ISSN 2029-1701
ISSN 2335-2035 (Online)

Mokslinių straipsnių rinkinys
VISUOMENĖS SAUGUMAS IR VIEŠOJI TVARKA
PUBLIC SECURITY AND PUBLIC ORDER
2017 (19)
Scientific articles

EVALUATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICY IN THE CONTEXT OF GOOD GOVERNANCE: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF BALTIC COUNTRIES

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Annotation. Principles of good governance in evaluating sustainable development policies are highly important because they contribute to the long-term commitment and strategic objectives, policy coherence through vertical and horizontal coordination, open and transparent stakeholder participation and consultation process, and brings sustainable development policies and strategies closer to local communities and humans. The inclusion of good governance framework into sustainable development policy evaluation phase would increase the effectiveness of social, economic and environmental policies, strengthen the role of democratic institutions according to people's needs and improve infrastructure. Analysis of legislation and strategic documents of the Baltic countries revealed the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian mutual sustainable development and good governance objective of seeking human well-being, quality of life and cultural integrity in strengthening society and government, encouraging good behavior of citizens. An evaluation of sustainable development policy based on the analysis of sustainable development indicators revealed that in comparison with Latvia and Estonia, sustainable development policy in Lithuania is not sufficiently effective and there is a lack of trust and participation among citizens.

Keywords: sustainable development, policy evaluation, good governance, Baltic countries.

INTRODUCTION

Growing economic problems that affect the interests of social groups, increasing environmental requirements and emergent global institutional network have turned sustainable development into a very important process, which is based on targeted policy on sustainable development. This policy must promote and ensure economic, social and environmental mainstreaming. This has become especially important in the beginning of the global finance crisis as countries faced economic difficulties, which have inspired politicians to review sustainable development policy, to reallocate state funds, to take unpopular decisions and to create anti-crisis strategies and programs. In these political changes, an important role is taken

by the public and stakeholders participation, openness, publicity, transparency, democracy – principles which indicate good governance[1] [2].

An analysis of scientific literature and research (Kilis, 2007; Toots, Reetz, Jahn, 2014; Bartle, Vass, 2006; Dunn, 2006; Giovanni, 2004; Hametner, Steurer, 2007; Strandenaes, 2012; Dvorak, 2011; Vilpišauskas, Nakrošis, 2005; Juknevičienė, Kareivaitė, 2012) on sustainable development, policy evaluation and good governance revealed scientific contribution's lack of evaluation of sustainable development policy in context of good governance. Most scientists are researching the process of sustainable development, good governance concepts and principles of adaptability in different areas of public policy and its evaluation process and models. While broadly analyzing sustainable development in economic terms an analysis of process indicators or indices is often performed but no scientific papers or studies, which analyzed sustainable development policy in the context of good governance, were found. Such analysis is particularly important because the policy of sustainable development evaluation is institutionalizing in the European Union's and the Baltic countries' that are in it - Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia - administrative systems.

The success of sustainable development policy and the importance of good governance in this policy cycle is defined by one of the main functions of policy analysis - *policy evaluation*[3,4]. Sustainable Development Policy Evaluation in the context of good governance in the Baltic countries is necessary because the post-communist states have moved to a different - democratic - mode, management models have changed, the needs of society have grown and constantly evolved. Wagener[5] states that the former socialist countries inclusive transformation is a process which includes not only its economic but also the legislative and political systems. It is difficult to perform effectively their functions for countries where the state and the market have entered the recovery process at the same time. Sustainable development policy's need for evaluation is justified because thanks to this function state agencies are provided with information about whether this policy intervention has been significant, efficient, effective and

