⁵ http://www.mfa.gov.lv/images/uploads/infografiki/Foreign_Policy_Report_2016_ENG.pdf

Latvia will be prepared to respond to attempts to divide its society or endanger the democratic system and security in the country. Counteracting Russian propaganda and disinformation in international organisations and the media will continue in tandem with work to strengthen the information space in Latvia and across the EU. Latvia will keep the democracy and human rights situation in Russia high on its agenda.

The State Defence Concept (2012)²⁶⁶

By continuing to improve and modernise the national defence capabilities, by strengthening North Atlantic Treaty Organization's collective defence and by contributing to international security, both bilaterally and multilaterally, Latvia reduces the risk of external military aggression or an outbreak of other national threats, and, if necessary, is ready to ensure effective deterrence measures.

It is within the interests of Latvia to promote the principle of openness and mutual trust in the dialogue with the Russian Federation in bilateral contacts, and at the levels of the OSCE, EU and NATO. There is a need to promote military cooperation, for example, for ensuring maritime safety and search and rescue coverage in the Baltic Sea, as well as promoting the involvement of the Russian Federation in trainings and exercises organised for NATO partner countries.

The National Security Concept (2015)²⁶⁷

The Russian Federation implements its foreign policy by using complex measures that causes so-called hybrid threats. (...) The main nature of these measures is gradual weakening of the country by use of internal policy. (...) The Russian Federation benefits from creating a conflict area near its border, in which the transition from peaceful existence to crisis and later to war is very difficult to identify. (...) [Russia also] benefits from creating a fictional notion that NATO causes external threats due to internal policy. (...) These risk factors require to increase the national security measures in the Republic of Latvia and Baltic region.

Considering the fact that Latvia is a member of NATO and EU, as well as the geographic location of the country, the biggest threat comes from the Russian Special Services. (...) Foreign special services not only gather information, but also execute so-called active measures that try to affect the decision making of the Republic of Latvia, NATO, and EU, as well as the opinion of the society in these territories.

Priorities of the prevention of threats to information space of the Republic of Latvia:

- Development of the public media
- Reduction of influence of the information space of the Russian Federation
- Development of the Media Literacy and Media Education

²⁶⁶ http://www.mod.gov.lv/~media/AM/Par_aizsardzibas_nozari/Plani,%20konceptcijas/2012_va_EN.ashx

²⁶⁷ http://www.mod.gov.lv/~media/AM/Par_aizsardzibas_nozari/Plani,%20konceptcijas/NDK/NDK_ENG_final.ashx

20. Lithuania

Summary: Like the other two Baltic States, Lithuania was one of the few ex-Soviet states to join the EU and NATO in 2004. The country's strategic location between the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad and the Republic of Belarus, makes the country's officials aware of threats posed by the Russian military. Moreover, Russian spy networks remain active in Lithuania, though the country's Russian minority is far less numerous than that of Latvia or Estonia. Lithuania stands in the avant-garde of the EU and NATO states in raising awareness of threats posed by Russia, also rapidly implementing measures to lower the country's dependence on Russian energy supplies. Lithuania has been one of the main advocates for a EU treaty with Ukraine, and the annexation of Crimea only made the country more aware of the need to prepare for the "hybrid war" tactics being used against Lithuania, more supportive of the EU sanctions against Russia, and more eager to aid Ukraine.

I. Relationship Parameters

Distance: Borders with the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad Oblast. Cooperation with Kaliningrad through town twinning and other projects.

History: Lithuania lived under Soviet rule from 1940 to 1991. In the first 10 years, thirty thousand Lithuanian resistance fighters were killed while fighting against the Red Army.²⁶⁸ It was the first country to declare independence from Moscow in 1990. Shared border was settled in 1992. Historical-psychological legacy of the Soviet era is being translated into political as well as economic ties. However, interpretations of the past differ. The Baltic countries demand that Russia condemn the Molotov-Ribentrop Pact and crimes committed during the Soviet era, including the occupation and annexation. There are "rhetorical" incidents on these issues repeatedly. The Baltic States perceive themselves 'stuck between a rock and a hard place'.

View of Russia: Frosty political relations with Russia. Internal political and social consensus on a strong rhetoric towards Russia's aggression and related security issues.

Military tensions: Acute security concerns. Increased military incidents in the region, mainly violations of Lithuanian airspace and threatening narratives. Russia's active information campaign puts information and cyber security issues high on the agenda. Therefore, Russian policies are widely observed at the political level, among the academia and the public. The Ministry of National Defence has even published several manuals on resisting Russian invasion.²⁶⁹ Furthermore, Lithuania has requested for increased presence of NATO (the German-led battle group of 1 000 troops has been deployed) and has increased its military spending by 50%.²⁷⁰ Much security assistance comes from the permanent presence of the U.S. and their sophisticated surveillance technology. The country has also

²⁶⁸ <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/10/28/europe/lithuania-war-manual/>

²⁶⁹ <http://kam.lt/lt/katurimezinoti.html>

²⁷⁰ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-lithuania-nato-germany-idUSKBN15M2BZ>

announced to invest millions in missile defence systems that would fill a defence gap on the border with Russia.²⁷¹

Russian minority in Lithuania: Lithuania has the smallest proportion of Russians among the Baltic states – around 6%. Lithuania has concerns about the impact of the Russian state propaganda on this minority.²⁷² Consequently, Lithuanian elites together with NGOs have launched projects to promote more accurate information for the Russian minority.

Suspension of Russian TV: The country's radio and television commission suspended three months of broadcasting of Russian state-owned broadcaster VGTRK after anti-U.S. comments. A member of Russian Duma Vladimir Zhirinovskiy stated that if U.S. troops get near Russia's borders "they will burn down with the crew." This was considered by regulators to be "an incitement to war, discord and hatred."²⁷³

Security services activity: Russian spies are thought to be the most active foreign agents operating in Lithuania. In 2014 Lithuania expelled three Russian intelligence officers operating under diplomatic cover and several diplomats had to leave their office before the expiration of their accreditation. Ten Russian intelligence officers operating under an unofficial cover were exchanged for individuals accused of collaboration with the Western services in Russia.²⁷⁴ Russia was accused of bugging phone calls of Lithuanian diplomats, several cases of Russian spyware on government computers had been discovered since 2015. Since then there has been a number of attempts to infect them.²⁷⁵ In addition, NATO base, a key hub of intelligence sharing in the Lithuanian city of Siauliai, was infiltrated by an alleged Russian spy ring.²⁷⁶ Lithuanian State Security Department has launched a TV advert urging public to be wary of the strangers and call a new "spyline" to check if they are not lured into espionage.²⁷⁷

Energy: Struggle to limit its dependence. After Lithuania refused to sell its oil refinery to a Russian-led consortium in 2006, Russia interrupted its oil supplies. Lithuania elevated the issue to the EU level attempting to stall the start of EU-Russia negotiations over the new PCA.²⁷⁸ Recently, Russian Gazprom has submitted commitments addressing the competition concerns of the European Commission.²⁷⁹ Nevertheless, Gazprom dominance has ended in 2014 when LNG terminal was opened in Lithuania, offering Baltic states independence from Russian gas.

²⁷¹ <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-lithuania-defence-missile-system-investment-invasion-fears-a7335561.html>

²⁷² <http://www.rferl.org/a/lithuania-suspends-russian-tv-anti-american-comments/28124570.html>

²⁷³ <http://www.rferl.org/a/lithuania-suspends-russian-tv-anti-american-comments/28124570.html>

²⁷⁴ <http://www.vsd.lt/Files/Documents/635718603371696250.pdf>

²⁷⁵ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-lithuania-cyber-idUSKBN14B1PC>

²⁷⁶ <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jan/2/russian-spy-ring-busted-at-nato-air-base-in-lithua/>

²⁷⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-lithuania-spies-idUSKBN13P26U>

²⁷⁸ Lasas, A, Galbreath, D., Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, Chapter 10, in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

²⁷⁹ <https://euobserver.com/energy/137219>

Lithuania had to close its Soviet-design Ignalina nuclear power plant in 2009 as a condition for the EU accession. However, plans for a new nuclear plant Visaginas are currently frozen. Lithuania fears Ostrovets, a nuclear plant in Belarus being built 40 km from Vilnius with a Russian contractor and with Russian finances. Lithuania considers it unsafe. There have already been several accidents that have been hidden from the public. Therefore, Lithuania says it will not buy power from Ostrovets.²⁸⁰

Economy and trade: Economic ties usually driven by geopolitical logic. In 1990s, Lithuania has reoriented westward and the EU replaced Russia as the largest trading partner. In 2013, Russia punished Lithuania hosting summit in Vilnius by banning the import of its dairy products, under the pretexts of phytosanitary problems. In the past, Russia introduced a temporary tightening of customs checks for Lithuanian goods causing delays and losses.²⁸¹ All in all, Moscow uses various trade barriers for Baltic exporters for political reasons.

Eastern Partnership: Lithuania's European policy priority. Strong political support for Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova. Lithuania prepared the Association Agreements with EaP countries in its role as EU president. Hosted EaP summit in Vilnius in 2013. It proposes to impose "conditionality" with a membership perspective. Relations with Ukraine have become even stronger due to the war in the country.

STRATCOM: Lithuania has a seconded national expert working at the EEAS East STRATCOM Team. Lithuania is a sponsoring nation of the NATO STRATCOM COE.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007):²⁸² New Cold Warrior: overtly hostile relationship with Moscow, willing to use the veto to block EU negotiations with Russia. Actively promotes a more critical EU line towards Russia. Motivated by Russian pressure and unresolved historical grievances.

EU-28 Watch (2015):²⁸³ Broadly shared strong position toward Russia promoted within the EU. "Russia first" is a marginal view in the country. High level of attention towards EaP countries. Lithuania regrets passive position of Western countries on their integration.

European Foreign Policy Scorecards:²⁸⁴ Leader on Russian sanctions, support for EaP, support for Ukraine's efforts to implement reform agenda, took advantage of its temporary seat on the Security Council to press Russia on Ukraine (2016). Pushing for EU-US cooperation on Russia, providing financial assistance to individual human rights organizations in Russia (2015), supporting visa liberalization and resistance against Russian pressure (2014).

²⁸⁰ <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/interview/lithuanian-pm-astravyets-nuclear-plant-is-a-threat-to-our-country/>

²⁸¹ <http://liia.lv/en/analysis/russias-milk-war-with-lithuania-or-moscows-attempts-to-reassert-influence-in-eastern-europe-325>

²⁸² http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR-02_A_POWER_AUDIT_OF_EU-RUSSIA_RELATIONS.pdf

²⁸³ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/lithuania/>

²⁸⁴ <http://www.ecfr.eu/scorecard>

III. Policy Documents

National Security Strategy (2017):²⁸⁵

In the current period the main threat for the security of the Republic of Lithuania is posed by aggressive actions of the Russian Federation violating the security architecture based on universal rules and principles of international law and peaceful co-existence. Aggression against the neighbouring countries, annexation of Crimea, the concentration of modern military equipment of the Russian Federation, its large scale offensive capabilities and their exercises near the borders of the Republic of Lithuania and other states, especially in Kaliningrad Region (Karaliaučius), cause international tension and threaten world peace. Capacity of the Russian Federation to use military and economic, energy, information and other non-military measures in combination against the neighbouring countries, ability to exploit and create internal problems of the states located in the Eastern neighbourhood of the Republic of Lithuania as well as preparedness of the Russian Federation to use a nuclear weapon even against the states which do not possess it is a challenge to the security of the Republic of Lithuania and the whole Euro-Atlantic community. These factors will affect national security not only in the short term but also in the future...

Objectives: Spread concepts and practices of democracy, free market, the rule of law, transparency and accountability, promote independent media and non-governmental organizations, democratic opposition, defend human rights and freedoms in the Eastern Partnership countries and the Russian Federation....maintain an approach that pursuit of good neighbourly relations and their development with the Russian Federation would be desirable, but only possible when the Russian Federation respects the norms and principles of international law, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of neighbouring countries, carries out its international obligations and implements the Minsk agreements...

National Security Threat Assessment 2017:²⁸⁶

Russia, aggressively seeking to strengthen its dominance in the region and change the global balance of forces, is considered to be a major source of threats posed to the national security of the Republic of Lithuania. In 2016, Russia's president was strengthening his authority concentrating even greater power in his hands. The aggressive foreign policy was employed in order to divert attention of the society from economic crisis and growing social problems in Russia. In this way, Russia is attempting to entrench its great power status and is intervening in other countries' internal and foreign affairs more aggressively with an aim to shift them to its own benefit... Russia's ambitions to restore its influence in the post-Soviet space affect both, social and political processes of Lithuania. In 2016, Russia was striving to weaken Lithuania's social integrity by escalating ethnic confrontation. Russia-friendly social and political forces have not gained much influence over internal processes of Lithuania but their

²⁸⁵ https://kam.lt/en/defence_policy_1053/important_documents/strategical_documents.html

²⁸⁶ <http://www.vsd.lt/Files/Documents/636265688721000000.pdf>

representatives are exploited for Russia's propaganda objectives. Extremism supporters in Lithuania are not large in quantity and currently they are not capable to provoke any larger scale unrests independently.

The Military Strategy (2016):²⁸⁷

The actions of Russia are undermining the rule-based European security architecture, and constitute the main factor diminishing the security of Lithuania. As a result, the security environment of Lithuania has worsened and become less predictable in the long run...Russia's growing military power and decisions to use it in violation of international norms and commitments, on which the security architecture in Europe is based, have the most negative impact on the security environment of Lithuania. Russia's military buildup, regular snap exercises lacking transparency, and increasing military activity along the borders of Lithuania and other countries intensify tensions in the region and elevate the risk of various military incidents. Russia's ability to use civilian tools in concert with military instruments, as well as execute covert military operations changes the premises for defence planning in the Baltic Sea region...

