

# I. STRATEGINĖS VISUOMENĖS SAUGUMO IR POLICIJOS RAIDOS PROBLEMAS

## SECURITY, TRANSITION PROCESSES AND INTEGRAL EUROPEAN CULTURAL SPACE: REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE BALTIC AND OTHER EAST – AND CENTRAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

**Prof. habil. dr. Borisas Melnikas**

Vilnius Gediminas Technical University  
Department of International Economy and Management  
Saulėtekio al. 11, 2040 Vilnius  
Ph. 2744878  
E-mail melnikas@vv.vtu.lt

*Submit to publish: 10 November, 2004.*

*Prepared to publish: 15 December, 2004.*

**Keywords:** Security, transition, integral cultural space, EU enlargement, political, economic, social development.

### *Abstract*

The purpose of this paper is to examine the theoretical background to the regional economic and social development in the context of development of integral European cultural space. The main trends and tendencies of the economic, political, social transition processes in the Eastern and Central Europe are analyzed. Possibilities and prospects of the regional economic and social development in the Baltic region are discussed. Problems and conflicts arising in the situation of the development of the integral cultural space in Europe are described.

The publication also presents the outcomes of the research done over the recent several years, dedicated to the diagnostics of the problems of transformations as well as of national and international security in various regions and countries of Central and Eastern Europe, especially in Baltic countries. The main attention is dedicated to the regional economic and social development in the Baltic countries in context of the integral European cultural, political, economic and social space.

## Introduction

A characteristic feature of the contemporary époque is intense processes of globalization, embracing all spheres of political, social and economic development and manifesting in all regions of the world. In the process of globalization a society of a new type is being formed, with its typical new values and new striving, which creates new patterns for lifestyle and is confronted to new problems and searches for solutions to these problems.

Globalization processes are very well showing themselves in the modern Europe. It is quite possible to state that the key-feature of globalization in Europe is the fact that an *integral European society* is being born, which creates and builds on an *integral cultural space*, as well as *integral spaces for social, economic, political, technological, ecological and information development*.

This development of the integral cultural space in Europe not only makes preconditions for basic change in life environment and conditions of all European nations, but also determines the fact that a brand new quality is being shaped, both of the society itself and of each European citizen.

The development and further growth of the integral cultural space in Europe is being influenced by a great number of diverse factors. Among these factors as very important appear those related to the expansion of the European Union and to transformation processes in Eastern and Central Europe, meaning that integration of Eastern and Central European countries to the European Union not only indicates the *quantitative growth of the European Union* (increase in the number of member states, the number of their population, overall territories and economic potential) but also *qualitative transformation in the entire Europe*. By the way, this particular consideration that integration of the Eastern and Central European countries is directly influencing *quantitative changes in the entire Europe* demonstrates the significance of the factors mentioned above to the formation of the integral cultural space in Europe.

The development of the integral cultural space in Europe, taking into account the situation of the integration of Eastern and Central European countries to the European Union, is very complex and conflicting process. On one hand, this process opens numbers of new opportunities and perspectives for societal advancement *in all Europe*, including the *countries of Eastern and Central Europe*. On the other hand, this process is inevitably causing *new problems and new conflicts*, and their solutions require that an *adequate policy* should be created, including the sphere of culture. This means that *identification of the new challenges for cultural policies and understanding of the essence of these challenges, as well as capability to properly treat them*, makes them *tasks of a high priority* in the situation of the growth of the European Union.

This publication is examining relevant issues of the *development of European cultural space and regional economic development in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, especially in Baltic countries*. The publication also presents the out comes of the research done over the recent several years, dedicated to the *diagnostics of the problems of transformations* as well as of *national and international security* in various regions and countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The main attention is dedicated to the *regional economic and social development in the Baltic countries* in context of the integral European cultural, political, economic and social space.

The *objective* of the research is to evaluate *new dangers*, witch could tantalize the security of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, particularly Baltic, now days.

Among main *research objectives* the following can be identified:

- clarification of integral European cultural space *concepts*,
- clarification of national and international security *concepts*, with regard to priorities of globalization processes and peculiarities of political, social and economic transformations happening in various regions,

- defining *typicalities* of transformations occurring in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and assessment of the *outcomes* of transformations, with regard to circumstances of national and international security,
- forecast of preconditions developed as a result of transformations for *new threats* to arise, and evaluation of the meaning and role of these threats,
- defining ideas designed for *prevention* of emerging threats.
- defining ideas designed for *regional economic and social development of Baltic countries in the European Union system and in the development context of Nordic European and Baltic Sea region countries*,
- defining ideas designed for *new research activities* in the area of regional development of Baltic countries in the context of integral European cultural space.

The importance of the tasks mentioned earlier suggests that theoretical and practical studies designed to better conceive and solve them can be considered as relevant both in scientific and practical sense.

### **Processes of the development of the integral cultural space in Europe**

**The integral cultural space in Europe: the main definitions.** The development of the integral cultural space is a striking sign of the contemporary society in Europe, which allows making a complex definition of political, social, economic and technological process development [3, 9, 23, 31].

The integral cultural space in Europe can be perceived as a portmanteau concept.

The easiest way is to see *the integral cultural space in Europe as a general system of priority values, stereotypes of social behavior, lifestyle patterns and moral and spiritual standards, typical to all layers of the European countries*.

Such definition of the integral cultural space demonstrates a very important factor: the *integrity* of the cultural space can be understood as *affinity* of priority values, stereotypes of social behavior, lifestyle patterns and moral and spiritual standards to all societal layers in all European countries. Thus, it is possible to state that the level of the affinity can determine the integrity of the whole cultural space. The more *likeness* can be seen within the systems of values, behavior, lifestyle patterns and standards of different countries and societal layers, the more integral can be their common cultural space be understood. And the opposite: if the systems of values, behavior, lifestyle patterns and standards of different countries and societal layers *do not suggest the idea of common features or suggest the picture of great differences*, one may say that the society of these countries *does not share* the integral cultural space.

When giving comments on the concept of the integral cultural space, it is necessary to accentuate several conditions. First, this definition suggests that one might acknowledge the existence of *different* systems values, stereotypes of social behavior, lifestyle patterns and moral and spiritual standards, typical to different countries and societal layers. Similarity or affinity of different systems can be comprehended as an *assumption for association of different cultural spaces into integral cultural spaces*. Next, this definition demonstrates the idea that *the integral cultural space* conveys the situation where *all key-elements* of cultural spaces of different countries and societal layers: this means that the main precondition for the integral cultural space formation is a high level of *its internal integrity*. Ten, this definition implies that the integral cultural space creates a situation where *specific features* of particular countries or societal layers may gradually *lose* their influence on the further growth of these cultures: the critical role of each country's and societal layer's development falls on the processes that start inferring as *general processes of the integral cultural space*.

