



Vilnius University



Institute of International Relations & Political Science  
European Studies Center

# Small States in the International Politics: The Baltic States Case

## COURSE SYLLABUS

2018/2019 ACADEMIC YEAR  
SPRING SEMESTER

INSTRUCTOR: GEDIMINAS VITKUS  
e-mail: [gediminas.vitkus@tspmi.vu.lt](mailto:gediminas.vitkus@tspmi.vu.lt)  
website : <http://web.vu.lt/tspmi/g.vitkus>

## Rationale of the Course

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are often seen as a single unit of the “Baltic states”, which is justified when one talks about their recent history, their geopolitical situation or simply their small size. After all, the three states have been fully integrated in the Soviet Union for more than half a century, they all have regained independence and built their nation states from scratch almost a quarter of century ago and they all have joined numerous international institutions, including the EU and NATO a decade ago. Today Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia form a fascinating part of Europe and one of mutually best integrated regions of the European Union. And all that makes these countries valuable study subject. Their experience could be especially interesting for those who are interested in fate of the smaller nation-states in the modern globalized world. A special emphasis is put on original and innovative steps of these small countries in micro and macro-regional level in order to increase their own security and prosperity.

## Course Structure

The purpose of this course is to introduce students into experience of the Baltic States Security and Foreign Policies and to make them familiar with most recent developments in order to sensibilise them to the policy dilemmas which arise in front of decision-maker in the Baltic States. Accordingly to above mentioned purpose the course is subdivided into the following modules:

1. Small States Studies – Theoretical Background
2. Introduction into Historical Background of the Baltic States
3. Return to the Western World: the Baltic States in 1990-2004
4. Security and Defence of the Baltic States
5. Foreign and European Policy Strategies
6. The Baltic States and Their Neighborhood
7. The Baltic States Case: Conclusions for the Small State Studies

## Readings

Every week the instructor will provide information on main and additional readings for the next class. As a rule all necessary materials are available at the Vilnius University Virtual Learning Environment.

## Requirements/Grading

Final grades in this course will be based on regular attendance, quantity and quality of class participation/discussion of each week's readings (40%) and the final exam (60%). The class routine might be periodic in class quizzes (announced and unannounced) covering the readings for which students were responsible and materials that were covered in past classes.

## Classroom Policies

Attendance is mandatory. Failure to attend more than three classes automatically leads to reduction of the final grade by 1 point. Postponement of exam or other assignments will not be permitted except as provided by the University regulations. No food in class.