Risk, dangers, threats: Conventional military threats. The likelihood of a conventional armed aggression against Lithuania and/or other NATO states in the region is no longer a theoretical one, and it may increase due to Russia's growing military power and intentions to use it. Information attacks. Russia and some other states and non-state actors have been aggressively disseminating unfounded and misleading information with an aim to shape Lithuania's public opinion on national security. Such attacks are used to generate distrust and discontent with the democratic order and the national defence system, discredit the Alliance, its capabilities and commitment to defend the Allies, as well as weaken the unity among the citizens, undermine their patriotism, and the will to defend the country. The spread of information and communications technologies is likely to cause even more information attacks, especially those directed towards specific target groups, in the future.

SID: Assessments of threats to national security (2014):²⁸⁸

The most active intelligence activities against national security and state interests of Lithuania are conducted by Russia's intelligence and security services...Enjoying its broad mandate, FSB actively operates against persons related to Lithuania's defence while on a visit in Russia, and particularly against the personnel of Lithuania's defence attaché residing in Russia. Furthermore, FSB has well-developed cyber espionage capabilities along with other technical means of intelligence which it actively employs in collecting information pertaining to the defence capabilities of Lithuania. The most active intelligence operations targeted against Lithuanian defence capabilities and national defence system are undertaken (both in Lithuania and from Russia) by GRU, which is constantly interested in:

- the infrastructure pertaining to Lithuania's defence;

²⁸⁷ https://kam.lt/en/defence_policy_1053/important_documents/strategical_documents.html

²⁸⁸ http://kam.lt/en/defence_policy_1053/important_documents/reports_by_sid_under_the_mnd.html

- national defence system personnel and their qualifications;
- Lithuania's defensive capabilities and potential;
- vulnerabilities of the institutions responsible for the national defence;
- Lithuania's participation in international military missions and operations;
- international military projects, cooperation in the area of defence, and readiness to defend the state jointly with NATO partners. Russia's intelligence and security services use a broad array of intelligence methods.

Russia's intelligence and security services use a broad array of intelligence methods:

1. Human intelligence (HUMINT)
2. Intelligence obtained by technical means
3. Open source intelligence (OSINT)

Speeches by Foreign Minister (2015-2017):

Lithuanian Foreign Ministry's statement on the third anniversary of the occupation of Crimea (2017):²⁸⁹ Lithuania strongly supports Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. In support of Ukraine, we will consistently maintain the non-recognition policy of the illegal annexation and occupation of Crimea that began three years ago. We will aim to maintain the EU and international sanctions against the Russian Federation in response to the illegal annexation of the peninsula until Russia withdraws from the illegally occupied territory of Ukraine. We condemn the ongoing restrictions by Russia, as an occupying power, of fundamental human rights and violations of the freedoms of media, expression, peaceful assembly, religion, and belief, as well as the persecution of the Crimean Tatars. We express concerns over the illegally imprisoned Ukrainian citizens in Crimea, the detention, and interrogation of journalists, who speak up for Ukraine's territorial integrity, as well as the ban on international human rights organizations monitoring the human rights situation in Crimea...

Lithuanian and Ukrainian Foreign Ministers: Russia's false accusations are causing big concern (2016):²⁹⁰ "The provocation methods and accusations by Russia threaten the Normandy format and constitute a challenge for the international effort to end external aggression and military action in eastern Ukraine. The international community should respond very seriously to such fabricated accusations and prevent any further provocations by Russia, if such are planned."

²⁸⁹ <https://www.urm.lt/default/en/news/lithuanian-foreign-ministrys-statement-on-the-third-anniversary-of-the-occupation-of-crimea->

²⁹⁰ <https://www.urm.lt/default/en/news/lithuanian-and-ukrainian-foreign-ministers-russias-false-accusations-are-causing-big-concern>

Lithuania condemns illegal Russian court's verdict against Ukrainian citizen Nadiya Savchenko (2016)²⁹¹

Lithuanian Foreign Ministry's statement on the non-recognition of the Russian State Duma elections in the annexed Crimea (2016)²⁹²

SSD: Annual Threat Assessment 2014:²⁹³

Russian SVR has directed its assets in Lithuania towards collecting political and economic intelligence. This service is mostly interested in:

- Internal developments in Lithuanian political parties, and their election campaigns;
- Lithuanian, EU and NATO policy and planned decisions vis-à-vis Russia;
- Lithuania's bilateral relations with other NATO and EU countries;
- Lithuania's support for Ukraine and cooperation with other Eastern Partnership countries;
- Situation in Lithuanian economy and energy sectors, and implementation of strategic projects; and
- Lithuanian intelligence services.

Russian military intelligence service GRU generally aims to support Russian military planning and the development of Russian military industry. The priorities of GRU collection include military readiness of NATO and Allied countries, and modern technologies developed in the West that could be applied in Russian military industry. In Lithuania, GRU interests include:

- Lithuanian defence policy, defence capabilities, military equipment and military exercises;
- NATO political and military planning, NATO communication systems and NATO air policing mission in Lithuania;
- Deployment of NATO forces in Lithuania (establishment of a command centre and deployment of rapid reaction force);
- Lithuanian military and strategic infrastructure (energy and transport assets, and lines of communication);
- Serving and retired military personnel and employees of Lithuanian defence system; and

²⁹¹ <https://www.urm.lt/default/en/news/lithuania-condemns-illegal-russian-courts-verdict-against-ukrainian-citizen-nadiya-savchenko>

²⁹² <https://www.urm.lt/default/en/news/lithuanian-foreign-ministrys-statement-on-the-non-recognition-of-the-russian-state-duma-elections-in-the-annexed-crimea>

²⁹³ <http://www.vsd.lt/Files/Documents/635664369272603750.pdf>

- Lithuanian domestic, energy, foreign and security policies.

Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) is an internal security service that does not conduct foreign intelligence activities under a diplomatic cover. However, this service also collects intelligence and counterintelligence information on foreign countries and seeks to influence internal processes taking place in those countries. The states that neighbour Russia face the most intense FSB intelligence activities. The main method for FSB's foreign collection is the intelligence from the territory. It means that FSB recruits Lithuanian citizens who visit Russia and also sends to Lithuania recruited Russian citizens. FSB also conducts intelligence activities against Lithuania by using its undercover officers placed in various Russian organisations...FSB Directorate in the Kaliningrad Region conducts the most intense intelligence activities against Lithuania...

Belarusian intelligence and security services actively acted against Lithuanian interests in 2014...Belarusian secret services worked along the same intelligence lines as their Russian counterparts.

21. Luxembourg

Summary: Luxembourg is one of the founding NATO and EU nations, and one of the three Benelux states. However, Luxembourg is a small and militarily insignificant NATO state, whose primary source of economic wealth and prosperity lies in financial services. High amounts of investments from Russia make the country hesitant to implement EU measures designed to curb shady finances coming from Russia. Though Luxembourg does not wish to bar Russian finance, it supports common EU policies designed to penalize Russia for violating international law. Furthermore, Luxembourg officials expressed hope that a peace in Ukraine is possible, and that Russia and Ukraine could find a compromise over their disagreements.

I. Relationship Parameters

Investment: Due to its role as a tax haven and banking hub, Luxembourg is an important country of origin of FDI. It is considered to be among the top-3 investors in Russia, although precise data are confidential. According to Putin, in 2015 Luxembourg investment funds held \$40 worth of assets in Russia, while Russian investments in the Duchy were worth \$12 billion.²⁹⁴

Sanctions: FDI numbers include Russian money cycled back to Russia via Luxembourg. The Duchy is home to Volga Group, owned by Putin associate Gennady Timchenko; Rosneft Finance, run by Putin associate Igor Sechin; and an asset management branch of Gazprombank. With all of them under EU and US sanctions, Luxembourg is a hotspot in terms of compliance. According to Luxembourg's prime minister, it has not frozen the assets of any Russians on EU blacklists as of 2015.²⁹⁵ Luxembourg banks were also accused of laundering Russian mafia money by Hermitage Capital, a UK firm whose lawyer, Sergei Magnitsky, was killed in Russia in 2009. The Duchy froze €6.5 million of Magnitsky-linked funds.

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer, 21% in Luxembourg had a positive view of Russia.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Friendly pragmatist: maintains a close relationship with Russia and tends to put business interests above political goals.

National Perspectives (2013): In the case of Luxembourg, normative concerns over the political situation in Russia are hard to find. In a 2010 interview, ambassador to Moscow Gaston Stronck called political relations with Russia 'very very stable' and 'extremely friendly'. He stated: 'Russia is a democratic state. Russia is able to find its own way and it does not deserve comments... from outside.'

²⁹⁴ <https://euobserver.com/foreign/130589>

²⁹⁵ <https://euobserver.com/foreign/130589>

We fully respect the developments underway in Russia.”²⁹⁶ The pragmatic attitude is illustrated by the Foreign Minister Jean Asselborn’s 2009 statement: “Russia doesn’t have a veto right over the choices of countries like Georgia and Ukraine. However, it is important to take Russian concerns into account to avoid the stability and political balance in our region being endangered unnecessarily. The advantage of a strategic partnership based on mutual trust is that divergences can be approached in an open and constructive way.”²⁹⁷

EU-28 Watch (2015): In Luxembourg, the violation of international law and the annexation of Ukrainian territory were strongly condemned. But there is growing opposition to the economic sanctions against Russia, which have proven to be inefficient in achieving the intended goals. Foreign Affairs minister Jean Asselborn’s 2015 declaration in parliament points out that lasting international isolation of Russia would be counterproductive, and that sanctions cannot be a solution to the Ukrainian conflict. “We must create a new basis of cooperation with Russia to keep peace and a certain level of normality,” he said.²⁹⁸

III. Policy Documents

Minister Assleborn’s Declaration on Foreign Policy (2016)²⁹⁹

After the Maidan revolution, Russia occupied and illegally annexed Crimea, before eastern Ukraine was set ablaze. Since April 2014, more than 9.000 people have lost their lives to the conflict in eastern Ukraine, among them the 298 people aboard Malaysia Airlines flight MH17. After the terrible escalation of violence in the winter of 2014, the arrangement regarding the implementation of the Minsk Agreement of 12th February 2015 created some hope for a permanent political resolution of the conflict. Beyond demanding a cease-fire and the retreat of weapons in accordance with the Minsk Memorandum of September 2014, this package asks for a political process of decentralization and local elections, at the end of which Ukraine shall regain sovereignty over its eastern border.

Following the annexation of Crimea and because of the destabilization of eastern Ukraine, the European Union was left with no other choice than adopting targeted sanctions against the separatists and Russia. The sanctions remain a means to an end, rather than an end in themselves. They are intimately linked to the implementation of the Minsk agreements in their entirety, and can be lifted as soon as the conditions are being met (...) The full implementation of the Minsk agreements remains absolutely essential, not just to stabilise eastern Ukraine, but moreover to normalise our relations with Russia. We have to keep seeking dialogue with Russia, because, in the long run, it is inconceivable to share a continent without communicating and without working on the creation of a common, shared, space. In those areas that are not affected by the sanctions, mainly the prevention of and fight against terrorism, our cooperation with Russia can and should be enhanced. We are also well aware that a

²⁹⁶ Casier, T, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, in National Perspectives on Russia.

²⁹⁷ Casier, T, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, in National Perspectives on Russia.

²⁹⁸ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/luxembourg/>

²⁹⁹ <https://www.gouvernement.lu/5800768/Discours-de-politique-etrangere---Version-EN.pdf>

solution in Syria is not conceivable without Russia, and therefore it is crucial to sustain dialogue with Moscow.

Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs Activity Report (2015)³⁰⁰

Bilateral relations with Russia were framed by the international political context marked by crises in Ukraine and Syria. Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Luxembourg met Russian and Ukrainian leaders in the context of bilateral relations and Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the EU.

Before meeting the Russian president Vladimir Putin and the Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko, Prime Minister of Luxembourg Xavier Bettel said in an interview for Euractiv: [the Minsk Agreements are not being respected because] “both sides have made mistakes. I do not want to put the blame only on one side. It is important to see how we can move forward, because at the moment, we are all in a lose-lose situation... For the moment the pattern is sanction, reaction, sanction, reaction... Everybody in the EU speaks about the need for change, led also by the 'Exit' debate, including Brexit.”³⁰¹

Foreign Minister Asselborn met his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov. He expressed regret that implementation of the Minsk agreements remains unsatisfactory, highlighting the importance of Russia exercising its influence positively and of Ukraine carrying out its responsibilities for the local elections in the Donbass. Regarding relations between the EU and Russia, as well as cooperation with NATO and within the OSCE, Asselborn said that the continuation of a constructive dialogue must be encouraged in order to reach an even closer partnership with Russia, a key political and economic player.³⁰²

³⁰⁰ <https://www.gouvernement.lu/5921759/2015-rapport-affaires-etrangeres-europeennes.pdf>

³⁰¹ <http://www.gouvernement.lu/5186616/31-bettel-euractiv>

³⁰² <http://moscou.mae.lu/en/News/Working-visit-of-Minister-Jean-Asselborn-to-Moscow-on-13-September-2016>

22. Malta

Summary: Malta is a non-NATO EU member state. Malta is a small country dependent on oil imports, of which Russia takes the biggest share. Malta's relations with Russia are insignificant. The Maltese government emphasizes the EU's mediating role in the Ukraine crisis.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: The first important event in Maltese-Russian relations in the 20th century was the wave of Russian refugees which fled Russia after the Bolshevik revolution and settled in Malta. These refugees have been perceived positively since they were mostly urbane, highly educated and cultured people. After securing its independence, Malta established official diplomatic relations with Russia. After the fall of the USSR, various bilateral agreements across a number of sectors has been signed.³⁰³

Trade: Besides oil, one of the most important trade relations between Malta and Russia is tourism, Malta being one of the most popular summer destinations for Russians, although Russians are far from being the majority of Maltese tourists and the number of Russian visiting Malta is currently declining.³⁰⁴ Malta actively tries to attract Russian entrepreneurs and investors and both countries work on furthering their economic ties.³⁰⁵ The country is also popular amongst Russian students, especially the ones coming to Malta to study English.³⁰⁶

Energy: All electricity on Malta is produced from petroleum on which Malta is 100% dependent.³⁰⁷ Russia is its biggest importer of petroleum with a share of 21%.³⁰⁸ Malta does not import any natural gas.³⁰⁹ Malta's extremely high dependency on energy imports has influenced its policies, as the dependency forces Malta to maintain good relations with exporting countries.³¹⁰

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer, 37% of Maltese had a positive view of Russia.