Understanding of the problems mentioned above allows us to apply the aforementioned concepts of the integral cultural space in the cases when various problems of European integration and expansion of the European Union arise.

Development of the integral European cultural space as form of processes of the creation of global economy as well as global information society and new quality of human resource could be defined [2, 11, 22, 30, 36, 38, 41].

**Problems and conflicts arising in the situation of the development of the integral cultural space in Europe.** During the development of the integral European cultural space, in the situation of European integration and growth of the European Union, a great number of various *problems* related to this development emerge [1, 7, 11, 19, 32, 34, 38]. These problems are very diverse, and they demonstrate a very diverse scale of reasons causing them and a diverse level of their importance; however, it is necessary to consider them, when aiming in consecutive development of processes of the actual integration into Europe.

Among main problems emanating in the development of the integral cultural space, the following can be identified:

1. *Immense cultural differentiation* among different countries, regions and social layers: the differentiation of this kind is influenced by way too serious differences within their *economic development* and *social status* (there are too serious differences among different countries, different regions, and different social, professional, as well as ethnic or confessional groups or layers, both within particular countries or regions and Europe or even the world;

2. Various ethnic, confessional or social *conflicts*, had been existing in the history and still present in some secret ways; and the *relics* of these conflicts: there are many cases in modern Europe when various historically developed conflicts and their relics interfere into the development of the integral cultural space;

3. *Disproportion in the momentum of technological, economic and social, as well as cultural development*: technological progress and growth of economic well being is very often of a faster tempo than social, cultural and mental changes (disproportion of this character determines the fact that in some societal layers or even countries a certain inadequacy of cultural and spiritual development to economic well being and technological opportunities can be observed: this inadequacy provokes diminishing of moral norms, deprivation of social accountability and causes other negative subsequences;

4. Too deep *cultural insularity* seen in particular countries and influencing lack of *tolerance* to other cultures, individual and group egotism, as well as insufficient capabilities to *adapt* to intense social and cultural changes: cultural insularity and lack of tolerance to other cultures not only affects the development of the integral cultural space but also provokes social, economic and other sorts of conflicts;

5. In many spheres of societal development there is lack of *administrative capabilities* necessary for partnership development and intercultural and multicultural exchange elaboration: the policies in the culture are often declaratory and inappropriately oriented towards basic needs of the society, coming forth in the situation of European integration and the development of the European Union.

It is critical to regard the problems and conflicts that we have discussed here and other problems and conflicts arising or developing in the construction of the integral European cultural space, when we are working on crucial issues of cultural policies related to further European integration and development of the European Union.

## **Transitions and regional development processes in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe**

**Processes of transformation in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe.** While assessing opportunities and perspectives for further economic and social growth in

the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, it is essential to consider a number of factors impelled by political, economic and social transformations, which took place in these countries over the last 15 years and are still on [18, 19, 27, 28, 30, 31, 35]. Taking into account that transitions indicate a major trend of political, social and economic development of these countries, the states of Eastern and Central Europe are referred to as transition countries.

Political, economic and social development in the transition countries is characterized by some features common to all of these countries as well as by specific features characteristic only of some transition states [30]. The ability to determine both general and specific features of transformations allows us to define the situation in a particular country, the priorities of its development as well as identifying and solving most urgent problems.

In determining general features representing major trends of political, social and economic development in a transition period, the following most important issues should be emphasized:

1. *Constant orientation toward the new quality life*, implying that in the period of transition the efforts are made to realize the norms, standards, ideals, and stereotypes of new quality life. The changes associated with the quality of life take place in the period of transition, which are aimed at changing life for the better. Thus, a new society based on such values as democracy, humanism and openness as well as declaring the priority of human rights, freedom and well - being has been formed in the states of Eastern and Central Europe in the time of transition.

2. *A complex character of transitions*, meaning that major changes are complex, embracing major areas of political, social and economic life as well as the development of modern technologies, environment protection, laws and other areas of social importance. A complex character of transitions may be considered one of the major features characteristic to the development of Eastern and Central European countries. In recent 10 - 15 years the qualitative changes have taken place in the political, social and economic structures of the society, while a new scale of values, life styles and priorities has been introduced and a new social order combining the elements of Western democracy and some Eastern Europe's traditions has been established.

3. Moreover, the complexity of transitions in these countries manifests itself in versatile effects on various sides of life, which may be controversially assessed, because the results of the changes are not definitely outlined. *The uneven character of transitions* implies that social changes often take place as a leap forward from one quality to another. These leaps are also characterized by profound and sudden changes. It is important to note that in the period of transition the society may experience shocks, when the traditional values and priorities are suddenly rejected, being replaced with some new values, of which the people have only superficial knowledge not being ready to adopt them. In the transition period, the formation of some political, social, economic, cultural and ideological vacuum is usually observed in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe due to a sudden character of changes often accompanied by instability.

4. *Simultaneous and controversial character of transitions*, meaning that different transitions may and/or do take place simultaneously, being, however, conflicting and imbalanced. As a result, the situation arises when one kind of transition is contrary to the others, which in turn may cause problems and even stresses in the society. The experience of the states of Eastern and Central Europe provides a lot of examples of controversial transitions; when, say, social and economic changes contradict the political transitions, while the changes taking place in some countries of Eastern and Central Europe do not conform to the transitions occurring in other states or regions of the same territory. Such negative phenomena, hampering the advance of the above states, call for the idea of harmonizing the transitions of controversial character, implying balancing of different changes.

5. *The innovative character of transitions*, meaning that any transition accumulates some novelty. In the transition period, the innovative potential is intensely developed by pro-

viding conditions for innovative activities. The novel character of transitions may be expressed in two ways: first, the conditions are created for adapting well - known models and solutions to some situation in a new way. In this case, they are considered to be innovative. Second, completely new, previously unknown models and solutions are made. In this case, these newly created patterns, having no analogues, are considered to be the innovations. The development of two types of novelties in the transition period emphasizes the importance of innovative activities for the countries of Eastern and Central Europe.

6. *A positive character of transitions*, implying that transitions yield positive results in most cases. In spite of the fact, that both positive and negative results are actually obtained in the conditions of transition, the predominance of positive results is a particular feature of transitions.

