

Europe in the Changing World: Challenges, Priorities and Research Collaboration

- Location & time: University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand; 25–27 September 2008
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Discovering the Baltics via Estonia

Theoretical, Structural and
Operational Dimensions of
Perspective Cooperation

A Baltic Maori Estonian Kiwi...



“[After the win in Australia in 1957] Next day I read in the Melbourne newspaper that the New Zealand Maori, Sarapu, had won the Australian chess championship.” [1]

[1] Ortvin Sarapu, *Mr. Chess*, New Zealand Chess Supplies Ltd, 1993, p.28

Is being 'small' a disadvantage?



In April 1979, for the then New Zealand Ambassador in the USSR Jim Weir Estonia appeared to be similar to Scandinavia; he “encountered nothing so sophisticated anywhere else in the Soviet Union”.^[2]



[2] Jim Weir, *A New Zealand Ambassador's Letters from Moscow* (Auckland, London, Sydney, Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton, 1988), p. 265.

A “boomtown” where “Prague meets Houston, except that Houston’s economy is cool by comparison”.^[3]

[3] John Tierney, ‘New Europe’s Boomtown’, in *The New York Times*, 5 September 2006.



Main Variables of This Study (Part 1)

Dependent (response) variable – New Zealand multi-dimensional interactions with the post-Soviet Baltic Republics, particularly with the Republic of Estonia.



Main Variables of This Study (Part 2)



Manipulated (independent) variable – Estonia, a democratic, transparent, free-market state, can be chosen as a gateway for New Zealand politics, business, scientific circles and the public in their endeavours to succeed in the post-Soviet Baltic region of the EU.

The Concept of 'Gateway'

The 'Hub'/'Gateway'

Concept – an idea to choose (formally or informally) the best possible place in a given region, which is seen as the most advantageous to be serving as a base for establishing one's stable presence in the area.



Research Questions

- Is it necessary for New Zealand to promote its image, business interests, scientific achievements and political values in the less known region of the Baltic States?
- Does an idea to choose one of the three Baltic States as a 'hub' for promoting New Zealand's image, business interests, scientific achievements and political values in the Baltic region of the EU have a perspective?
- Can Estonia be considered/recommended to become such a 'hub'?

Research Angles

Dimensions

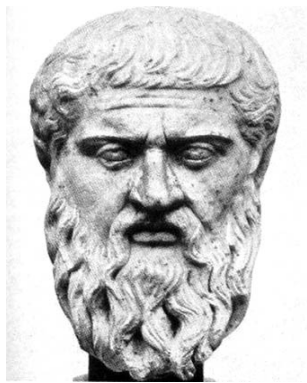
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Theoretical

Structural

Operational

Theoretical Dimension



Theoretical dimension of analysis is employed to pick out some existing theoretical concepts that are relevant to this particular research work and combine them in a larger framework where majority of interactions under study occur or may occur.

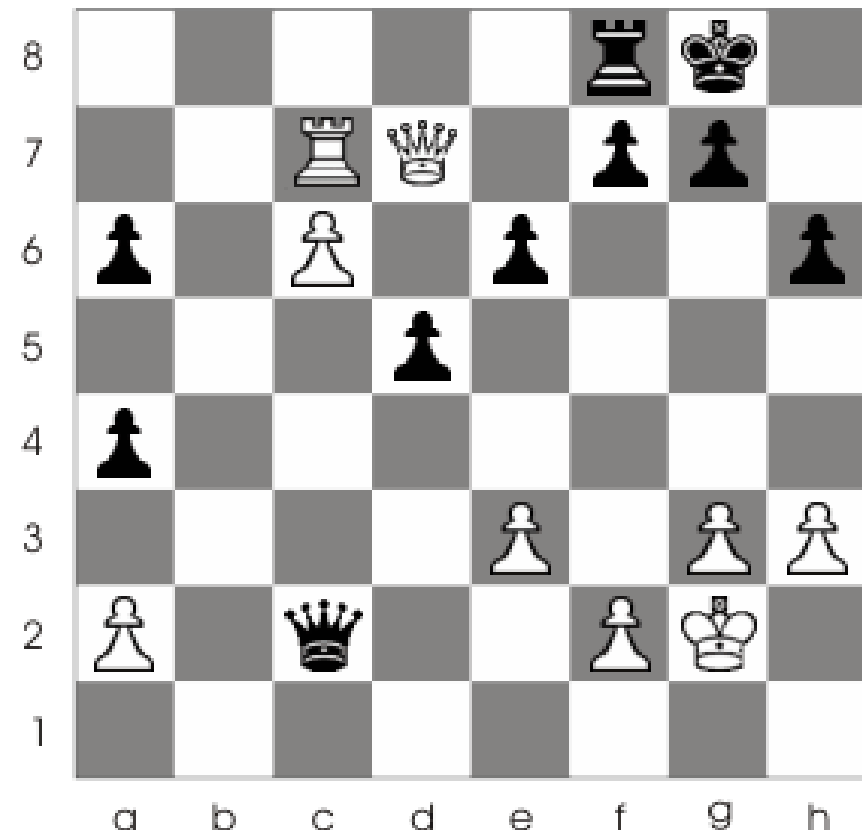
Theoretically...

- Signs of classic *functionalist* strategy in the broader sense, not only related to the European integration, by promoting and developing “shared identities” and getting involved into “cross state cooperation on a series of functional matters”. [4]
- Reflections to act in a distinct ‘*intergovernmental*’ way make the Baltics significantly more ‘distinguishable’ among the other newcomers to the EU.
- *Regional* experts within the EU and outside of the EU (active participations in the Baltic Assembly and the Community for Democratic Choice.