Number of Russian diplomats: 10 (19 with spouses).³¹¹

³⁰³ Alshinawi, Arsalan, Malta, Chapter 16 in National Perspectives on Russia.

³⁰⁴ https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_C3/Population_and_Tourism_Statistics/Documents/2017/News2017_020.pdf

³⁰⁵ <http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20160228/business-features/the-russian-connection.604110>

³⁰⁶ Alshinawi, Arsalan, Malta, Chapter 16 in National Perspectives on Russia.

³⁰⁷ http://www.transport.gov.mt/admin/uploads/media-library/files/DAirMaltaStudyVisit_The%20Energy%20Sector%20in%20Malta.pdf

³⁰⁸ http://atlas.media.mit.edu/en/visualize/tree_map/hs92/import/mlt/show/2711/2014/

³⁰⁹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2252.html>

³¹⁰ Alshinawi, Arsalan, Malta, Chapter 16 in National Perspectives on Russia.

³¹¹ <https://foreignaffairs.gov.mt/en/Pages/Foreign%20Diplomatic%20Missions%20accredited%20to%20Malta/Russia.aspx>
<http://www.malta.mid.ru/eng/diplist.html>

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Friendly pragmatist. Malta does not have significant economic nor political ties with Russia, most significant is its interest in attracting Russian tourists.

National Perspectives (2013): For Malta, the post-Cold War era has brought changes to its basic foreign policy orientation. The earlier pro- Eastern stance had been replaced with a more pro-Western course, as exemplified by the island becoming a member of the EU and NATO's PfP, while still retaining its neutrality status. With respect to its relationship with Russia, the Maltese government, whether Nationalist or Labour, has sought during the past two decades to adopt a pragmatic position, largely focussing on securing its national, political and economic interests, as it witnessed the lack of unity among EU member states around a common approach to Russia. Russia itself sees Malta as its priority foreign partner.

Carnegie Europe – Letter From Valletta (2015):³¹²

As for the crisis in Ukraine, Malta believes that the EU should continue its mediating and monitoring role and should insist that parties to the conflict in eastern Ukraine adhere to the February 12 ceasefire agreement. Despite a pledge by Malta's Labour government in 2014 to strengthen ties with Moscow, Prime Minister Joseph Muscat made it clear that his country supported the imposition of sanctions against Russia for its behaviour in Ukraine.

III. Policy Documents

Strategic Objectives of Malta's Foreign Policy (2006)³¹³

According to this document, the top three foreign policy objectives of Malta are:

- Harness Malta's geopolitical relevance to maximise political and economic benefits;
- Make a success of European Union membership and contribute towards the construction of a European Union which gives added value to its member states and its citizens;
- Strengthen Malta's bilateral relations, in particular relations with its immediate neighbours.

The document does not mention Russia at all.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs Annual Report (2014)³¹⁴

Even though relations with Russia were affected by the crisis in Ukraine, the Embassy of Malta in Moscow is still working hard to raise the profile of Malta in Russia through various events. The

³¹² <http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/?fa=59122>

³¹³ http://www.doi-archived.gov.mt/EN/press_releases/2006/02/pr0184a.doc

³¹⁴ <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Publications/Documents/Annual%20Reports/2014/MFA%20Annual%20Report%202014.pdf>

Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation entered into force, removing Malta from the Russian list of 'offshore' countries. The Ministry increased diplomatic contacts with Ukraine and Moldova in order to demonstrate the Maltese Government's support for the signing of the Association Agreements with the EU. Malta continues to maintain that any attempt to solve the crisis in Ukraine should be based on the principles of international law and should fully respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. The Ministry has participated in EU discussions in Brussels on the elaboration of restrictive measures on Russia and continues to follow developments.

23. The Netherlands

Summary: The Netherlands is one of the founding EU and NATO member states. The Netherlands is generally too distant from Russia to concern themselves with the issue of immediate Russian threats. So far the major dimension of Russo-Dutch relations has been economic. However, the downing of the MH17 flying from Amsterdam, and Russian behavior in its investigation worsened the two countries' relations. Though it is one of the more Euroskeptic Western European nations, the Netherlands did raise a concern that Russia's behavior threatens international order and the integrity of the EU. This has led to the Dutch becoming more aware of and more concerned by Russian threats, both military and "hybrid". Furthermore, the Netherlands is hesitant but generally supportive of the common EU stance on Russia, even though the Dutch still believe that political reforms and democratic transformations in Russia are possible in the future.

I. Relationship Parameters

Distance: Dutch foreign minister Koenders considers the Netherlands' location an advantage, as it is far from "the East and the unpredictability of Russia," as well as other sources of instability.³¹⁵

Energy and trade: The Netherlands is one of Russia's main trading partners (2nd among EU states) and sources of foreign direct investment (2nd in the world). Oil, gas and other energy products constitute the most important element in the two countries' trade relations. The Dutch company Shell is a major investor in Russia, including in a large LNG project in Sakhalin. The Dutch natural gas infrastructure and transmission company Gasunie has a close partnership with Russian state operator Gazprom, which led to Dutch participation in the Nord Stream pipeline project. The former CEO of Gasunie heads the South Stream pipeline project's Amsterdam office. Finally, Rotterdam is the main transit port for Russian oil and oil products, and Russia has plans for investment in downstream facilities in the port area.³¹⁶

Normative issues: The Netherlands has traditionally seen itself as a country with an international responsibility. It is one of the few EU member states running a programme for funding of and assistance to Russian civil society (MATRA), and has not hesitated to raise critical issues on human

³¹⁵ <https://www.government.nl/binaries/government/documents/speeches/2016/11/17/>

³¹⁶ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_how_should_europe_respond_to_russia_the_dutch_view311233

rights and the state of democracy in Russia. However, this has never interfered with the defence of Dutch business interests.

Euroskepticism: One of the founding members of the Europe Coal and Steel Community and NATO, the Netherlands have undergone a 'revolution' of their Europe policy, with an increasingly defensive and sceptical attitude towards Brussels. In the aftermath of the negative Dutch referendum on the Constitution, the Netherlands has chosen a foreign policy course in which bilateral relations are favoured over supranational solutions, and European co-operation is only desirable 'when a national approach does not lead to the optimal promotion of the interests of Dutch society'³¹⁷. In 2016, Dutch voters rejected the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement in a referendum. Observers say the No camp was less motivated by Moscow than by antagonism toward Brussels and fears over chaos in Ukraine.³¹⁸

Political meddling: During the 2017 elections in the Netherlands, Russia has tried to influence the outcome by spreading disinformation, leading the Dutch intelligence service AIVD to conclude that Russia is trying to use freedom in Western societies to undermine them.³¹⁹

MH17: The downing of civilian airliner Malaysia Airlines MH17, in which 196 Dutch people were killed, was an enormous shock for the Dutch public and a game changer for Dutch relations with Russia.

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer, 8% of the Dutch had a positive view of Russia.

STRATCOM: The Netherlands are a sponsoring nation of the NATO STRATCOM COE.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Frosty pragmatist. The Netherlands has a very strong economic relationship with Moscow, approaching the importance of Germany-Russia or UK-Russia relations. However, the Netherlands does not put Russian concerns above a common EU Eastern neighbourhood policy, and it tends to raise human rights issues in relation to Russia – although not strongly enough to endanger trade and economic relations.

Views from the capitals (2015): The Dutch have consistently combined excellent economic relations with Russia with a broader critical dialogue, which has included discussions on politically sensitive issues such as human rights. Balancing the two has always been difficult, often leading to tensions... Respect for international law and support for the post-war security order are important principles in Dutch foreign policy. When the Ukraine crisis broke out, the Netherlands strongly condemned Russia's annexation of Crimea and Moscow's support for the destabilisation of the Donbas. The Netherlands worked closely together with the EU on the issue and followed Germany's lead as the main

³¹⁷ Casier, T, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, in National Perspectives on Russia.

³¹⁸ <https://themoscowtimes.com/news/russian-bear-looms-over-dutch-referendum-52333>

³¹⁹ <http://www.politico.eu/article/russia-spread-fake-news-during-dutch-election-report-putin/>

international mediator in the conflict. At first they did not favour stronger economic and financial sanctions, but after the downing of MH17, it became clear that there could be no quick return to “business as usual”.³²⁰

The Dutch policy remains moderate for several reasons. The ongoing investigation of the MH17 crash requires Russian cooperation; business lobby is wary of substantial losses as a result of sanctions; the government has not found a way to translate the “no” vote in the Ukraine referendum into policy.³²¹ Also, the Dutch still seem to believe that Russia will eventually make a successful transition to a modern law-based economy and society. However, developments in recent years point in a different direction.

European Foreign Policy Scorecards: Leader on maintaining a strong and united sanctions policy (2016), developing sanctions towards Russia (2015), promoting human rights in Russia (2013).

III. Policy Documents

Foreign Minister’s speech on international security (2016)³²²

In recent years Russia has taunted us with its involvement in Ukraine, its illegal annexation of Crimea, its criminal military involvement in Syria, its placement of Iskander missiles in Kaliningrad, its snap military exercises, cyber-attacks and hybrid threats. Russia seems to be becoming less a partner and more a strategic opponent. This huge risk must be avoided at all costs. Russia is a country with which we share many interests, such as the fight against terrorism and energy security... What we need is a business-like relationship based on our interests... But we must not be naïve. Putin himself has said he has a 19th century view of interstate relations in the 21st century. This means naked power politics, with the big countries forming a ‘concert of nations’ to share out the spoils... I still support a relationship with Russia. One we shape together in a united international alliance... We must do this through the outstretched hand of the OSCE, the fist of European sanctions and the muscle of NATO (by means of deterrence and an enhanced forward presence in Lithuania and elsewhere)... Above all, let us not forget that Russia is so much more than its leaders. There will come a day when even closer rapprochement is possible. The Netherlands is already paving the way through its people-to-people contacts and, for example, through its support for impoverished civil society organisations and independent Russian-language media.

Foreign Minister’s speech on the European Union (2015)³²³

On Europe’s eastern flanks Russia is trampling all over the foundations of the modern world order... A divided Europe is a weak Europe as far as the Russian Federation is concerned... Russia is

³²⁰ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_how_should_europe_respond_to_russia_the_dutch_view311233

³²¹ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_view_from_the_hague_an_eternal_balancing_act7146

³²² <https://www.government.nl/binaries/government/documents/speeches/2016/11/17/speech-foreign-minister-koenders-on-international-security/Speech+Minister+Koenders+on+international+security.pdf>

³²³ <https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-foreign-affairs/documents/speeches/2015/03/30/renewing-the-european-promise-speech-by-minister-koenders-on-the-european-union>

determined to undermine European unity, for example by supporting anti-European parties like the Front National and by portraying the West as the enemy... It's essential to respect the Minsk agreements. And that requires an open hand as well as a clenched fist. We must continue putting pressure on the Russian Federation, but also seek political solutions. Russia and the Russians are not our enemy, but we cannot allow the European rules on national sovereignty and the use of force to be unilaterally flouted. The EU's sanctions and joint diplomacy have an impact that the Netherlands could never achieve on its own.

Foreign Minister's op ed on free press (2015)³²⁴

Russian government has been investing in spreading disinformation to audiences both inside and outside Russia. We do not want to ban Russian television channels or news platforms, even if they are controlled by the state or are spreading disinformation. We certainly do not want to launch any counter-propaganda. What we want to do is help independent journalists interested in reporting news in Russian.

International Security Strategy (2013)³²⁵

Mentions Russia as "one of the new economic and geopolitical powers demanding a role on the world's stage", including through increased defense spending and investment in military technology.

Defence Intelligence and Security Service Report (2014)³²⁶

Russia's annexation of Crimea, involvement in the conflict in eastern Ukraine and troop build-up near NATO territory are signs of its assertive and aggressive foreign and security policy. Outside Ukraine, Russia is flexing its military muscle and sending strategic messages by increasing number and complexity of deployments of its strategic bomber fleet and navy close to NATO territory. The aims of the Russian security policy are not only to preserve nuclear equilibrium and a strategic balance with the United States, but also to maintain influence in the former Soviet republics and bring about fundamental change in Europe's security architecture. In response to increased Russian military activity, the North Atlantic Council approved measures for the military reinforcement of NATO's eastern border. Netherlands contributed by stationing F-16 fighter jets in Poland, deploying naval warships to the Baltic Sea and pledging Dutch units to NATO's 'spearhead' force. The demand for intelligence products on the Russian Federation rose sharply as a result.

³²⁴ <https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-foreign-affairs/documents/media-articles/2016/05/02/speakers-of-russian-also-have-the-right-to-a-free-press>

³²⁵ <https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-foreign-affairs/documents/policy-notes/2013/06/21/international-security-strategy>

³²⁶ <https://www.government.nl/government/contents/members-of-cabinet/jeanine-hennis-plasschaert/documents/annual-reports/2015/07/21/2014-annual-report-netherlands-defence-intelligence-and-security-service>

24. Poland

Summary: Poland is one of the EU and NATO member states which were formerly in the Eastern Block, notable for its high economic growth and strong military. Though it is traditionally suspicious of Russia, Poland's strong stance on common EU policies and complex history with Ukraine do not translate into sympathy towards its eastern neighbour. Poland's already chilly relations with Russia in the aftermath of Lech Kaczynski's death in Smolensk have been worsened by the annexation of Crimea. Poland's history left it aware that international treaties alone cannot protect the country, leading to a military build-up as a reaction to events in Ukraine. Furthermore, Poland is firm on abandoning Russian natural gas imports in favour of alternative import sources from Denmark and Norway. Naturally, Poland has shown full support to sanctions against Russia, urging the parties in the conflict in Ukraine to respect the Minsk agreements.