7. *The idealistic and disappointing character of transitions*, meaning that this period is characterized by the recurrence of "searching for the ideals - disappointment" cycles. The above cyclic character shows that at the beginning of transition the solution of urgent problems is usually associated with the achievement of certain ideals, while later the period of disappointment both in the very ideals and in the transition itself and its outcome, follows. For example, in the transition period in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe it was much expected from democratization and free market development. However, later, the community was seriously disappointed with the results obtained. At the same time, the cycles of "idealization - disappointment" demonstrate the maturing of the society in the course of transition as well as its adaptability to actual environment.

8. *Openness in the period of transitions*, meaning that the tradition of openness, publicity and "transparency" becomes established, makes it possible to develop democracy and free market economy. However, it is evident that the patterns of "the open society" being formed in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe do not completely conform to the long - standing traditions of openness existing in Western countries, especially in Europe. Nevertheless, the developing tendency of openness in the states of Eastern and Central Europe is generally considered as one of the major development trends in the transition period.

9. *Harmonization of objective and subjective elements*, implying that the character and orientation of transitions largely depend on a number of objective factors characterizing objectively existing background of political, social and economic transformations as well as on subjective elements, reflects on personal interests, influence and lobbyist activities of various subjects (i.e. individuals, groups of people of various levels, clans, etc.). The above objective and subjective elements are characterized by certain degree of coordination and harmonization, therefore, the harmony of these two factors should be considered as a naturally determined phenomenon of the development of Eastern and Central European countries in the transition period. It should be noted that subjective factors play a particularly important role: the interests of individual persons, groups of people of various levels, clans, etc., have a considerable effect on political, social and economic development of these countries.

10. *Integrity and comparable character of transitions on a world scale*, meaning that local transitions are integrated into the higher - level transition systems. This indicates that the above transitions are of an international character, promoting the process of globalization as well as internationalization of political, social and economic development and demonstrating that they are comparable and can be coordinated at an international level. It may be stated that the transitions taking place in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe are of paramount importance for their integration into the global and international political, social, economic, as well cultural and information structures, as well as being a factor contributing to the convergence of the mentality and lifestyles of the inhabitants of various countries.

11. *The resonance factor*, conditioning that transitions of various origin and nature could coincide in time. Therefore, the community has to endure a heavy burden of a number

of transitions taking place simultaneously. The phenomenon of resonance indicates itself as the timing of political, social and economic changes causing a heavy burden on the community, which in turn may threaten its safety and stability.

The above - listed appropriate phenomena show *general* trends of transitions, which are universal and similar in all the states of Eastern and Central Europe. Along with these major trends some *specific* features may be observed in political, social and economic development of particular countries or groups of countries.

The above trends are particularly characteristic of transitions taking place in the Baltic countries, including Lithuania. The Baltic region is specific in many ways, therefore the transitions taking place in it may be considered a specific case of conformity to natural laws.

The following features of transitions may be specially mentioned as mostly characteristic of the Baltic states, including Lithuania:

1. *Higher resonance of transitions*, implying that in the Baltic states some additional transitions associated with regaining independence and forming new modern states as well as the priority of integration into the Western system took place alongside the political, social and economic transitions characteristic of other countries of Eastern and Central Europe. This means that the transition resonance in the Baltic states was caused not only by the democratization and market relations common to Eastern and Central European countries, but also by the transitions associated with very rapid development of new national states and their integration into the Western system. Thus, transitions in the Baltic states were more diverse and extensive than those taking place in other countries of Eastern and Central Europe. Therefore, it may be stated that the higher transition resonance is a major characteristic feature of the Baltic region.

2. *The conflicting character of national priorities and regional integration and internationalization trends*, indicating that two opposite as well as mutually complementary tendencies are developed in the Baltic states. On the one hand, national businesses are seeking autonomy, even closeness and self - isolation, trying to get established on the national market by the exclusive right. On the other hand, the tendency of integration of the whole Baltic region and the cooperation of three Baltic states in political, social and economic areas is constantly growing. Though three Baltic states often compete with each other, more and more possibilities are revealed to pursue the unified policy of cultural, economic and information development.

Needless to say that some more *specific features of transitions* taking place in the Baltic states may be identified. Undoubtedly, they may refer to one of these countries, for example, Lithuania. The transitions taking place only in one of the states may be referred to as individual features characterizing the development of a particular state.

Thus, the analysis of *individual features of transitions* taking place in Lithuania enables us to determine the effect of various geographical characteristics (e.g. configuration of neighboring countries, exceptional geographic position of Kaliningrad region and the like) on their development. Some other individual and specific factors also influence the transition processes in Lithuania. Among them are cultural and historical features (e.g. the influence of the catholic ethics, the development of Lithuanian state and the formation of Lithuanian nation, urbanization, the location of agricultural zones, etc.).

The specific features of transitions taking place in Lithuania complete a general system of naturally determined trends of development in the periods of transformations. The proper understanding of these phenomena helps to improve the political, cultural, social and economic life.

Further investigation and evaluation of naturally determined transitions and their major features would allow the states of Eastern and Central Europe to pursue more efficient policy of improving the conditions of development as well as promoting the integration of these countries into international cultural, political, social and economic structures and spaces.

**Main problems of national and international security in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe.** In the countries of Eastern and Central Europe nowadays processes of transformation have intensely been going. It is possible to state that the essence of the *current stage of process of transformations* is *adaptation* of the countries of Eastern and Central Europe to the new conditions determined by undergoing integration to the European Union and the expansion of the European Union.

When examining key problems of national and international security, currently present in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe it is possible to distinguish *two typical groups of such problems*:

- *general* security problems in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe,
- security problems in *particular countries* of Eastern and Central Europe.

These are main *general* security problems in the countries of Eastern and Central European countries:

1. Security problems determined by *economic and social differentiation* of a various character:

- economic differentiation among Eastern and Central Europe in general and among developed Western countries, including developed countries of the European Union,
- economic differentiation among various regions in the Eastern and Central Europe and among various regions in Western Europe
- economic and social differentiation among various societal layers (in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe there are huge economic and social differences among various societal groups or layers, and there is virtually no “middle class” or it is a very weak status which could be identical to the “middle class” by its economic and political development);

2. Security problems, determined by specificity of *cultures and mentalities*:

- tradition of “double moral” and “double standards” typical to the elite layers and expressing firm priorities of egotist personal or group interests both in routine and extreme situations,
- dominance of elements of “slave” and “villain” psychology in mass social psychology what in extreme situations may encourage diffusion of radical fascist and neo-Nazi feelings,
- lack of tolerance to other cultures and other stereotypes of social behavior, inadequate cultural abilities to adapt to the new environment and new stereotypes of social behavior;

3. Problems of *geopolitical and geoeconomical* character:

- problems arising in international markets of energy, as well as problems in other spheres of international economics,
- problems arising in the spheres of international investment and privatization,
- problems arising because of competition in the development of military and industrial complexes in different countries,
- problems arising on the international scale when implementing various political and military means designed for the actions against terrorism and for peace accomplishment and protection;

4. Problems of *criminal* character:

- corruption in the state,
- organized crime, international liaisons in the spheres of criminal activities,
- new methods and technologies of crime.