[4] Richard Herrmann and Marilyn B. Brewer, ‘Identities and Institutions: Becoming European in the EU’, in *Transnational Identities: Becoming European in the EU*, ed. by R.K. Herrmann, T. Risse and M.B. Bremer (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), p. 1.

Structural Dimension

Structural dimension is understood as a tool to take a ‘hi-resolution’ snap-shot of the current *status quo*. It is of a static nature that allows scrutinising the settings, numerous elements of political, business and social cultures, legal structure, proven qualities of a subject as well as visible potential to react in accordance to the rules.



Structurally... (1st segment)

Table 1: New Zealand Total Export Merchandise Trade with the Baltic States, Finland, Georgia, Poland and Ukraine
(FOB NZ\$, Source: Statistics New Zealand)

Year/country	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Estonia	9,075,297	1,926,482	2,416,249	3,009,840	2,185,126
Latvia	5,141,105	3,785,459	2,393,049	4,130,003	4,019,069
Lithuania	8,648,963	7,404,658	7,460,073	11,499,960	8,151,653
<i>Total Baltics</i>	<i>22,865,365</i>	<i>13,116,599</i>	<i>12,269,371</i>	<i>18,639,803</i>	<i>14,355,848</i>
Ukraine	615,574	1,683,840	3,330,029	7,692,205	13,523,246
Georgia	6,849,829	16,800,044	4,381,914	11,910,458	13,668,300
Finland	15,846,541	18,952,737	20,957,746	25,301,895	25,097,480
Poland	21,861,328	15,269,885	15,484,734	13,983,104	19,092,507

Structurally... (2nd segment)

Table 2: New Zealand Total Import Merchandise Trade with the Baltic States, Finland, Georgia, Poland and Ukraine
(CIF NZ\$, Source: Statistics New Zealand)

Year/country	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Estonia	431,668	632,401	1,195,050	2,713,031	653,006
Latvia	530,717	855,898	1,328,623	1,140,463	896,031
Lithuania	96,226	366,618	212,797	696,495	815,999
<i>Total Baltics</i>	<i>1,058,611</i>	<i>1,854,917</i>	<i>2,736,470</i>	<i>4,549,989</i>	<i>2,365,036</i>
Ukraine	2,735,151	4,180,967	6,804,901	6,170,623	4,420,211
Georgia	92,761	94,181	163,342	464,343	38,291
Finland	137,521,234	204,912,429	183,649,290	163,562,0015	147,113,489
Poland	14,381,933	23,901,440	35,938,485	24,415,618	30,612,083

Structurally... (3rd segment)

Table 3: Index of Economic Freedom^[5]

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
New Zealand	3	3	3	3	5
Estonia	6	6	12	15	12
Latvia	45	36	50	37	41
Lithuania	32	24	27	24	22

Basic components: Business freedom, trade freedom, fiscal freedom, freedom from government etc.

^[5] *Index of Economic Freedom Official Website*, available from
<http://www.heritage.org/research/features/index/chapters/htm/index2007_execsum.cfm> [accessed 30 September 2007],
<http://www.heritage.org/research/features/index/searchresults.cfm> [accessed 30 September 2007],

Structurally... (4th segment)

Table 4: *Freedom of the Press*^[6]

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
New Zealand	1-13 (free)	8 (free)	10 (free)	10 (free)	9 (free)
Estonia	14-46 (free)	28 (free)	24 (free)	17 (free)	16 (free)
Latvia	14-46 (free)	28 (free)	24 (free)	31 (free)	31 (free)
Lithuania	14-46 (free)	33 (free)	30 (free)	26 (free)	29 (free)

^[6] *Freedom House Official Website*, available from <<http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/fop/2007/pfscharts.pdf>>, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=271&year=2006>, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=204&year=2005>, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=203&year=2004>, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=197&year=2003> [accessed 2 October 2007].

Operational Dimension



Operational dimension has a definite nature of dynamics. Its 'lenses' are to be set up to see how well the paradigm under study realises its potential while working within the static set of coordinates and responding to the dissertation's research questions. This dimension is planned to be a core methodological tool in finalising the paper's outcome from a practical point of view.

Survey – Standard Questionnaire

Note: a list of interviewees was created to reflect equal representation of the two sides on the basis of mirroring a counterpart's position/level/societal status whenever it was possible. Students – future elites of the region.

	Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania	New Zealand	Total (to date)
Elites	8	2	1	7	18
Students	6	0	12	11	29

Trends: the Baltics vs. New Zealand

- tendency to not overemphasize the issue of isolation;
- sufficient level of self-respect;
- general readiness to cooperate;
- desire to start working on a small number of projects;
- the issue of isolation is linked together with a fear to lose current markets;
- level of understanding of the issue varies (for example, students – elites);
- general readiness to cooperate;

Patterns: the Baltics vs. New Zealand

- recognition of New Zealand's achievements;
- acknowledging New Zealand's reputation;
- 'like-mindedness';
- not forgetting to acknowledge a neighbouring country (Estonians on Latvia);
- what are the areas of cooperation?
- knowledge of the region (students);
- recognition of the region's potential;
- lack of information on the Baltics;

Mart Laar, former PM of Estonia

‘The reputation of New Zealand is positive as one of the radical reformers in the world, whose experiences were important for Estonia in transition process’. [4]

[4] Mart Laar, Interview with author, 18 February 2008



Indulis Bērziņš, former Foreign Minister of Latvia



‘We see you as partners and experts in this region, and we want to provide you with all kind of expertise related to our region. [...] We consider New Zealand as a very important partner’. [5]

[5] Indulis Bērziņš, interview with author, 21 May 2007

Saaremaa vs. Whangaparaoa, or What are we waiting for?