I. Relationship Parameters

Distance: Borders with the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad Oblast. Due to the suspension of Small border traffic (SBT), entrance to the Kaliningrad Region is carried out only on the basis of valid visa.³²⁷

History: Deep historical burden prevents normalisation of relations with Russia. Issues from the past are causing distrust towards Russia and are being translated into political as well as economic ties. Especially the crimes committed against Poles during the Second World War by Soviet authorities, the Soviet invasion of Poland in 1939, the Katyn Massacre in 1940 (which many Poles see as genocide, Russians rather as a war crime) and subsequent denial of truth about the massacre (by blaming Germans for it) have lasting repercussions on the mutual relations. On the other hand, Russia blames Poles for not showing any gratitude for liberation from the Nazi occupation.³²⁸

Investigation of Smolensk airplane crash: Russia is criticised for its failure to examine all the circumstances of the airplane crash in Smolensk in 2010 which killed 96 people onboard, among them President Lech Kaczynski and his wife Maria, the chief of the Polish General Staff and other top military officers and politicians. Moreover, the ruling party Law and Justice has long challenged the official investigation of the crash.³²⁹ Poland is considering the possibility of submitting a dispute regarding the investigation to the ICJ.³³⁰

Security services activity: Poland is of high interest for Russian intelligence services, therefore Russia is the country with extensive spy network in Poland. In 2006, Polish president Lech Kaczynski

³²⁷ http://www.kaliningrad.msz.gov.pl/pl/informacje_konsularne/opieka_konsularna/polak_w_ok/zasady_wjazdu/zasady_wjazdu;jsessionid=C6BA2DA3DF0DA1D606CE3945D18B39F5.cmsap6p

³²⁸ Cichocki, B., Poland, chapter 6 in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

³²⁹ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_view_from_warsaw_deterrence_above_all7150

³³⁰ <http://www.thenews.pl/1/10/Artykul/291622,Poland-to-lodge-complaint-in-Hague-tribunal-over-Russian-Smolensk-inquiry-FM>

dissolved the Military Intelligence Service (WSI) which was considered the base of communist-era spies. Subsequently, a report³³¹ on the operations of the WSI was published.³³² Number of Russian intelligence officers operate under diplomatic cover as well. In 2014, several Russian diplomats were expelled on suspicion of spying in favour of the Russian intelligence services. As a response, Russia has expelled several Polish diplomats for what was described as an “unfriendly and unfounded” step.³³³ Former Russian military attaché in Poland Eduard Shishmakov who was expelled for espionage is accused of participating in the plot in Montenegro.³³⁴

Diplomatic mission: Number of diplomats accredited at Russian embassy in Poland is 64, 118 with their spouses.

Migration: EU’s most popular destination country for Ukrainian temporary migrants.³³⁵ Currently, most refugees applying for asylum in Poland come from Russia, Ukraine and Georgia.³³⁶

Economy and trade: Poland’s most important trade partner from outside the EU. Poland supports the EU-Russia Partnership for Modernization. Nevertheless, Russia’s trade with Poland has halved since 2014. Following anti-Russian sanctions in 2014, Russia has banned import of Polish fruit and vegetables. Russia’s food hygiene authorities claimed it had contained unacceptable levels of pesticide residues and nitrates.³³⁷ In 2013, Poland exported to Russia agriculture products valued at 1,3 bln. EUR (6,2% of all agriculture export) – which made Russian market the third most important destination. In 2015 this value dropped to 398 mln. EUR. At the same time, the overall value of agriculture export in 2015 rose by 7,7% to 23,6 bln. EUR.

Energy: Poland opposed the Nord Stream pipeline. A liquid-natural-gas terminal LNG in Poland reducing its dependence on Russia was inaugurated in 2015. The Polish government has decided not to prolong an agreement with Russia on the purchase of gas which is due to expire in 2022; instead they started to negotiate with Denmark and Norway on the construction of a gas pipeline from the North Sea to Poland’s LNG port. In order to diversify its gas deliveries, several plans for connections in the region exist on paper, including routes such as: Poland-Czech Republic, Czech Republic-Slovakia, Poland-Slovakia, Poland-Lithuania, Slovakia-Hungary, Hungary-Croatia and Hungary-Romania.³³⁸

Military tensions: Acute security concerns of a “frontier” state with memories of Soviet takeover of 1939. Poland fears being left alone in a confrontation with Russia. Therefore, it has requested for

³³¹ https://archive.org/stream/MacierewiczReportOnLiquidationOfThePolishMilitaryInformationServices/WSI_Report_full_djvu.txt

³³² <https://www.stratfor.com/geopolitical-diary/geopolitical-diary-trying-redefine-poland>

³³³ <https://www.euractiv.com/section/europe-s-east/news/russia-orders-out-polish-and-german-diplomats-in-tit-for-tat-expulsions/>

³³⁴ <http://www.euractiv.com/section/enlargement/news/eu-calls-for-rapid-investigation-into-montenegro-coup/>

³³⁵ <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2015-10-19/migration-ukrainians-times-crisis>

³³⁶ <http://politicalcritique.org/cee/poland/2016/forgotten-refugees-chechen-asylum-seekers-in-poland/>

³³⁷ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28603140>

³³⁸ <http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/interviews/2007-russia-ukraine-and-europe-s-energy-security>

increased presence of NATO in the country³³⁹ and has increased its military spendings from 1,6% GDP in 2013 to 2,2% in 2015.³⁴⁰ As a part of Operation Atlantic Resolve, American soldiers are being deployed in Poland along with tanks and heavy equipment serving as a deterrence. The Kremlin considers this to be an aggressive step along its borders and a threat to its security. It has already deployed nuclear-capable Iskander missiles in Kaliningrad which borders with Poland and Lithuania. Russian media often heats up the atmosphere between both countries by spreading fabrications, such as the alleged crash between Polish and Russian submarines which have allegedly taken place in 2016. In fact, the the Polish submarine was anchored in Gdynia at the time.³⁴¹

Dispute over the US missile shield: Russia opposes plans to build a part of the NATO missile defence system in Poland that is due to be ready in 2018. As a response, Putin said that Russia "will do everything needed to ensure and preserve the strategic balance, which is the most reliable guarantee from large-scale military conflicts," in addition, the Kremlin has vowed to modernize the Dnepr Missile Launch Detection System located in Crimea.³⁴² Russian media also usually reminds of the presence of the Iskander missile system in Kaliningrad whenever discussion about the construction begins within NATO.³⁴³

Eastern Partnership: Polish diplomacy flagship initiative. Promoting eastern dimension in the EU, as well as within the V4 countries. Strongly supporting EU and NATO aspirations of EaP countries (including commitment to Ukraine's "European perspective").³⁴⁴ Ukraine has always been its priority country and Poland was active in supporting the Orange Revolution. Nevertheless, Poland is reluctant to provide Ukraine with lethal weapons, its military support is focused mainly on military training of Ukrainian soldiers. Poland underpins anti-Russian sanctions until the full implementation of the Minsk agreement.

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometr, 27% of Poles had a positive view of Russia.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007):³⁴⁵ New Cold Warrior: overtly hostile relationship with Moscow, willing to use the veto to block EU negotiations with Russia. Suspecting Russia of waging a new cold war against the EU. Active in shaping a more critical EU stance towards Russia. Frosty political relations with Russia that often spills over into the economic field (meat and vegetable embargo, disputes over phytosanitary norms). Poland blocked negotiations on the new PCA with Russia.

³³⁹ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS?locations=PL>

³⁴⁰ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/poland/>

³⁴¹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-russia-poland-idUSKBN14W1E4>

³⁴² <http://www.rferl.org/a/us-nordic-summit-russian-aggression/27733484.html>

³⁴³ <http://neweasterneurope.eu/articles-and-commentary/2057-from-prussia-to-russia-how-koenigsberg-the-fortress-city-became-kaliningrad-the-iskander-base>

³⁴⁴ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/poland/>

³⁴⁵ http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR-02_A_POWER_AUDIT_OF_EU-RUSSIA_RELATIONS.pdf

National Perspectives (2013):³⁴⁶ Energy security, common neighbourhood and historical issues key subjects of cooperation. Anyway, feelings between Poles and Russians are a mix of admiration, envy and disrespect, with a prevailing mistrust.

EU-28 Watch (2015):³⁴⁷ Polish-Russian relations have deteriorated due to the annexation of Crimea with no sign of future improvement. Poland is a leader in maintaining anti-Russian sanctions and supporting Euro-Atlantic ties of EaP countries. Its tough approach toward Russia is not widely shared by the entire EU. Ukraine's association remains the long-term aim, but the objective is currently seen with more realism.

Views from the capitals (2015-2016):³⁴⁸ Poland's security concerns and distrust exacerbated by Russian imperialist turn has brought their relationship to its lowest level in 25 years. Official contacts are limited. Poland is convinced that the conventional military conflict with Russia is possible, therefore deterrence is the pillar of its strategy. Anyway, it prefers sanctions to any military operations and thinks the EU should reconfirm its commitments towards the EaP countries. Conflict in Ukraine and Syria should be dealt with separately. Nevertheless, the political consensus on approach towards Russia is not as clear as it has been in the past.

European Foreign Policy Scorecard³⁴⁹ Leader on ambitious agenda in the Eastern neighbourhood, support for ratifying and implementing Association Agreements with Georgia and Moldova, promoting a tough sanctions policy and a response towards Russian aggression in the Donbas. Strong political, financial and military support of Ukraine (2016). Leader on diversifying gas supplies away from Russia and author of the initiative for an Energy Union, trying to hold Russia to its WTO commitments and pushing for EU-US cooperation on Russia (2015), pushing for assistance to EaP and visa-free travel, supporting European Commission in resisting Russian pressure on EaP countries (2014) and leader on putting pressure on Belarus for political liberalization (2013).

III. Policy Documents

Annual address on foreign policy goals (2017):³⁵⁰

Stability in our neighbourhood and beyond – in the European neighbourhood – is a key task for Poland...[Russia's] withdrawal from the deal on plutonium disposal with the U.S. was a chance to learn about Russian ambitions vis-à-vis CEE, such as, the de facto pulling out of NATO from the entire region, and drawing a dozen or so countries with their tens of millions of citizens into a grey zone

³⁴⁶ Cichocki, B., Poland, chapter 6 in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

³⁴⁶ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_view_from_warsaw_deterrence_above_all7150

³⁴⁷ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/poland/>

³⁴⁸ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_view_from_warsaw_deterrence_above_all7150

http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_sanctions_are_the_eus_only_tool311339

http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_poland_and_the_eastern_partnership_the_view_from_warsaw3038

³⁴⁹ <http://www.ecfr.eu/scorecard>

³⁵⁰ http://www.msz.gov.pl/en/foreign_policy/goals_of_foreign_policy/annual_address_2011/

condemning them instability and uncertainty. Poland will not accept such a vision of the political order in Europe, and will not condone the carving up of our continent into spheres of influence. Never again Munich or Yalta. Russia's political actions go hand-in-hand with concrete military steps. We are concerned by the expansion of the Western Military District, to which three new divisions were added in 2016. The militarization of Kaliningrad Oblast continues, with the deployment of new types of weaponry, such as medium-range missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads....At the same time, we recognize the need for dialogue with our Russian neighbour. We are going to take steps to develop social dialogue, people-to-people contacts, and cultural cooperation, as well as to restore bilateral economic relations.

Annual address on foreign policy goals (2016):³⁵¹

Russia aims to revise the post-Cold War European order and is ready to use force, as its aggression against Ukraine shows. Russia seeks to expand its own sphere of influence and inhibit democratic transition of those Eastern European countries which aspire to rapprochement with the West. It is a policy supported by the expansion of the Russian military potential and hybrid activities, including propaganda...Pragmatic and substantive relations with Russia are in the interest of Poland and Europe alike. Rather than based on one-sided concessions, however, cooperation with Russia should be built in the spirit of constructive dialogue, respect for bilateral agreements and international law.

Eastern Policy: Russia³⁵²

Since 2013, relations between Poland and Russia have lost their dynamics. The basis thereof was different attitude towards the architecture of the European security, controversies regarding the role and position of the countries of the Central Europe, as well as energy security. Differences between Poland and Russia have been exposed to the biggest extent after Russian aggression in Ukraine. Poland, fulfilling joint EU policy, limited its political contacts with Moscow – at the same time keeping open different channels of dialogue and technical cooperation.

National Security Strategy (2014):³⁵³

As a neighbour of the Russian Federation, Poland considers that both bilateral relations and NATO-Russia and EU-Russia relations should be developed on the basis of full respect for international law, including sovereignty and territorial integrity of states, as well as freedom to choose their own path of development, political and military alliances...The reassertion of Russia's position as a major power at the expense of its neighbourhood, as well as the escalation of its confrontational policy, has a negative impact on the security in the region.

³⁵¹ <http://www.msz.gov.pl/resource/601901dd-1db8-4a64-ba4a-9c80f2d5811b:JCR>

³⁵² http://www.msz.gov.pl/en/foreign_policy/eastern_policy/russia

³⁵³ https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dok/NSS_RP.pdf

Internal Security Agency Report (2014):³⁵⁴

ISA confirmed continued high level of activity of Russian intelligence services directed against Poland and linked with the Kremlin's propaganda strategy. Their aims were discrediting the position of Poland and other NATO member states in the Ukraine crisis; bringing attention to the complex history of relations between Poland and Ukraine to cause antagonism between their societies; creating and highlighting divisions among the EU and NATO members. Kremlin media spread anti-EU and anti-American statements, especially by Euro-sceptic politicians and voices speaking against further sanctions and tougher policy on Russia. The strategy relied on Russian media as well as Polish citizens representing the pro-Russian stance, and in some cases paid by the Russian state institutions.

25. Portugal

Summary: Portugal is one of the founding NATO member states and one of the westernmost EU member states. The country's distance from Russia makes it generally less aware of the issues at the Union's eastern borders. It is generally independent from Russian fossil fuels. Portugal is generally unconcerned with Russia, and it remains outside of immediate Russian interests as well.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Bilateral relations between Portugal and Russia were repeatedly interrupted and re-established, which happened for the last time in 1974 after the Portuguese democratic revolution. The countries really started to focus on improving their relations in the 1990s. Many formal improvements have been made since then (e.g. the signing of the 1994 Treaty of Friendship, high-level visits at the presidential and governmental level since 2001, regular meetings of the ministries of defence since 2004, or efforts for further military cooperation), however, these improvements have not led to significant practical outcome.³⁵⁵

Energy: Portugal does not import any gas from Russia, but since it imports gas from Algeria, Russo-Algerian gas relations are watched in Portugal. Portugal does import Russian oil.³⁵⁶

Trade: Even though Russia is only the 30th Portugal's trading partner, two areas in trade relations with Russia are important for the Portuguese – oil (which forms 80 percent of total imports from Russia) and Russian tourists.³⁵⁷

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer, 26% of the Portuguese had a positive view of Russia.