The problems discussed above, along to some other problems, are being evaluated as *general* security problems, manifesting in all countries of Eastern and Central Europe. It is obvious that in each of these countries there are manifestations of security problems typical to *particular* countries. Some of these problems have been analyzed in detail in separate publications [28, 30].



**Priorities of cultural policies, that have to be implemented in the situation of the integration of Eastern and Central European countries to the European Union.** Integration of the Eastern and Central European countries to the European Union not only shows the growth of the European Union but also characterizes *the core transformation of the entire European cultural space*. This means that the important outcome of the transformations in the Eastern and Central Europe has been the fact that integration of new countries into the European Union gives an impulse for development of *the integral cultural space of the entire Europe*. Based on this approach towards transformations, two key priorities of cultural policies can be defined:

1. Cultural policies that are designed to *popularize on a mass scale and affirm* progressive values of humanism and democracy, stereotypes of social behavior, as well as lifestyle patterns and standards of moral and spiritual life in the Eastern and Central European countries;

2. Cultural policies that are designed to guarantee that traditional Western European society is able to consider the Eastern and Central European society as *equal and compatible* with the norms of Western culture and lifestyles, and the progressive historical and cultural experiences of the Eastern and Central European countries and their *elitist* spheres are integrated into the overall system of the European cultural system.

For sake of the implementation of these two priorities on the pan-European scale special programmers of complex character should be introduced:

1. Programmers of cultural heritage preservation, conservation and actualization of all European countries, regions, as well as ethnic, confessional and other groups and layers: the programmers of such kind should ensure that culture of each country, region as well as ethnic, confessional or other social groups and layers preserves *unique* elements comprising *uniqueness* of each of these countries in the context of *basic* norms and standards of the European cultural space. These programmers should embrace a broad *panorama of diverse spheres of culture and art* (cultural heritage in architecture and urbanism, use of different languages and dialects, visual art, theatre, music, literature and other spheres), as well as *knowledge of history and the past, ethnography, traditions of trade and professional activities, traditions of interpersonal communication, community and social life, and traditions of attitude to nature* (by the way, a special attention should be paid to the heritage of vulnerable and fragile cultures of nations or groups with small or diminishing in number of citizens). These programmers should be developed and implemented applying various means of science, education, mass media, culture and art events organization, and law, economics or even politics.

2. Programmers for *integrated European dimensions adaptation in various cultural spaces*: such programmers should address *coexistence of various cultures and their reciprocal harmonization*, ensuring universal cultural *tolerance and mutual understanding*. Central goal of these programmers is to achieve that basic standards of European culture become a priority to every European citizen, and within the integral European cultural space there should prevail *general integrated characteristics, norms and dimensions* typical to all cultures of European countries, regions, ethnic, confessional or other social groups or layers. It is important to note that one of the core dimensions of the integral Europe is a *genuine respect* to all cultures of all countries, regions, social groups and layers: this dimension is principal when ensuring opportunities to achieve *synergy effect* based on symbiosis, integration and synthesis of various cultures. It is obvious that all programmers of this kind should connect all Europe and the means of a very broad spectrum;

3. Programmers for *elimination of unacceptable factors within humanism and democracy*: first of all, these are programmers designed to *prevent fascist, racist, nationalist, anti-Semitic manifestations* as well as programmers designed to adopt *ideals of humanism, high morale, human rights and freedom and social accountability*; they should include prevention of such phenomena as violence or wrong habits etc. All programmers of this kind should be

executed with complex use of the entire potential of the administration of the states; their education, scientific and mass media systems. The program should include in its strategies strengthening of moral and legal responsibility for the actions that do not conform to the standards of humanism and democracy, fight against approval of these actions or inadequate prevention. It is absolutely critical to achieve that within the integrated European cultural space cultural mechanisms should develop, dismissing any possibility to emerge, show or spread inappropriate conduct (a propos, nowadays in all Europe, including and especially in Eastern and Central Europe cases of fascist, nationalist and anti-Semitic feelings arise: this factor should be assessed as a real threat to the further integration of Europe; therefore, an intense combat against the actions of this kind should be performed employing all cultural policy, legal and administrative means.

The programmers discussed, along with other programmers meant to be implemented in whole Europe, could be assessed as an important precondition for creation of the integral European cultural space in the environment of European integration and the expansion of the European Union.

We may state that further development and implementation of the programmers of this kind should encourage the *creation of a new society* and produce preconditions for further cultural, economic and social progress.

## **Regional economic development of Baltic countries in the European Union system and in the development context of Nordic European and Baltic Sea region countries**

**Prospective of economic and social development of Baltic countries in the European Union space.** Integration of the Baltic countries, similar to other countries of the Central and Eastern Europe into the European Union essential changes in the economic and social life of these countries. Main indicator of these changes is the fact that economies of the Baltic countries gradually become a *part of the integral* economic system of the European Union, and the societal life of the Baltic countries is being fully *integrated* into the unified social, cultural and information space of the European Union.

Political, economic and social development in the Baltic countries as *regional development in the Baltic region* could be defined. Some *theories of regionalization and regional development as theoretical background* for the regional development strategies and policy could be used [4, 8, 13, 14, 37, 40].

Development processes in the Baltic region as processes of *regional transitions* are described in many publications [27, 28, 30, 31].

As a result of the integration of the Baltic countries into the European Union will inevitably emerge *new tendencies* in their economic and social development, which will be impelled by the following important circumstances:

- economic potential, generated in the Baltic states, will have possibilities for *more complete and efficient use*, as additional opportunities will appear both in distribution of the goods produced in the Baltic countries in the markets of the European Union, and additional opportunities to substantially modernize this potential,
- markets of the Baltic countries become an *integral* part of the markets of the European Union: in the Baltic states there will greatly increase range of sales of products, manufactured in other countries of the European Union, investment processes will become more dynamic, labor force migration will become more intense, (part of the labor force from the Baltic region will “drift” to other countries of the European Union, whereas the remaining part of workplaces in the Baltic region will be taken over by employees from abroad),

- there will be rapid interaction coming among markets of the Baltic states and markets of the other countries of the European Union, expressing the effect of “commuting vessels”: this means that intensive assimilation of prices, tariffs, productivity and remuneration will start arising in different countries and this trend will inevitably cause cardinal changes in economic structures,
- both new occurrences of *competition* in the Baltic countries, and opportunities for new *partnership and co-operation* will arrive, which will be determined by framework of integral markets,
- Baltic countries become the *Eastern border of the European Union*, directly connected to the market space of Russia and other countries of Commonwealth of Independent States as a very important and promising to the European Union system (by the way, Baltic countries are unique in their solely role of the *single* region of the European Union that in the recent past belonged to the economic system of the formed USSR: the Baltic countries has kept significant *potential of administrative and entrepreneurial capabilities for the economic and cultural activities in Eastern spaces*, and this factor may become very important when incorporating economic subjects of the Baltic states into the economic initiatives of the inseparable European Union in the markets of Russia and other countries of Commonwealth of Independent States ,
- economic subjects of the Baltic states, as new economic subjects of the European Union, will start developing activities in international and global markets, and this fact will influence changes in the *position* of the Baltic countries in the international system of labor division.

Understanding of the circumstances discussed earlier determines necessity to deeper examine *problems* of economic and social development in the Baltic countries, which will emerge at the very first stage of the membership of these countries in the European Union. Among these problems as the most critical can be mentioned the following:

- problems, indicating that average level of the development of the Baltic countries is substantially lower than one of the European Union and, what is more, the level of the leading countries,
- problems of the human resources and productivity in the Baltic states,
- problems of competitiveness of the economic subjects in the Baltic countries,
- problems of infrastructure quality, including problems of inadequacy of the infrastructure of the Baltic countries if compared to contemporary standards,
- problems of activation of mutual co-operation in the Baltic region, as well as co-operation between the Baltic and other countries in different spheres of economic and social development.

Integration of the Baltic countries into the European Union determines not only changes in the Baltic states but inevitably brings changes in the countries that have belonged to the European Union earlier. This statement first of all is due to those countries of the European Union that maintained intense economic co-operation with the Baltic region.

Integration of the Baltic countries into the European Union can be considered as a phenomenon, *influencing* situation *in the whole* space of the European Union, expanded and further growing, including the countries that have belonged to the European Union for years, and the countries, that are just seeking to become members of this organization.

It is possible to state that aforementioned problems, typical to economic and social development of the Baltic region in the space of the European Union, could be considered not only as typical problems of the Baltic countries but also problems of the *other* countries of the European Union and the problems of the *whole* European Union. By the way, these problems may also be possible to conceive as problems of the *creation of patterns of successful integration of new members into the European Union and further growth of the European Union*. This means that these unsolved or inefficiently solved problems may affect the whole development process in the European Union. And the opposite- successful solution

of these problems may allow to form patterns of *successful integration into the European Union*, planning their implementation both in the situation of further growth of the European Union, and in case of the solution of critical problems inside the European Union.

The factors mentioned above show that problems of economic and social development of the Baltic countries in the space of the European Union require *complex decisions*, which would enable successful processes of integration and create preconditions for achievement of high pace of economic and social growth. Anyway, trying to prepare and support complex solutions of this kind appropriate *research* should be executed in order to encourage economic and social growth.

**Perspective research designed for the economic and social development of the Baltic countries in the system of the European Union.** Integration of the Baltic countries as well as other countries of the Central and Eastern Europe into the European Union determines essential changes both in the Baltic region and the *whole* expanded space of the European Union. The changes of this kind inevitably cause a number of new *problems*, solution of which require completion of proper research.

The research series designed for the economic and social growth of the Baltic countries in the space of the European Union could be comparative with the research series designed for the regional development of the other regions and countries [4, 5, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 24, 26, 33, 39, 42, 44].

The research series designed for the economic and social growth of the Baltic countries in the space of the European Union should embrace various directions. Among them the most significant should be the following:

1. Research designed to define *priorities of the economic specialization and social development* in the Baltic region and separate Baltic countries, explaining *functions* of the Baltic region and separate Baltic countries in the integral space of the European Union. Research of this kind could be important developing and implementing *regional policies* of the European Union; as the results of the research may interpret both perspectives and priorities of the economic and social development of Baltic and other countries, and various co-operation opportunities of different countries, and the role and impact of the economic and social growth of all to the overall evolution of the integral European Union, in the context of global economies and global societal life;

2. Research designed for *adaptation* of human resources for work and life in new situation determined by the development in the European Union, including integration of the Baltic countries into the European Union. In the course of this research certain patterns should be created in order to ensure the Baltic countries human resources adaptation in the situation of further growth of the space of the European Union, as well as patterns designed to ensure the Baltic countries human resources adaptation in the situation after integration of the Baltic countries into the European Union;

3. Research designed for the development of the activities of the economic subjects of the Baltic countries in the space of the European Union, emphasizing compatibility of the economic subjects of the Baltic countries and their co-operation to the economic subjects of other countries. In the process of this research patterns, dedicated to further human resources development in multicultural spaces of the European Union, considering development of information society and processes of globalization, could be created;

4. Research designed for development of social and economic infrastructure in the Baltic countries. In the course of this research, solutions to the problems of inadequacy to contemporary standards of development of social and economic infrastructure should be analyzed and presented in the situation of the entrance of the Baltic countries into the European Union;

5. Research, designed for development possibilities of the co-operation of the Baltic countries and co-operation with neighbor countries (both to European Union members and other neighbor states). In the course of this research, expertise of regional co-operation

should be summarized, gained in the situation of the integration of the Baltic countries into the European Union, planning to utilize and spread this expertise for the sake of further growth of the European Union.

The research series mentioned above are designed to consider critical problems of the economic and social development of the Baltic countries, emerging in the primary stage of the membership of these countries in the European Union; which means that these problems explicit:

- general retardation of the Baltic countries if compared to leading countries of the European Union,
- necessity to develop human resources of the Baltic countries, improve their quality, ensure increase of labor efficiency and productivity,
- necessity to increase compatibility of the economic subjects of the Baltic countries,
- necessity to substantially improve social and economic infrastructure in the Baltic countries,
- necessity to expand co-operation of the Baltic countries between each other and outside the Baltic region.