³⁵⁴ http://bs.net.pl/sites/default/files/media/rozne/raport_2015_int.pdf

³⁵⁵ Simão, Licínia, Portugal and Spain, Chapter 7 in National Perspectives on Russia.

³⁵⁶ http://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/a_power_audit_of_eu_russia_relations, Simão, Licínia, Portugal and Spain, Chapter 7 in National Perspectives on Russia.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

Number of Russian diplomats: 17 (without spouses).³⁵⁸

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Friendly pragmatist. Russia is not a priority for Portugal and the two countries do not have significant economic or political relations.

National Perspectives (2013): Russia as an area of interest has been rather neglected by the Portuguese, however, a multi-sectorial view of the challenges posed by an interdependent world, and of the integration processes in the EU and NATO, has made Lisbon much more aware of the importance of enlarging the scope of its foreign policy interests. Even though the diplomatic relations between the two countries are robust now, not much actual co-operation has taken place.

III. Policy Documents

National Defense Strategy (2013)³⁵⁹

The new Strategic Concept expresses NATO's resolve to deepen relations with its strategic partners, including the EU and Russia. It underlined the unique and fundamental importance of the strategic partnership between NATO and the EU, as well as the critical importance of bilateral partnership between NATO and Russia to European stability.

National Cyber Security Strategy Green Paper (2015)³⁶⁰

The document does not mention Russia at all.

³⁵⁸ <http://www.embrussia.ru/> (/embaixador, /diplomaticos, /militar)

³⁵⁹ https://www.defesa.pt/Documents/20130405_CM_CEDN.pdf

³⁶⁰ <https://www.mita.gov.mt/en/cybersecuritygreenpaper/Documents/NCSS%20Green%20Paper.pdf>

26. Romania

Summary: Romania has been an EU and NATO member state since 2004. The country's high domestic fossil fuel reserves make the question of energy secondary in Romania's relations with Russia. Romania's primary concern is with its immediate neighbourhood. It was supportive of a pro-EU and pro-NATO measures in Georgia, and forming a common Black Sea partnership within Europe. Moldova, Transnistria and the EU expansion are key issues in Romania's foreign policy. As Chisinau's foremost advocate in Europe, Romania's interests in Moldova's accession to the EU have collided with Russia's desire to keep Transnistrian conflict frozen. Romania remains dedicated to deeper ties with the US and NATO, and with the Black Sea partners, such as Georgia and Ukraine.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Romania had a complex relationship with Russia even prior to the unification of the two voivodeships of Moldavia and Wallachia into one country in the late 19th century. Following the WWI, Romania annexed Bessarabia and Bukovina from the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires, but lost them during the WWII. During the Cold War, Romania broke away from the USSR and pursued independent foreign policy under Ceausescu's regime, which was finally deposed in a violent revolution in 1989.

Moldova: Romania and Russia both have special relationship with the ex-Soviet Republic of Moldova. After the collapse of the USSR, a separatist Russian-speaking region of Transnistria broke away and established its own unrecognized state with the support of Russian troops.³⁶¹ Since then, the Russian-Romanian relationship has been shaped by the question of Moldova's identity as a part of the Romanian nation or that of the "Russian world", as well as the status of Transnistria. Romania remains Moldova's main advocate in the EU, emphasizing the need of Moldova's deeper European integration.³⁶²

Energy: Romania has a domestic supply of fossil fuels, making its dependence on foreign gas imports insignificant (only 30% imported from Russia), but as they dwindle, the question of Russian natural gas price hikes is raised, also warning that the Russian energy business can take over Romania's energy sphere.³⁶³

View of Russia: According to Eurobarometer, 40% of Romanians have somewhat positive view of Russia, 30% somewhat negative, 13% very positive and 11% very negative.³⁶⁴

³⁶¹ Micu, M., Romania, chapter 13, in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

³⁶² <https://www.mae.ro/en/node/19584>

³⁶³ Micu, M.

³⁶⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/finland/sites/finland/files/ebs_451_anx_en.pdf

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Frosty Pragmatist. Romania is supportive of the Nabucco pipeline project and lowering energy dependence on Russia. Additionally, Russia's role in Moldova's affairs draws open criticism from Bucharest.³⁶⁵

National Perspectives (2013): History has shaped the two countries' relationship more than anything else. Romania supports strengthening Black Sea partnerships and remains wary of Russian threat, particularly the one coming from its heavy military presence in Moldova's breakaway Russian enclave of Transnistria. Romania has started the Black Sea Synergy co-operation initiative in 2007 which tried to stress Romania's active role in regional partnership, and showed support to the Nabucco project, which aimed at transporting fossil fuels from Central Asia to Europe without using Russia as a transit state.

EU-28 Watch (2015):³⁶⁶ Romania remains suspicious of Russia and shows enthusiasm in deepening ties with the United States, especially following the events in Ukraine. Romania remains a supporter of measures employed to penalize Russia for violating international law. However, its own maritime border dispute with Ukraine and criticism of the Eastern Partnership not including Moldova make Romania's situation special. The question of Moldova is particularly troubling for Romania, as it remains the main advocate for including Moldova into further EU extension plans.

III. Policy Documents

Titus Corlatean's (Foreign Minister) statement (2014):³⁶⁷

Recent months proved that outside the confines of the European Union a forged unstable context can ignite at any time, using any reason and questioning everything: from human life to EU integration aspirations. In these circumstances, the international law and human rights are recklessly violated. We have seen this in Georgia, six years ago, we have witnessed a similar situation in the Republic of Moldova, in the bloody month of April 2009, and this year in Ukraine. Such course of action sets aside the interest of the people and their chance for a better future. Together, we must stand against this manipulation by demonstrating that EU enlargement brings development and serves the interest of the people.

Bogdan Aurescu's (Foreign Minister) statement (2015):³⁶⁸

During the past years, we have seen significant negative developments, such as the financial crisis and the economic instability; energy supply disruptions derived from political turmoil and armed conflicts, not only in Middle East and Northern Africa, but also in our own neighborhood, in Ukraine.

³⁶⁵ http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR-02_A_POWER_AUDIT_OF_EU-RUSSIA_RELATIONS.pdf

³⁶⁶ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/romania/>

³⁶⁷ <https://www.mae.ro/en/node/27503>

³⁶⁸ <https://www.mae.ro/en/node/31359>

The recent events in our Eastern neighborhood have proved once more that access to energy is not just an economic issue, but a security one as well.

Bogdan Aurescu's (Foreign Minister) speech on the annual meeting of Romanian diplomats (2015):³⁶⁹

We cannot ignore the fact that around the two organizations we are part of, a genuine belt of instability has emerged, with many hotspots, from the ingressions of the Russian Federation in Ukraine and the shift in the balance of security in the Black Sea region through the illegal occupation and militarization of Crimea in the East and the rise of the terrorist phenomenon, the growing challenges of illegal migration, various crises and state instability in the South.

With regard to the Russian Federation, the main features of bilateral relations should be predictability and pragmatism. We want a relation that should respect the legitimate interests of Romania, just as the legitimate (I repeat, the legitimate) interests of Russia should be normally respected. However, the level of interaction with the Russian state will depend on its positive involvement in solving the Ukrainian conflict and on restoring the strategic balance in the Eastern Neighbourhood. Respecting all international commitments is an absolutely necessary prerequisite to intensify dialogue.

National defense strategy 2015–2019³⁷⁰

Today, the region is marked by active conflicts and the deterioration of the relations between NATO and the Russian Federation...An important actor in the European and Euro Atlantic environment is the Russian Federation. Its actions in the Black Sea Region, infringing upon international law, questioning international order, preserving frozen conflicts and the annexation of Crimea have raised again the NATO awareness upon fulfilling its fundamental mission that is collective defense, as well as the validity of the security arrangements agreed upon with Russia at the end of the XXth century....The Russian Federation is trying to consolidate its status as a power at the regional level, its actions having an impact upon regional stability and the European path of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, and Georgia.

³⁶⁹ <https://www.mae.ro/en/node/34702>

³⁷⁰ <http://old.presidency.ro/static/National%20%20Defense%20Strategy%202015%20-%202019.pdf>

27. Slovakia

Summary: Slovakia has been an EU and NATO member state since 2004. Though highly energy-dependent on Russia, Slovakia is a firm supporter of the EU and NATO measures to counter Russian aggression in Europe, particularly in the aftermath of the annexation of Crimea. Still, Slovakia prioritizes its economic ties with Russia, which sometimes leads to backing down on certain security measures, such as the deployment of US missile shield in Slovakia. The country's transit status for energy coming from Russia to Western Europe is important for the Slovak government. Potential threats to Slovakia include presence of pro-Russian fringe elements in politics and ex-Communist politicians who may harbor sympathy for Russia. Nonetheless, when it comes to the Eastern Partnership and the EU and NATO expansion, Slovakia has expressed enthusiasm in including ex-Soviet states, which Russia believes to be parts of its sphere of influence.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Notwithstanding the communist-era, Slovakia has established a pragmatic relationship with Russia after the dissolution of Czechoslovakia. Early in the 1990s, Russia was considered a guarantee of Slovakia's neutrality and an important economic partner.³⁷¹ The vision of Slovakia as a bridge between the East and West was promoted. In addition, Slovak intelligence services and security forces closely cooperated with their Russian counterparts. This changed in 1998 when Slovakia shifted its policy to join the EU and NATO. Nevertheless, Slovakia remains one of the most pro-Russian countries in the EU.³⁷² Unlike in the Czech Republic, Hungary or Poland, issues related to the Communist past are seldom raised by Slovak authorities.³⁷³ This corresponds with the fact that there are several former communists in the government. What is more, several former StB officers and communist political Commissioners ("politrucci") hold important positions in the security structures of the country.

Pendulum policy: Slovakia does not have a conceptual or an ideological approach to Russia that would provide a ground for a clear foreign policy programme.³⁷⁴ Slovakia balances between preserving close economic ties with Russia while following EU policy against Russian aggression towards Ukraine. During the negotiations of anti-Russian sanctions in 2014, Slovakia wanted to keep some of the high-profile Russian names off the sanctions list to safeguard its interests.³⁷⁵

Tough position over Russia is kept by the President Andrej Kiska, who agrees that EaP countries should be offered a membership perspective after the complete fulfilment of EU's criteria. The minister

³⁷¹ Dangerfield, M., Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia, chapter 11, in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

³⁷² http://www.pism.pl/files/?id_plik=19695

³⁷³ https://www.academia.edu/6005353/Slovakia_s_Eastern_policy_from_the_Trojan_horse_of_Russia_to_Eastern_multivectoralism_full_text

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_slovakia_changes_course_on_russia311312

of foreign affairs Miroslav Lajčák is balancing between a strong support of Ukraine and constructive dialogue with Russia, contrary to the PM Robert Fico who is the most vocal pro-Russian politician in the country. He speaks against maintaining Russian sanctions and prefers trade ties and gas imports before punishing the Kremlin. Society is rather mentally divided in the affiliation with the West and Russia. While a clear majority condemns Russia's action in Ukraine, support for sanctions is not that strong.³⁷⁶

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometer poll, 49% of Slovaks had somewhat positive view of Russia and 12% very positive, with 28% somewhat negative and 8% very negative. However, the survey does not focus primarily on foreign policy.³⁷⁷

Energy: Energy dependency on Russia. Approximately 97% of Slovakia's gas and 98% of oil demands are covered by Russia.³⁷⁸ Slovakia is important trading gas hub in the region. It opposes Nord Stream 2 which would deprive it from transit fees. In order to diversify its gas deliveries, interconnectors between Slovakia-Hungary and Slovakia-Ukraine are now up and running, and a connection with Poland is being negotiated. All in all, diversification is of high priority, but the commercial interest of the energy companies play a key role as well. Russian company TVEL is an important supplier of nuclear fuel and will cooperate in the project to complete the Mochovce Nuclear Power plant.

Slovakia provided reverse flows to Ukraine during energy crisis and its supplies from Russia have been consequently cut by 50%. In 2014, Slovakia signed an agreement with Ukraine allowing supplies of Russian gas from EU countries to Ukraine through Slovakia. This step was criticised by Gazprom. Slovakia has expressed interest to join the project "Turkish Stream" (aiming at circumvent Ukraine) despite the fact that it will deprive the country of lucrative transit fees.³⁷⁹

Economy and trade: Bilateral economic relations are a long-term priority of Slovak policy toward Russia. Key roles are played by the Intergovernmental Commission for Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation co-chaired by foreign minister Miroslav Lajčák and Russian Deputy PM Dmitry Rogozin who is banned from entering the EU.³⁸⁰ The main pillars of the Russia-Slovakia economic relationship are gas and weapons. Russian investors with ties to Russian government are interested in acquisitions in areas of strategic importance. Russian Railways are interested in Cargo Slovakia and Severstal is interested in the US Steel company.³⁸¹

³⁷⁶ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/slovakia/>

³⁷⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/finland/sites/finland/files/ebs_451_anx_en.pdf

³⁷⁸ https://www.academia.edu/6005353/Slovakia_s_Eastern_policy_from_the_Trojan_horse_of_Russia_to_Eastern_multivectoralism_full_text

³⁷⁹ <http://www.rferl.org/a/putin-ratifies-deal-build-turkish-stream-gas-pipeline-southern-europe/28297156.html>

³⁸⁰ https://www.mzv.sk/web/en/news/current_issues/-/asset_publisher/lrJ2tDuQdEKp/content/lajcak-met-with-rogozin-on-the-eve-of-the-meeting-of-slovak-russian-intergovernmental-commission/10182

³⁸¹ https://www.academia.edu/6005353/Slovakia_s_Eastern_policy_from_the_Trojan_horse_of_Russia_to_Eastern_multivectoralism_full_text

Military relations: tend to be free of any serious security-related problems. Slovakian PM Robert Fico opposes the deployment of a radar system of US missile defence shield in Europe.³⁸² The Slovak military remains heavily dependent on Russian armaments.³⁸³ Nevertheless, modernisation of the Slovak army which will reduce its dependence is in progress. The program includes the acquisition of nine pieces of Blackhawk helicopters, two Spartan transport aircrafts and replacement of Russian radar systems. Replacement of the MiG-29 is being negotiated.