Research, designed to *define priorities for economic specialization and social development in the Baltic region and single Baltic countries*, as well as *state functions of the Baltic countries in the integral space of the European Union* can touch upon the following topics:

- functions of the Baltic region and Baltic countries expanding economic, social and cultural co-operation of the European Union with Russia and other countries of Commonwealth of Independent States,
- functions of the Baltic region and Baltic countries, their economic specialization and social growth in the whole system of the Nordic European countries and the countries of the Baltic sea region,
- priorities of economic specialization and social growth of the Baltic region in general and Baltic countries in particular, meant to greatly decrease retardation of the Baltic countries if compared to the leading countries of the European Union.

Research designed to *improve human resources in the period of integration of the Baltic countries into the European Union* can touch upon the following topics:

- analysis of structures of human resources in the Baltic and neighbor countries of the European Union, adequacy of these structures responding to the existing and developing needs of labor market and workplaces structures,
- systems of education, science and studies and vocational training and their adequacy to the needs of the improvement of human resources, in-service training systems and possibilities for their development,
- level of labor efficiency and productivity and development opportunities in various sectors of economics,
- trends in labor force migration in the Baltic region and neighbor countries of the European Union, labor market of the Baltic region and overall labor market of the European Union,
- social security systems in the Baltic countries and adequacy of these systems to modern standards.

Research designed for *the development of the activities of the economic subjects of the Baltic countries in the space of the European Union and increase of their compatibility* can touch upon the following topics:

- specialization of business sectors in the Baltic countries and advancement of forms of international co-operation,
- development of innovations and technology transfer, creation of parks of science and technologies,
- co-operation of the Baltic countries and other countries of the European Union creating and introducing high technologies,

- establishment of clusters and improvement of their activities,
- improvement of quality in all sectors,
- encouragement of export.

Research, designed for *development of social and economic infrastructure in the Baltic countries* can touch upon the following topics:

- social and economic infrastructure adequacy to modern needs, possibilities to respond these needs,
- regional development in the Baltic countries, and its influence in formation of modern social and economic infrastructure,
- international co-operation improving social and economic infrastructure.

Research designed for *mutual co-operation of the Baltic countries and their co-operation with other countries* can touch upon the following topics:

- mutual co-operation of the Baltic countries and co-operation to other countries in the sphere of nature protection and energy,
- mutual co-operation of the Baltic countries and co-operation to other countries in the sphere of information technologies and telecommunications,
- mutual co-operation of the Baltic countries and co-operation to other countries in the sphere of transport and logistics,
- co-operation of the Baltic countries to the Commonwealth of Independent States systems countries implementing various projects of regional economic and social development.

In the course of the research series, mentioned earlier, *complex comparative analysis of the economic and social development in the Baltic countries and other countries of the European Union* should be undertaken. Special attention should be drawn to *comparison of trends in economic and social development of the Baltic countries and the countries of Northern Europe and the Baltic Sea region*. This would allow to examine and state consistent patterns of the economic and social growth of the Baltic countries in the context of development of the *whole* European Union and to consider problems emerging in the Baltic countries and make decisions in the light of the countries of Northern Europe and Baltic Sea region as integral European region.

Moreover, topics of the research series mentioned above embrace current economic and social issues of the Baltic countries and other countries of the European Union present at *initial* stage of integration of the Baltic countries into the European Union and their membership in the European Union.

The research discussed above can be assessed as very important and relevant at both *theoretical and practical aspects*.

The *theoretical* importance and relevance of the research lies in processes of the expansion of the European Union towards the East and integration of the Baltic countries into the European Union have no analogues or precedents in historical practice: these processes are *neither examined nor summarized first of all in the theoretical aspect*. Contemporary theories of economics and social development haven't *defined or stated any consistent patterns or laws*, which could explain economic or social changes, happening in the situation of the expansion of the European Union towards the East and integration of the Baltic countries into the European Union. At the same time they lack opportunities to *consistently act and manage those processes*. Besides, identification of these patterns and their design is a very important prerequisite to develop the European Union in the future and encourage progressive reforms.

The *practical* importance and relevance of the research is determined by necessity to understand and find solutions *real* practical problems, emerging or possible to emerge as a result of integration of the Baltic countries into the European Union.

The research discussed in this paper should be executed in *complex, applying different methods*. This research should be done simultaneously in the Baltic countries and other

countries of Northern Europe or Baltic Sea region, gathering experts of these countries and working on the basis of integral methodologies and programs. In the course of the programs of this kind the *synergy effect* should be reached that would allow seeing opportunities and perspectives of the economic and social development of the Baltic states in the space of the European Union in a *novel way*.

## Conclusions

The central indicator of the processes of globalization, European integration and political, social, economic as well as technological development in the European countries is the creation of an integrated cultural space in Europe. The formation of this space is being strongly influenced by many factors, including the expansion of the European Union, especially integration of Eastern and Central European countries into the European Union.

Enhancement of national and international security in the situation of globalization and European integration is a basic priority of the modern society. Many new factors and issues emerge in the situation of globalization and European integration which determine both *international* in general and *national* security in particular countries. Main dangers and threats challenging security have several key features. What is important to mention is the fact that the role of *non-military* dangers and threats is increasing; and among essential ones dangers and threats of *social, economic and mental* character occur. The importance of these dangers and threats can be supported by the fact that modern society cannot ignore the probability of emerging conflicts of social, economic or mental origin.

An important factor of international and –in many modern countries- national security is a process of transformation going in Eastern and Central European countries and the integration of Eastern and Central European countries to the European Union and the NATO. Ensuring international and national security in Eastern and Central Europe becomes a crucial precondition for security development in the situation of globalization.

Creation of the integral European cultural space is very important factor of international security.

Processes of development of the integral cultural space in Europe are very complex and controversial; and in this course many various problems and conflicts arise. Insufficient attention to these problems and conflicts cause a real threat for the further process of European integration and the expansion of the European Union; therefore, special attention should be paid to the solution of these problems and conflicts.

To encourage creation of an integral cultural space in Europe appropriate cultural policies are necessary that should be implemented on the scale of the entire Europe. These policies may embrace many priorities, including the following:

- *Preservation of cultural diversity* of all European countries, as well as ethnic, confessional or other social groups or layers; *heritage preservation of these countries*; and *further integration* of these cultures into overall process of culture development;
- *Adaptation and dissemination of integrated European dimensions* in all Europe;
- *Elimination of inappropriate factors within humanism and democracy*.

**These priorities are especially important for the cultural policies of the Eastern and Central European countries.**

The very important priority of the formation of integral European cultural space is *regionalization* of economic and social development in all Europe. Integration of the Baltic and other East – and Central European countries into the European Union determines not only changes in the Baltic states but inevitably brings changes in the countries that have belonged to the European Union earlier. This statement first of all is due to those countries of the European Union that maintained intense economic co-operation with the Baltic region.

Integration of the Baltic countries into the European Union can be considered as a phenomenon, *influencing situation in the whole* space of the European Union, expanded and further growing, including the countries that have belonged to the European Union for years, and the countries, that are just seeking to become members of this organization.

It is possible to state that problems, typical to economic and social development of the Baltic region in the space of the European Union, could be considered not only as typical problems of the Baltic countries but also problems of the *other* countries of the European Union and the problems of the *whole* European Union. By the way, these problems may also be possible to conceive as problems of the *creation of patterns of successful integration of new members into the European Union and further growth of the European Union*. This means that these unsolved or inefficiently solved problems may affect the whole development process in the European Union. And the opposite- successful solution of these problems may allow to form patterns of *successful integration into the European Union*, planning their implementation both in the situation of further growth of the European Union, and in case of the solution of critical problems inside the European Union.

Problems of economic and social development of the Baltic countries in the space, integral European especially in the space of Nordic European and Baltic Sea region countries require *complex decisions*, which would enable successful processes of integration and create preconditions for achievement of high pace of economic and social growth.

The research series designed for the economic and social growth of the Baltic countries in the space of the European Union should embrace various directions.

Ideas of integral European cultural space and regional development are very important for further economic and social development in the whole system of European Union.



## LITERATURE

1. **Altwater E., Mahnkopf B.** Limits of Globalisation: Politics, Economy and Ecology in the World Society. – Münster: Verlag Westfälisches Dampfboot, 1996.
2. **Armstrong M. A.** Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice. – London: Kogan Page, 1999.
3. **Berglund S., Aarenbrot F.** The Political History of Eastern Europe in the 20th Century: the Struggle between Democracy and Dictatorship. – Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 1997.
4. **Boldrin M., Canova F.** Inequality and convergence in Europe's regions: reconsidering European regional policies. Economic Policy. 2001. Vol. 16. Is. 32.
5. **Bond E., Syropoulos C., Winters L. A.** Deepening of regional integration and multilateral trade agreements // Journal of International Economics. 2001. Vol. 53. Is. 2.
6. **Buchanan D., Badham R.** Power, Politics and Organizational Change. – London: Sage Publications, 1999.
7. **Calori R., Atamer T., Nunes P.** The Dynamics of International Competition. – London, Sage Publications, 1999.
8. **Chortareas G. E., Pelagidis T.** Trade flows: a facet of regionalism or globalisation? // Cambridge journal of economics. 2004. Vol. 28.
9. **Culture and Economy after the Cultural Turn** / Ed. L. Ray, A. Sayer – London: Sage Publications, 1999.
10. **Cultures in Central and Eastern Europe** / Ed. M. Bateman. – Oxford, Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1997.
11. **Currie W.** The Global Information Society. – Chichester: John Wiley, 2000.
12. **Dicken P.** Global Shift: Transforming the World Economy. – London: Sage Publications; A. Paul Chapman Publishing, 1998.
13. **Dutta M.** Economic Regionalisation in the Asia – Pacific: Challenges to Economic Cooperation. – Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 1999.



14. **Garrett G., Mitchell D.** Globalization, Government, Spending and Taxation in OECD Countries // European Journal of Political Research. 2001. Vol. 39. No. 3.
15. **Gerber J.** International Economics. – Amsterdam: Addison Wesley Longman, 1999.
16. **Ghose A. K.** Global inequality and international trade // Cambridge journal of economics. 2004. Vol. 28. Is. 2.
17. **Guy M.** Regionalisation in Afrika: Integration and Disintegration // Africa Today. 2001. Vol. 48. No 2.
18. **Hayo B., Seifert W.** Subjective economic well-being in Eastern Europe // Journal of Economic Psychology. 2003. Vol. 24. Is. 3.
19. **Hofbauer H.** Osterweiterung. Vom Drang nach Osten zur peripheren EU – Integration. – Wien: Promedia, 2003.
20. **Hummels D., Ishii J., Kei-Mu Yi.** The Nature and Growth of Vertical Specialization in World Trade // Journal of International Economics. 2001. Vol. 54.
21. **Hunt S. D.** A General Theory of Competition: Resources, Competences, Productivity // Economic Growth. – London: Sage Publications, 2000.
22. **Huseman R. C., Godman J. P.** Leading with Knowledge: The Nature of Competition in 21st. Century. – London: Sage Publications, 1999.
23. **Jondt F. E.** Intercultural Communication: an Introduction. – London: Sage Publications, 1998.
24. **Krugman P., Obstfeld M.** International Economics. – Amsterdam: Addison Wesley Longman, 1997.
25. **Lavingne M.** The Economics of Transition: From Socialist Economy to Market Economy. – London: Macmillan Press, 1995.
26. **McNally R.** The Comprehensive World Atlas. – Stamford: Longmeadow Press, 1999.
27. **Melnikas B.** The Integrations Problems of the Baltic States: Possibilities for the Formation of a Unified Technological, Economic and Social Space // East–West Scientific Cooperation. Science and Technology Policy of the Baltic States and International Cooperation. NATO ASI Series, 4. Science and Technology Policy. – Dordrecht; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publisher, 1997. Vol. 15.
28. **Melnikas B.** Probleme der Integration der baltischen Staaten in westliche Strukturen (Berichte des Bundesinstituts für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien). – Köln, 1999. No 40.
29. **Melnikas B., Jakubavičius A., Strazdas R.** Inovacijos: verslas, vadyba, konsultavimas. – Vilnius: Lietuvos inovacijų centras, 2000.
30. **Melnikas B.** Transformacijos. – Vilnius: Vaga, 2002.
31. **Melnikas B., Reichelt B.** Wirtschaft und Mentalität. Tendenzen der EU – Osterweiterung. Eine Brücke zwischen den Welten. – Leipzig: LEIFIM – Verlag, 2004.
32. **Olsen T. E., Osmundsen P.** Spillovers and International Competition for Investments // Journal of International Economics. 2003. Vol. 59. Is. 1.
33. **Parker B.** Globalisation and Business Practice: Managing Across Boundaries. – London: Sage Publications, 1998.
34. **Perraton J.** The global economy – myths and realities // Cambridge journal of economics. 2001. Vol. 25.
35. **Politische und ökonomische Transformation in Osteuropa** / Hrsg. G. Brunner. – Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2000.
36. **Porter M.** Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors. – New York: The Free Press, 1980.
37. **Redding S., Venables A. J.** Economic geography and international inequality // Journal of International Economics, 2004. Vol. 62. Is. 1.
38. **Rosenzweig P.** Accelerating International Growth. – Chichester: John Wiley, 2001.
39. **Salvatore D.** International Economics. – New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1990.
40. **Sangmon K.** A Longitudinal Analysis of Globalization and Regionalization in International Trade: Social Network Approach // Social Forces, 2002. Vol. 81. No. 2.
41. **The Sustainability of Long – Term Growth: Socioeconomic and Ecological Perspectives** / Ed. M. Munasinghe, O.Sunkel, C de Miguel. – Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2001.
42. **Tandon Yash.** The World Trade Organisation and Africa's Marginalisation // Australian Journal of International Affairs. 1999. Vol. 53. No. 1.
43. **Thiede S. P.** Europa: Werte, Wege, Perspektiven. – Berlin: Presse – und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, 2000.
44. **Yarbrough B. V., Yarbrough R. M.** The World Economy; Trade and Finance. – Chicago: The Dryden Press, 1999.