Eastern Partnership: Priority countries are Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus. Slovakia is a strong supporter of the integration efforts of Ukraine and Georgia into the EU and NATO. It is willing to help eastern countries with reforms to fulfil their commitment under the EaP. On the other hand, in relations with Belarus, Armenia and Azerbaijan, pragmatism prevails and human rights are sometimes overlooked.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007):³⁸⁴ Friendly pragmatism: tends to put its business interest above political goals and to oppose actions which might irritate Moscow. Influenced by almost complete energy dependency striking bilateral energy deals with Russia. Shares Russia's position on Kosovo. Slovakia supports EU's role in the Eastern neighbourhood, but it was against EU peacekeeping mission in Moldova.

National Perspective (2013):³⁸⁵ Pragmatic 'business as usual' approach has been sustained. Slovakia has been labelled a 'quasi-Russophile' country. Directly supporting eastern dimension of EU external relations, also within the Visegrad Group. Prioritized countries: Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus. A degree of a 'Russia-first' principle regarding the support for their EU and NATO aspirations.

Russia-cautious political parties: Slovak Democratic and Christian Union-Democratic Party (SDKU-DS) in Slovakia. Currently also Most-Híd (Hungarian minority) and SaS (Liberals). Pro-Russia camp include SMER and nowadays also the neo-nazi party LSNS.

EU-28 Watch (2015):³⁸⁶ Policy of friendly pragmatism is likely to prevail. Economic interests in relationship with Russia and almost complete dependence in energy sector. In light of the conflict in Ukraine balancing between securing its national interests and supporting unified voice in the EU, therefore preferring political dialogue as a solution.³⁸⁷

View from the capitals (2015):³⁸⁸ Slovakia had traditionally sought economic cooperation with Moscow as most of its gas deliveries and nuclear fuel for its Russia-built nuclear power plants as well

³⁸² <https://zpravy.aktualne.cz/zahranici/slovaci-nechteji-radar-usa-v-cesku/r-i:article:418934/>

³⁸³ <https://www.congress.gov/crec/2016/03/22/CREC-2016-03-22-pt1-PgH1502-2.pdf>

³⁸⁴ http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR-02_A_POWER_AUDIT_OF_EU-RUSSIA_RELATIONS.pdf

³⁸⁵ Dangerfield, M., Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia, chapter 11, in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

³⁸⁶ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/slovakia/>

³⁸⁷ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/slovakia/>

³⁸⁸ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_slovakia_changes_course_on_russia311312

as some of its defence equipment come from Russia. Following the crisis in Ukraine, Slovakia changed course on Russia and began diversifying its defence, economy, and energy away from Russian sources.

European Foreign Policy Scorecards (2013-2016):³⁸⁹ Leader on diversifying gas supplies away from Russia, supporting political reforms in the Eastern Neighbourhood through bilateral assistance, Ukraine's efforts to implement reform agenda and deal with Russian aggression, visa liberalization with Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine (2014). Slacker on sanctions attempting to protect Dmitry Rogozin, Russia's deputy prime minister, from being banned, but eventually subscribed to the common approach (2015).

III. Policy Documents

Security and Defence strategies are currently under preparation.

Focus of the foreign and European policy in 2016:³⁹⁰

In relation to the Russian Federation it is of importance to continue political dialogue without changing our approach to the annexation of the Crimea. We will also foster cooperation in the field of energy and in addressing open bilateral issues. From a political and military point of view it is not possible to find a solution to the current crisis in Ukraine without the RF. It is necessary to maintain an intensive dialogue within the EU on a common position and future arrangement of relations with Russia. The future of restrictive measures imposed against the RF for violations of international law remains an open question. For the Slovak Republic, it is of high priority to maintain its potential as a transit country for energy carriers coming from the RF to Western Europe. Despite the difficult international political situation, we are interested in seeking new forms of bilateral cooperation. Following the military strengthening of the Alliance on its eastern flank Slovakia will gradually ease pragmatic dialogue between NATO and Russia with the aim of reducing mutual tensions and building trust.

Report on the SIS activities (2015):³⁹¹

Russia: The dominant trend has been the strengthening of conservative forces within the state leadership and their interest in maintaining a high level of regulation and control over the internal events in the country. In accordance with this trend, there was a further reduction in operations of the third sector, especially organizations with foreign support that the Russian leadership considers to be the forces prepared to organize the so-called color revolutions on Russian territory. In the foreign field, the Russian Federation continued in its efforts to keep Ukraine in its sphere of influence and to strengthen its positions in Central Asia region. Russia used the Syrian campaign and the fight against

³⁸⁹ <http://www.ecfr.eu/scorecard>

³⁹⁰ <https://www.mzv.sk/documents/10182/2198827/2016+-+Zameranie+zahrani%C4%8Dnej+a+eur%C3%B3pskej+politiky+Slovenskej+republiky>

³⁹¹ <http://www.sis.gov.sk/pre-vas/sprava-o-cinnosti.html>

Islamic terrorism to distract the West from the Ukrainian conflict and to strengthen its great powers ambition.

28. Slovenia

Summary: Slovenia was a first ex-Yugoslav state to join the EU and NATO in 2004. Slovenia has expressed full support for preserving Ukraine's borders, as well as for fulfilling the Minsk agreements in Ukraine. Nonetheless, Slovenia is eager to maintain energy-focused economic ties with Russia. Moreover, the country supports lifting the sanctions imposed after the annexation of Crimea, even though the policy of supporting Ukraine's territorial integrity remains intact. Thus, Slovenes see the conflict in Ukraine as a bilateral Russo-Ukrainian issue, and not a direct threat to the EU and NATO.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: almost entirely free of the painful historical Soviet legacy. Sense of shared Slavic identity and appreciation for the contribution of the Red Army in liberating part of Slovenia. Agrees with historical narrative about the importance of SSSR in the defeat of fascism. Slovenian politicians stress "mutual respect for different opinions" in relations with Russia.

Economy and trade: Russia is Slovenian 7th largest trade partner and the 6th biggest investor in the country.³⁹² Despite the fall in trade after 2014, Slovenia still has a trade surplus with Russia. Within the EU, Slovenia has always asserted strengthen co-operation with Russia. Slovene-Russian Business Club actively promotes business ties under the banner 'Fostering the Slavic Bonds'. Therefore, it favours of lifting the anti-Russian sanctions stressing their negative impact on the economies.³⁹³ Economic cooperation is high on the agenda during regular visits of Slovenian president Borut Pahor in Moscow and vice versa. Imports consist mainly of energy, while exports are dominated by pharmaceuticals, nuclear reactors, machines and mechanical devices. Slovenia is also a popular tourist destination among Russians.³⁹⁴

Ukraine crisis, anti-Russian sanctions: Slovenia supports territorial integrity of Ukraine and advocates full respect of the Minsk agreements.³⁹⁵ It has provided TV and radio broadcasting equipment and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine due to the situation in Donbas.³⁹⁶ Russian President Putin's visit to Slovenia in 2016 has angered Ukrainians living in Slovenia, who protested in front of the Russian embassy in Ljubljana.³⁹⁷ Mykhail Brodovych, Ukraine's ambassador to Slovenia, commented on this that "these commemorative events are just a pretext for Putin to demonstrate that

³⁹² <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/slovenia/>

³⁹³ <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analyses/2017-02-15/slovenian-presidents-visit-to-moscow>

³⁹⁴ <http://www.sloveniatimes.com/russia-slovenia-s-traditionally-important-trade-partner>

³⁹⁵ http://www.vlada.si/en/prime_minister/news/a/slovenian_prime_minister_miro_cerar_and_russian_prime_minister_dmitry_medvedev_support_further_strengthening_of_economic_cooperation_between_their_countries_57/

³⁹⁶ <http://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/prezident-ukrayini-zustrivsyaz-premyer-ministrom-respubliki-38686>

³⁹⁷ <http://www.rferl.org/a/putin-seek-divide-slovenia-eu-on-sanctions-during-visit-july-30/27889575.html>

he is normally accepted in the country that is a member of the EU and NATO".³⁹⁸ Nevertheless, relations between Ukraine and Slovenia remain friendly.

Energy: Slovenia depends on Russian energy imports. Approximately 42% of gas imports supplied from Russia and 35% from Austria.³⁹⁹ Current agreement on gas from Gazprom runs through 2018.⁴⁰⁰ Slovenia has joined the Russian-sponsored South Stream arguing that it is entirely in line with the EU's energy security goals as it promotes diversification of supply routes, not suppliers. It is keen to be a transit country to profit from the fees and other Russian investments.⁴⁰¹

View of Russia: According to the latest Eurobarometr, 45% of Slovenians had a positive view of Russia.

Warm relations with Moscow have continued even as Slovenia joined EU sanctions. The close co-operation between the countries is manifested in annual meetings of their presidents or PMs. Slovenian politicians perceive their country as a bridge between the East and the West.⁴⁰² Slovenian President Borut Pahor has offered to host a venue for a meeting between the Russian and U.S. presidents modelled on the summit between George W. Bush and Vladimir Putin in 2001 (famous for a comment of G.W. about looking Putin in the eye and getting "a sense of his soul").⁴⁰³

Eastern Partnership: Slovenia supports association with EaP countries and their reform programmes as well as visa liberalisation. During a visit of PM Dmitry Medvedev to Slovenia in 2015, Slovenian PM Miro Cerar spoke out in favour of lifting sanctions and agreed on cooperation in cultural, economic and energy relations. Mr. Cerar reiterated his support for Ukraine's territorial integrity. Slovenia promotes deepening partnership with EaP countries as a precondition for stability in Europe, while avoiding their membership since it does not want to endanger relations with Russia.⁴⁰⁴

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007):⁴⁰⁵ Friendly pragmatism: tends to put its business interest above political goals and to oppose actions which might irritate Moscow.

National Perspective (2013):⁴⁰⁶ Economic interest are important drivers of Slovenia's foreign policy towards Russia. Officials from both countries stress their shared Slavic identity and are supporting wide cultural relations as well. Ljubljana was chosen as a headquarter of a new established Forum of

³⁹⁸ <http://www.rferl.org/a/putin-seek-divide-slovenia-eu-on-sanctions-during-visit-july-30/27889575.html>

³⁹⁹ <http://www.geoplin.si/en/natural-gas/slovenian-market>

⁴⁰⁰ <http://www.gazpromexport.ru/en/partners/slovenia/>

⁴⁰¹ Gower, J., Slovenia, chapter 15, in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

⁴⁰² <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analyses/2017-02-15/slovenian-presidents-visit-to-moscow>

⁴⁰³ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-putin-slovenia-idUSKBN15P1VK>

⁴⁰⁴ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/slovenia/>

⁴⁰⁵ http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR-02_A_POWER_AUDIT_OF_EU-RUSSIA_RELATIONS.pdf

⁴⁰⁶ Gower, J., Slovenia, chapter 15, in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

Slavic Cultures jointly sponsored by presidents of Slovenia and Russia. Cooperation is manifested every year by a commemoration held at the Russian chapel in the Vrsic mountain where approximately three hundred Russian war prisoners were killed during the First World War. Slovenian MEP Alojz Peterle was until 2014 a Vice-Chair of the EU-Russia Parliamentary Co-operation Committee. Slovenia was also successful in launching the negotiations on a new agreement with Russia in 2009 during its presidency in the EU.

EU-28 Watch (2015):⁴⁰⁷ Slovenia condemns Russian aggression in Ukraine and strongly supports its territorial integrity, while endeavours to maintain economic relations with Russia. Anti-Russian sanction have a negative effect on its economy.

European Foreign Policy Scorecards:⁴⁰⁸ Slacker on relations with Russia on energy issues and efforts to diversify supplies in Europe reducing dependency on Russia (2014).

III. Policy Documents

Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia (2015):⁴⁰⁹

Russia is an important market for Slovenia, which seeks cooperation in tourism, agriculture, culture and education. Slovenia will make long-term endeavors within the European Union to encourage Russia to join the circle of shared European values with a view to establishing a long-term EU-Russia partnership. Furthermore, Slovenia will call on the players in the post-Soviet region to establish cooperation, while showing respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all the countries of the region.

National Security Strategy (2010):⁴¹⁰

Slovenia will continue strengthening its alliance with the US and its partnership with the Russian Federation.

⁴⁰⁷ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/slovenia/>

⁴⁰⁸ <http://www.ecfr.eu/scorecard>

⁴⁰⁹ http://www.mzz.gov.si/fileadmin/pageuploads/Zakonodaja_in_dokumenti/Strateski_dokument_slovenske_zunanje_politike_ang.pdf

⁴¹⁰ http://www.mo.gov.si/fileadmin/mo.gov.si/pageuploads/pdf/ministrstvo/RSNV2010_slo_en.pdf

29. Spain

Summary: Spain is an EU and NATO member state located in the westernmost part of Europe. Being located far away from Russia and not affected by the same fears as the easternmost EU member states, Spain remains focused on engaging in dialogue with Russia. This, however, does not negate Spain's concern with Russian military build up and Russia's actions in Ukraine. At the same time, Spain remains skeptical over possible European expansion, and Russia's status as a strategic partner in the fight against terrorism has left a mark on Spain's attitude of hesitance in making strong moves to counter Russian threat. However, this is more of a sign of the lack of any serious ties with Russia, rather than Spanish attempts to oppose other EU member states who have real concerns over Russian threats. Economy-wise, Russia does not play a significant role in Spanish energy imports, but Russian tourism plays a big role in Spanish economy. Thus, Spain was one of the several countries to voice criticism against anti-Russian sanctions, but so far, Spain joined other EU nations in supporting Ukraine's territorial integrity.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Despite the geographical distance between Spain and Russia, and the rather limited historical and cultural ties, the relationship between the two countries is nowadays quite deep and friendly. Spain and Russia fully established their diplomatic relations in 1977, after the end of Franco's regime, even though the relationship deepened only after the end of the Cold War. Under José Maria Aznar (prime minister from 1996 to 2004)⁴¹¹, Spanish foreign policy was focused heavily on cooperation with the USA, even though he established very friendly links with Putin as well. After the terrorist attacks in Madrid in 2004 and during the prime ministership of José Luis Zapatero, Spanish foreign policy changed its focus to the "heart of Europe", while desiring national affirmation and promoting multilateralism. Spain fiercely denounced the Bush administration for its intervention in Iraq. Efforts to develop a Russia-specific foreign policy led to the signing of the "Declaration of Strategic Partnership" in 2009, which focuses on cooperation in the energy sphere, economic relations in general and tourism in particular.⁴¹² Nevertheless, Putin never fully trusted Zapatero because of issues such as LGBT rights or withdrawal from Iraq. In the last decade, Spain has been very supportive towards Russia, backing Russia's positions on many issues.⁴¹³

Energy, trade, investment, sanctions: Between 2012 and 2016, the cumulative trade in goods between Spain and Russia fell by 45,3%, mainly due to the Russian economic recession and sanctions.⁴¹⁴ Spanish exports of food and agriculture were heavily hit by the Russian embargo in

⁴¹¹ http://www.cidob.org/biografias_lideres_politicos/europa/espana/jose_maria_aznar_lopez

⁴¹² <http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/Documents/46d9-3123-declaraciondeasociacionestrategica.pdf>

⁴¹³ Simão, Licínia, Portugal and Spain, Chapter 7 in National Perspectives on Russia.

⁴¹⁴ <http://www.icex.es/icex/es/navegacion-principal/todos-nuestros-servicios/informacion-de-mercados/paises/navegacion-principal/el-pais/relaciones-bilaterales/index.html?idPais=RU>

August 2014.⁴¹⁵ Overall, bilateral economic relations, although promising in some sectors, are not particularly strong. However, it is noteworthy to mention that Spain is very popular amongst Russian tourists, who represent a priority market for the Spanish tourist industry.⁴¹⁶ The number of Russian tourists visiting Spain began to skyrocket in 2008 with half a million visitors and peaked in 2013 with more than 1.5 million. This still represents only a small portion of the approximately 60 million tourists who visited Spain last year. But Russia is the fastest growing origin market and its tourists have higher average expenses per person than others.⁴¹⁷ Regarding energy, the purpose of the 2009 deal was to further interconnect the energy markets of Spain and Russia, but as for oil and gas, Russia accounts only for 11% of Spain's crude oil imports, and no Russian gas is imported to Spain.⁴¹⁸ Spain is not a supporter of sanctions, as they have negative effect on the Spanish economy. In 2015, the then foreign minister of Spain said that the sanctions are "beneficial for no one."⁴¹⁹ Only 10% of Spaniards who consider Russia to be responsible for the war in Ukraine (59%) thinks that the EU should sanction Russia.⁴²⁰

Euroscepticism: Spaniards are amongst the most Eurosceptic countries in the EU, with almost half of the population having an unfavourable view of the EU.⁴²¹ However, that is a direct outcome of austerity policies, and in spite of that, 80% of Spaniards believe that Spain should stay in the EU.⁴²²

Eastern Partnership/EU-28 Watch: "Spain has never foreseen a scenario with the member countries of the Eastern Neighbourhood as members of the European Union as a real possibility. The Ukraine crisis, with the conflict with Russia, has only reinforced Spain's views on the question of enlargement towards these countries. That does not mean that Spain thinks there should not be close economic and political ties between those countries and the EU, but rather that the Eastern Partnership is not and should not be the first step towards an EU perspective for them."⁴²³

View of Russia: When it comes to Vladimir Putin personally, 88% of Spaniards have no confidence in him, according to the Pew Research Center.⁴²⁴ According to the latest Eurobarometer, 58% of Spain's population have a negative view of Russia (42% very negative, 16% somewhat negative). On the contrary, 31% looks at Russia positively (25% somewhat positive, 6% very positive).

⁴¹⁵ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/spain/>

⁴¹⁶ [http://www.cidob.org/en/publications/publication_series/notes_internacionales/n1_108/spain_and_the_european_uni
on_russia_conflict_the_impact_of_the_sanctions](http://www.cidob.org/en/publications/publication_series/notes_internacionales/n1_108/spain_and_the_european_union_russia_conflict_the_impact_of_the_sanctions)

⁴¹⁷ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_how_should_europe_respond_to_russia_the_spanish_view354

⁴¹⁸ Ibid., <http://uk.reuters.com/article/gazprom-repsol-idUKL357888920090303>
http://www.cores.es/sites/default/files/archivos/icores/i-icores-imp-export-gn-marzo-2015_eng.pdf,
http://www.cores.es/sites/default/files/archivos/icores/i-crudosjulio2015_eng.pdf

⁴¹⁹ <https://euobserver.com/foreign/127940>

⁴²⁰ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/spain/>

⁴²¹ <http://www.pewglobal.org/files/2016/06/Pew-Research-Center-Brexit-Report-FINAL-June-7-2016.pdf>

⁴²² http://www.gallup-international.com/web/files/richeditor/filemanager/Spain_WE_Tabs_201216_1.pdf

⁴²³ <http://eu-28watch.org/issues/issue-no-11/spain/>

⁴²⁴ http://www.pewglobal.org/2016/06/29/2-obamas-international-image-remains-strong-in-europe-and-asia/ga_2016-06-29_balanceofpower-1-04/

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Strategic partner. Among large EU member states, Spain has the least developed relations with Russia, although Putin has been careful to treat Madrid with the respect it generally accords to big states. Spain's approach to Russia is driven by economic priorities and a desire to avoid irritating the Kremlin. Maybe because it is less dependent on Russian gas, Spain supports full ownership unbundling of EU energy companies. Also, Spain is wary of engagement in the Eastern neighbourhood.

National Perspectives (2013): Official positions place Spain as a supporter of a multipolar world, where the USA is not a leading superpower, but one great power among others, namely Russia. (...) The development of a clear Spanish interest towards Russia can be categorized in two main aspects. On the one hand, the availability of opportunities for interaction in regional security issues, such as the Middle East, where Spain has been actively engaged and where Russia remains a central actor. On the other hand, there has been an overlap of security perceptions, mainly on issues of terrorism, which the post 9/11 context further reinforced. Today, due to Spain's engagement in global settings such as Afghanistan, and Russia's increasingly vital role in NATO efforts, both countries have furthered bilateral co-operation. (...) Besides high politics in the global and EU-Russia bilateral agenda, Spanish relations with Moscow have also focused on economic co-operation, investment and cultural relations.

ECFR Article (2016): Spanish diplomacy's default approach is that the incentives of engagement with Russia outweigh those of containment and deterrence. Spain continuously cooperates in common security frameworks while also trying to avoid isolating Russia and overlooking its role in key dossiers, such as Syria and Ukraine.⁴²⁵

III. Policy Documents

Official statements by the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs (2016)⁴²⁶

In relation to Ukraine, Spain's position is in favour of a political solution to the conflict, based on compliance with the Minsk Accords and full respect for international law and the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine. As regards relations between the European Union and Russia, Spain defends a balanced and constructive approach, both as neighbours and as strategic partners, which is based on dialogue and allows for open discussion on the main international issues that concern and are of interest to both parties. The State secretary also underlined the need to make decisive progress on human rights issues.

Strategy for External Action (2015)⁴²⁷

⁴²⁵ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_spains_balancing_act_with_russia

⁴²⁶ http://www.exteriores.gob.es/Portal/en/SalaDePrensa/NotasdePrensa/Paginas/2016_NOTAS_P/20160209_NOTA021.aspx

Ukraine is a sovereign country with the full right to decide its status freely among nations. This is Spain's departure point. From this stance, we inevitably understand and incorporate Russia's special sensitivity which derives from diverse factors such as the strategic value that Ukraine has for Russia and, in turn, Russia has for Ukraine; a strong emotional value; economic weight; and human closeness among a large part of respective societies. (...)

Russia's attitude in the common neighbourhood—particularly in the Ukraine conflict—has lead to considerable distancing in relations with the European Union that can only have undesirable consequences for all. (...) Spain wishes to work towards achieving a more solid relationship with Russia. Spain has the capacity and aspirations of being a key partner in the modernisation process of the Russian economy mapped out by its leaders. We also aspire to further strengthen the ties between both societies which have only recently begun to know each other better.

National Security Strategy (2013)⁴²⁸

Russia is the EU's largest neighbour and a key strategic actor of great importance to the European energy market. Cooperating with Moscow is essential to Europe's security and stability. Russia must contribute to settling longstanding conflicts in the strategic environment it shares with the Union, as this will enhance the democratic stability of the countries involved and the security of everyone. Russia must consolidate its role as a strategic partner of the EU - this will have a positive effect on the security of Spain and its partners and NATO allies and on global governance.

National Security Reports (2014–2016)

2014: The Ukraine crisis is a major challenge to European security. The situation has been aggravated by the annexation of Crimea and the decisive military support from Russia to separatist groups, which poses a threat to the stability and security of the entire Euro-Atlantic space, with possible long-term effects in the area Black Sea and for the allied countries of the East.⁴²⁹

2015: The Ukraine crisis together with the exchange of accusations between Russia and the US on Russia's violation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and the new deployment of tactical nuclear weapons by the US have generated tensions which could lead to a new nuclear arms race. There is a will on both sides to maintain diplomatic activities on WMD non-proliferation. In its 2014 military doctrine, Russia emphasizes modernization and development of nuclear forces and SLBM test launches. In 2015, Russia added forty new ICBMs to its nuclear arsenal.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁷<http://www.exteriores.gob.es/Portal/es/SalaDePrensa/Multimedia/Publicaciones/Documents/ESTRATEGIA%20DE%20ACCION%20EXTERIOR%20ingles.pdf>

⁴²⁸ http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/Documents/estrategiaseguridad_baja_julio.pdf

⁴²⁹ <http://www.dsn.gob.es/es/estrategias-publicaciones/informe-anual-seguridad-nacional/informe-anual-seguridad-nacional-2014>

⁴³⁰ <http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/serviciosdeprensa/notasprensa/Documents/INFORME%20ANUAL%20DE%20SEGURIDAD%20NACIONAL%202015.pdf>

2016: The modernization of the Russian's Federation's nuclear and ballistic weapons is a factor generating a certain degree of tension, compounding that already existing in the Eastern European scene.⁴³¹

30. Sweden

Summary: Sweden is a non-NATO EU nation that has always had a complicated relationship with Russia. Since 2014 events in Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea, Sweden condemned the act and began rethinking its defense policy, examining the country's strategic vulnerability after a series of Russian military probes in Swedish waters and airspace. Sweden's interest in Russia is primarily concerned with human rights, economy and energy, but the latter plays a far less significant role, since Sweden's energy import is very diverse.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: Sweden has been a historical rival of Russia since the times of Peter the Great and King Charles XII up to the Napoleonic wars. During the Winter War of 1939-40 between Russia and Finland, Swedish volunteers went to Finland to help defend it against Russian aggression. However, Sweden managed to avoid both world wars, and maintained a policy of neutrality in the Cold War as well, following examples of Finland and Austria by never joining NATO, unlike its other Scandinavian neighbors.

Economy: IKEA has invested substantially in Russia in the past, becoming the biggest non-energy foreign investor in the country.⁴³² Low presence of Russian goods on the Swedish market is met with asymmetrically large presence of Swedish companies in Russia, making Sweden one of the largest sources of investment in Russian economy, but without making the two economies mutually dependent.⁴³³

Energy: Sweden maintains a low level of energy import from a diverse range of sources, with renewable and nuclear energy amounting to total of 65% of its overall energy sources (34% and 31% respectively), with oil following only at 27%. However, in 2014, Russia was the biggest oil source (42% of the share of imported oil), with Norway and Denmark providing only 25% and 15% respectively, and the rest coming from Nigeria and the UK.⁴³⁴

⁴³¹ <http://www.dsn.gob.es/es/documento/informe-anual-seguridad-nacional-2016>

⁴³² http://fride.org/uploads/file/A_power_audit_of_relations_eu-russia.pdf

⁴³³ Etzold, T., & Haukkala, H., Denmark, Finland and Sweden, Chapter 9 in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

⁴³⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2014/pdf/ocp196_en.pdf

Syria: Sweden's has officially condemned Russia's and Assad's actions in Syria, stating that they threaten peace process in the war-torn country.⁴³⁵

Tensions: The sharp rise in Russian military activity in the Baltic region prompted Sweden to boost its defense spending and deepen its cooperation with NATO by 2015.⁴³⁶ In October 2014, Swedish navy engaged in a hunt for a Russian submarine that intruded into Sweden's territorial waters, but Russia denied that such incident ever took place.⁴³⁷ In 2015, Russian diplomats were asked to leave Sweden in the midst of the tensions between the two countries.⁴³⁸ In July 2015, Russian bombers have been spotted patrolling near the island of Gotland, located in the middle of the Baltic Sea.⁴³⁹ Sweden's military experts assessed that Russia aims at gaining control of Gotland in case of open warfare, alarming the nation's government that unless it is fortified, the island would be quickly occupied by Russia.⁴⁴⁰ This key security concern prompted the Swedish military to start deploying permanent troops in Gotland in September 2016,⁴⁴¹ and the process is expected to have finished by 2018.⁴⁴²

Human Rights: Sweden, like Denmark, is particularly concerned with human rights abroad and in Russia in particular. Sweden refused in the past to extradite Chechens accused of terrorism in Russia, which led to Sweden being accused of harboring "bandits", while the Swedes highlighted human rights violations in Russia.⁴⁴³ In 2013 and 2014 Swedish government criticized Russia for deteriorating human rights conditions, increasing militarization, threatening Russia's neighbours, and decline of the country's civil society.⁴⁴⁴

View of Russia:

43% of Swedes have very negative view of Russia, and another 43% somewhat negative, according to the Eurobarometer. Only 1% has a very positive view, and 12% see Russia in a somewhat positive light.⁴⁴⁵

STRATCOM: Sweden has a seconded national expert working at the EEAS East STRATCOM Team. Sweden is a partner country of the NATO STRATCOM COE.