## ***Saugumas, transformacijų procesai, saugumas ir bendra Europos kultūrinė erdvė: regioninė raida Baltijos ir kitose Rytų ir Vidurio Europos šalyse***

***Prof. habil. dr. Borisas Melnikas***

*Vilniaus Gedimino technikos universitetas*

***Pagrindinės sąvokos:*** saugumas, transformacijos (pokyčiai), bendroji (integruota) kultūros erdvė, ES (Europos Sąjungos) plėtra, politinė, ekonominė, socialinė raida.

### **SANTRAUKA**

*Straipsnyje kompleksiskai nagrinėjamos politinės, socialinės, ekonominės, ypač saugumo ir stabilumo užtikrinimo, problemos, pastaruoju metu kylančios Baltijos regione, taip pat visose Rytų ir Vidurio Europos šalyse.*

*Šios problemos nagrinėjamos atsižvelgiant į daugelį aplinkybių, prioritetų, pirmenybę teikiant visuomenės saugumui.*

*Parodyta, kad esminiai veiksniai, darantys įtaką šiuolaikinei raidai ir pažangai Baltijos regione, taip pat visose Rytų ir Vidurio Europos šalyse, yra dviejų tipų:*

*– transformacijų procesai, išreiškiantys esminius kokybinius pokyčius visose politinio, socialinio, ekonominio gyvenimo, taip pat technologijų pažangos, teisėsaugos, gynybos, nacionalinio saugumo ir kitose srityse: transformacijų procesai tiek per pastaruosius 10–15 metų, tiek ir dabartiniu metu bei artimiausioje ateityje vertintini kaip svarbiausia Rytų ir Vidurio Europos šalių visuomenės raidos charakteristika,*

*– bendros kultūrinės erdvės visoje Europoje formavimosi procesai, išreiškiantys tai, kad vykstanti Europos Sąjungos plėtra, naujų šalių ir Rytų ir Vidurio Europos integracija į Europos Sąjungą, taip pat spartūs pokyčiai visose Europos šalyse sukelia esminę kultūros ir gyvenimo būdo transformaciją visoje Europoje ir lemia bendros kultūrinės erdvės susidarymą.*

*Ir transformacijų procesai, ir bendros kultūrinės erdvės visoje Europoje formavimasis reikalauja naujai suvokti ir spręsti ir bendrąsias, ir regionines politines, socialines, ekonominės raidos, ypač saugumo ir stabilumo problemas.*

*Naujas požiūris į saugumą Baltijos ir kitose Rytų ir Vidurio Europos šalyse grindžiamas įvertinimu tų veiksmų, kurie išreiškia transformacijų ypatumus bei bendros kultūrinės erdvės visoje Europoje formavimosi aplinkybes, detaliau išdėstomas šioje publikacijoje.*

*Publikacijos tikslas – atskleisti saugumo bei regioninės plėtros ypatumus ir perspektyvas Baltijos ir kitose Rytų ir Vidurio Europos šalyse, atsižvelgiant į transformacijų bei į bendros kultūrinės erdvės Europoje formavimosi procesus.*

*Publikacijoje nagrinėjami regioninės plėtros teoriniai pagrindai atsižvelgiant į bendros Europos kultūrinės erdvės formavimosi aplinkybes. Detaliai analizuojami politinių, ekonominių, socialinių transformacijų procesai, būdingi Rytų ir Vidurio Europos kraštams. Aptariamos regioninės plėtros galimybės, būdingos Baltijos regionui. Nagrinėjami konfliktai ir kitos problemos, kylančios bendros Europos kultūrinės erdvės formavimosi sąlygomis.*

*Publikacijoje taip pat nagrinėjamos problemos, kylančios transformacijų sąlygomis, pažymimos nacionalinio ir tarptautinio saugumo problemos, būdingos įvairiems regionams ir kraštams Rytų ir Vidurio Europoje. Ypač daug dėmesio skiriama regioninei ekonominei ir socialinei raidai Baltijos šalyse bendros Europos politinės, ekonominės, kultūrinės ir socialinės erdvės formavimosi aplinkybėmis.*

*Analizuojami vieningos europinės kultūros erdvės formavimosi procesai ir jų ypatumai.*

*Vieni svarbiausių tyrimo uždavinių ir rezultatų yra šie:*

- nacionalinio ir tarptautinio saugumo esmės ir prioritetų išryškinimas, atsižvelgiant į globalizacijos sąlygas bei įvairiems regionams būdingų politinių, socialinių, ekonominių transformacijų aplinkybes,
- Rytų ir Vidurio Europoje vykstančių transformacijų procesams būdingų dėsningumų išryškinimas, šių transformacijų poveikio nacionaliniam ir tarptautiniam saugumui įvertinimas,
- naujų pavojų, kylančių transformacijų sąlygomis, analizė, prevencijos priemonių parengimas ir įgyvendinimas, ypač daug dėmesio teikiant specializuotoms programoms, skirtoms formuoti naują mentalitetą ir plėtoti šiuolaikišką kultūrą,
- Baltijos šalių ypatumų įvertinimas, regionalizacijos perspektyvų Baltijos šalyse aptarimas, atsižvelgiant į Baltijos šalių raidos galimybes Šiaurės šalių bei Baltijos jūros regiono kontekste,
- regionalizacijos požiūriu perspektyvios Baltijos šalims skirtų tyrimų kryptys ir jų pagrindimas. Tolesni tyrimai aprašytoje srityje vertintini kaip labai aktualūs ir reikšmingi.