⁴³⁵ <http://www.government.se/contentassets/6d43e67099e24441967be7c38b8888cc/statement-of-government-policy-in-the-parliamentary-debate-on-foreign-affairs-2016>

⁴³⁶ <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/policy-budget/2015/06/27/finland-sweden-russia-nato-baltics-tensions-budgets-gdp/29289941/>

⁴³⁷ <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/11/15/swedes-find-definitive-evidence-of-submarine-russians-call-them-unmanly/>

⁴³⁸ <http://www.svt.se/nyheter/inrikes/sapo-ryssland-bedriver-psykologiskt-krig-mot-sverige>

⁴³⁹ <http://www.ibtimes.com/russian-bombers-spotted-swedish-coast-report-1995862>

⁴⁴⁰ <http://www.ibtimes.com/russia-sweden-war-swedes-prepares-potential-military-invasion-baltic-island-2420967>

⁴⁴¹ <http://www.forsvarsmakten.se/sv/aktuellt/2016/09/tidigarelagd-etablering-pa-gotland/>

⁴⁴² <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analyses/2016-10-26/gotland-and-aland-baltic-chessboard-swedish-and-finnish-concerns>

⁴⁴³ <http://www.thelocal.se/20100309/25432>

⁴⁴⁴ Bengtsson, R. (2016). Sweden and the Baltic Sea region. In J. Pierre (Ed.), The Oxford Handbook of Swedish Politics (pp. 447-461). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁴⁴⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/finland/sites/finland/files/ebs_451_anx_en.pdf

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Frosty Pragmatist. Sweden's stance on Russia is characterized by criticism of internal policies in Russia, active support of the EU's Eastern Neighborhood Policy with former Soviet republics, and environmental concerns over the Baltic area. Other important factors are the Russian timber tariffs, which hit Sweden and Finland, and generally low level of dependence on Russia in terms of energy imports. However, Sweden's IKEA is among the biggest foreign investors in Russia, being the biggest one among non-energy companies.

National Perspectives (2013): Though relations between Russia and Sweden were improving in the 1990s, which reassured Sweden to maintain its non-aligned status, Sweden's increasing criticism of Russia's slip into authoritarian rule under Putin has cooled two countries' mutual relations. Sweden was a leading critic of Russia's Chechen war and the 2008 war in Georgia. The two countries' relations have also been strained by the Nord Stream natural gas pipeline, going from Russia to Germany through Swedish territorial waters with environmental concerns for Sweden. Nonetheless, Sweden tried to improve bilateral relations with Russia, particularly by economically supporting Russia's Kaliningrad enclave. Moreover, the relations have improved substantially after cooling down during the war in Georgia, and Sweden seeks cooperation with Russia in particular issues, such as environment, maintaining a pragmatic outlook in dealing with Russia overall.

Watch (2015): Sweden's position on Russia is shaped by Russia's actions in Ukraine, which were strongly condemned by the Swedish government, and growing tensions in the Baltic Sea region. The island of Gotland remains a key security flaw for Sweden. Sweden backed the EU sanctions against Russia and increased military cooperation with Finland and NATO, to which Russia responded with hostile warnings. Still, although Sweden has suspended its military ties with Russia, it still keeps the door for dialogue with Russia open, but Swedes insist that whether situation improves or worsens depends on Russia.

III. Policy Documents

Statement of Government Policy (2016)⁴⁴⁶

Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and military presence in eastern Ukraine constitute flagrant breaches of international law. This is the greatest challenge to the European security order since the end of the Cold War. The sanctions against Russia must remain in place until the terms of the Minsk agreements are met. Ukraine must be allowed to regain control over its internationally recognized borders.

Sweden's Defence Policy 2016 to 2020 (2015)⁴⁴⁷

In its report, the Defence Commission outlined the deteriorating security situation in Europe,

⁴⁴⁶ <http://www.government.se/contentassets/6d43e67099e24441967be7c38b8888cc/statement-of-government-policy-in-the-parliamentary-debate-on-foreign-affairs-2016>

particularly in light of the Russian aggression against Ukraine. Since the report, developments in the region have continued to worsen. The Defence Commission proposed a number of measures/actions for the Swedish Armed Forces. These included amongst others: a new system for the basic training of squad leaders, soldiers and sailors; upgrades of air defence capabilities; a reorganisation of the land forces into two mechanised brigades; increased presence in the Baltic Sea and on the island of Gotland; increased quality of home guard units; efforts to reinvigorate civil defence; a modern psychological defence; enhanced cyber capabilities and long range precision strike capability.

Security Service Yearbook (2014)⁴⁴⁸

In 2014 the Security Police could state that the biggest intelligence threat against Sweden comes from Russia. Russia's espionage against Sweden is extensive. It has also increased in connection with the crisis in Ukraine. Illegal intelligence operations against targets in Sweden have increased. Such operations are often carried out by intelligence officers, who hide behind a diplomatic façade. Security Service counterintelligence operations are an important instrument to meet this threat; and another is a vigilant public.

⁴⁴⁷http://www.government.se/globalassets/government/dokument/forsvarsdepartementet/sweden_defence_policy_2016_to_2020

⁴⁴⁸http://www.sakerhetspolisen.se/download/18.4c7cab6d1465fb27b01f1a/1426682274489/Arsbok2014_webb_slutgiltig.pdf

31. The United Kingdom

Summary: The United Kingdom is a key EU and NATO member and a country with a UN Security Council permanent membership. The UK was quick to condemn Russia's actions in Ukraine, as well as in Syria, and its firm stance remains unchanged even after the political reshuffle following the 2016 'Brexit' referendum. Russia does not play a key role in British security or international policy, but Britain is aware of threats posed by Russia in Europe and the Middle East, and it is an active member of NATO efforts to counter these threats.

I. Relationship Parameters

History: The United Kingdom has been both an ally and a rival of Russia throughout history. The UK became an ally of the Soviet Union in the WWII, but the two countries maintained a hostile stance towards each other during the Cold War.

Economy: The United Kingdom is a major global financial and economic center, whose many companies saw great opportunities in expanding trade with Russia. However, they often encounter bureaucratic hurdles and harassment by Russian authorities, resulting in controversies that negatively shape the perception of Russia. A high profile case was the TNK-BP, which was consequently acquired by Rosneft,⁴⁴⁹ despite BP's enthusiasm over TNK's long-term prospects.⁴⁵⁰ Royal Dutch shell encountered similar issues on the Sakhalin-II project, being accused of causing environmental damage.⁴⁵¹

Energy: The United Kingdom does not depend heavily on energy imports, having its own carbon fuel reserves available. Its natural gas imports come primarily from Norway and Qatar, however, more domestic resources may become available with the advance of hydraulic fracturing.⁴⁵²

Sanctions: The United Kingdom has shown an overwhelming support for sanctions against Russia following the illegal annexation of Crimea and the conflict in the eastern Ukraine. Moreover, the political challenges following the Brexit vote in 2016 did little to change the Conservative government's stance on the issue.⁴⁵³

Tensions: Russian jets have been known to patrol areas near or in the British territorial waters. In September 2015, Russian nuclear bombers have been spotted approaching the UK airspace and were intercepted by British jets.⁴⁵⁴ A year later a similar incident occurred in the same area near Shetland isles.⁴⁵⁵ Crossing of the Admiral Kuznetsov aircraft carrier on the way to and from Russia's operation in

⁴⁴⁹ <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-rosneft-tnkbp-deal-idUKBRE92K0IX20130322>

⁴⁵⁰ David, M. Ireland and the United Kingdom, Chapter 4 in M. David, J. Gower and H. Haukkala, 'National Perspectives on Russia: European Foreign Policy in the Making?', Routledge 2013.

⁴⁵¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2006/oct/04/russia.oilandpetrol>

⁴⁵² http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2014/pdf/ocp196_en.pdf

⁴⁵³ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/11/18/theresa-may-vows-to-keep-pressure-on-russia-amid-fears-over-dona/>

⁴⁵⁴ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/defence/11859300/RAF-Typhoons-intercept-Russian-Blackjack-bombers.html>

⁴⁵⁵ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/09/22/britain-sends-typhoon-jets-to-intercept-russian-bombers-near-she/>

Syria in 2016 and 2017 caused high alertness in the Royal Navy,⁴⁵⁶ but was met with ridicule by some British tabloid media⁴⁵⁷ and with alarm by other. In 2011, Admiral Kuznetsov already violated the country's territorial waters in Moray Firth near north-eastern Scotland, causing the Royal Navy to deploy HMS York and causing concern over dumping waste near the coast.⁴⁵⁸

War in Syria: Russia's bombing campaign in Syria has been met with condemnation both from the British government and public opinion in Britain. In 2015 PM Cameron accused Iran and Russia of bolstering Assad's regime in Syria⁴⁵⁹ and called for Assad's prosecution for war crimes.⁴⁶⁰ The post-Brexit referendum, which caused significant political upheaval in the UK, did little to change this stance. PM May condemned Russia over its actions in Syria, and called for Russia to be pressured in order for killings in Syria to stop.⁴⁶¹ Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson was among the most visible public figures to condemn Iran and Russia during the siege of Aleppo, accusing them of violating the international humanitarian law, and causing the city's residents to suffer.⁴⁶²

View of Russia: Britons maintain predominantly somewhat negative view of Russia (42%), with 23% having a somewhat positive view, 20% very negative, and 4% very positive.⁴⁶³

STRATCOM: The UK has a national seconded expert working at the EEAS East STRATCOM Team. The UK is a sponsoring nation of the NATO STRATCOM COE.

II. Expert Assessment

Power Audit (2007): Frosty Pragmatist. The United Kingdom demonstrated a firm stance against Russia in political sphere, imposing restrictions upon Russian officials following the murder of Alexander Litvinenko, and by refusing to extradite political asylum seekers residing in Britain. At the same time, Britain remains a place of choice for many Russians to live, and the country became the second largest investor in the Russian economy in 2006.

National Perspectives (2013): Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Britain insisted on further democratization and reforms taking place in Russia, looking for a stable and reliable partner to the east. However, the war in Iraq and the UK's previous positions on the wars in Chechnya, as well as the NATO's operation in Kosovo, cooled the two countries' relations. However, a major event that shaped them for years to come was the murder of Alexander Litvinenko in London in 2006. The UK's refusal to extradite people wanted by Russian authorities, such as the leader of Chechen separatists Akhmed Zakayev or late Russian oligarch Boris Berezovsky, was used by Russia as a justification to harbor

⁴⁵⁶ <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/russian-ship-shame-only-extended-9690129>

⁴⁵⁷ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3861166/It-s-Putin-s-Russian-rustbucket-30-year-old-ageing-aircraft-carrier-sailed-menacingly-close-Britain-poor-condition-frequently-plagued-breakdowns.html>

⁴⁵⁸ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2073901/HMS-York-scrambled-Scotland-Russian-fleet-security-scare.html>

⁴⁵⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/29/david-cameron-syria-uk-us-russia-iran-assad-cbs-putin-rouhani>

⁴⁶⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/27/assad-face-justice-stay-short-time-cameron-syria-un>

⁴⁶¹ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/10/20/theresa-may-condemns-russian-aggression-as-royal-navy-monitors-w/>

⁴⁶² <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/aleppo-battle-latest-syria-civil-war-boris-johnson-russia-iran-bashar-al-assad-a7477971.html>

⁴⁶³ https://ec.europa.eu/finland/sites/finland/files/ebs_451_anx_en.pdf

Litvinenko's alleged murderers. The 2008 Russian-Georgian war was met with further harsh criticism by Prime Minister Brown, who urged the EU to seek further energy independence from Russia. However, none of this stopped the new Conservative government from trying to improve relations with Russia, as the Prime Minister Cameron's 2011 visit to Moscow has demonstrated.

EU-28 Watch (2015): Though Britain is highly critical of Russia's recent actions in Ukraine, it is commonly held that the EU was too eager to provoke Russian response by its diplomatic actions in Ukraine, and any direct military confrontation with Russia is seen as highly undesirable. In British context, such events are seen in the light of the constant political disagreements between London and Brussels. Thus, further expansion of the EU is met with hostility in Britain, particularly due to anti-immigrant stance of some right-wing organizations and parties, such as the UK Independence Party (UKIP).

III. Policy Documents

National Cyber-Security Strategy 2016–2021 (2016)⁴⁶⁴

Much of the most serious cyber crime – mainly fraud, theft and extortion – against the UK continues to be perpetrated predominantly by financially motivated Russian-language organised criminal groups (OCGs) in Eastern Europe, with many of the criminal marketplace services being hosted in these countries.

National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015 (2016)⁴⁶⁵

The resurgence of state-based threats; and intensifying wider state competition is currently demonstrated most clearly in the actions of Russia in Syria and Ukraine. Russia continues to invest considerable sums in new military capability. Foreign intelligence agencies continue to engage in hostile activity against the UK and its interests. More generally, competition between states in the Middle East, South Asia and East Asia brings ongoing risks of miscalculation and conflict.

Ministry of Defence Annual Report and Accounts 2013–2014 (2014)⁴⁶⁶

The UK suspended the vast majority of its bilateral defence cooperation with Russia following the Ukraine crisis (the exception being where there are Treaty obligations or the engagement is of a commemorative nature). Since then working closely with NATO partners, the UK MOD has built on a well-established relationship with Ukraine and increased cooperation designed to support defence reform, good governance (including anti-corruption) and strategic communications.

⁴⁶⁴ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/567242/national_cyber_security_strategy_2016.pdf

⁴⁶⁵ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/575378/national_security_strategy_and_strategic_defence_security_review_annual_report_2016.pdf

⁴⁶⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/381064/MOD_AR13-14_webversion.pdf

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