[1] Bartle, I., Vass, P. Economic regulators and sustainable development: promoting good governance. The University of Bath, 2006.
[2] Weiss, T. Governance, good governance and global governance: conceptual and actual challenges Third World Quarterly, 2000, Vol 21, No 5, p. 795–814. http://upeaceap. org/hando_upfiles/GGPD_RM_04–2.pdf. [2016 07 06].
[3] Dunn, W.N. Viešosios politikos analizė. Įvadas. Vilnius: Homo liber, 2006.
[4] Parsons, W. Viešoji politika: politikos analizės teorijos ir praktikos įvadas. Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2001.
[5] Wagener, H.J. Good Governance, Welfare, and Transformation. The European Journal of Comparative Economics, 2004, Vol. 1, n. 1, p. 127–143, European University Viadrina Frankfurt. http://eaces.liuc.it/18242979200401/18242979200401010106.pdf. [2016 07 06] p.128.

acceptable to civil society as well as to other interested parties and what consequences has it brought. According to Dvorak[6], the evaluation helps make better decisions and with specific evaluation approaches contribute to the strengthening of democracy which encourages citizen participation, guarantees transparency and support public welfare. For this reason when evaluating sustainable development policy it is important to evaluate good governance as well because, it has a significant impact on all stages of this policy's process.

The aim of the paper: to evaluate the sustainable development policy of the Baltic countries in the context of Good Governance. **Objectives of the paper**: to reveal the theoretical aspects of policy evaluation in the context of Good Governance; to examine the legal and strategic documents of sustainable development and Good Governance in the Baltic countries; to identify the interaction between the Sustainable Development indicators in the context of Good Governance in the Baltic countries. **The following methods were used**: analysis of scientific literature, legal and strategic documents, comparative analysis of secondary data (Eurostat statistics).

Sustainable development policy evaluation associated with good governance is a new phenomenon in the Baltic countries, thus very few studies have been carried out. The civil society participating in good governance as well as the public and private sectors all seek the same objective, which would ensure the well-being of people and the state, would seek to protect the natural resources, and economy, would solve the issues of economic growth and poverty reduction, would reduce the environmental harm. For these reasons, good governance is an integral part of sustainable development policy process. In order to determine the degree of success of sustainable development policies achieving their goals and objectives, it is necessary to carry out the evaluation of sustainable development policy in the context of good governance.

IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICY EVALUATION

By analyzing the concept of sustainable development it was noted that scientists (Ryden, 2008; Bourdeau, 2007, Yoon Lee, 2007 and so on.) provide some of the same sustainable development features accentuating the long-term national economic development in order to rationally reconcile society's economic, social and environmental interests, ensuring the welfare of present and future generations within the authorized limits of environmental impact.

[6] Dvorak, J. Viešosios politikos vertinimas Lietuvoje: diegimas, mastas ir reikšmingumas. Daktaro disertacija (Socialiniai mokslai, politikos mokslai (02 S)). Vytauto Didžiojo Universitetas, 2011. http://vddb.laba.lt/fedora/get/LT-eLABa-0001:E.02~2011~D_20111122_092627-49436/DS.005.0.01.ETD. [2016 06 19].p.10.

The main problems of globalization, such as *poverty, unemployment, gender inequality, environmental pollution, unstable economics, social exclusion, changing needs of society, demographic change* - led to the emergence of a sustainable development policy, one of the key areas of public policy. Even 20 years after the adoption of sustainable development ideology in Rio de Janeiro (1992 m.), the same challenges had to be analyzed again: "How to ensure the quality of life while solving not only economic growth but also poverty reduction issues, reducing the environmental harm, i.e. seeking natural resource conservation and protection"[7]. Lack of completed sustainable development policy objectives is associated with inefficient activities of institutions at all levels. Wagener[8] notes that the transformation from a totalitarian, administratively coordinated system (which Baltic countries belonged to) into a democratic system coordinated by markets and competition was caused by the lack of understanding of welfare and happiness.

Sustainable development policy is defined as a process during which the problems are identified and the decisions to solve those problems are taken, the agendas are organized, the objectives are formed, the strategies, programs and objectives to implement the decisions are devised so the policy of sustainable development can be analyzed on the basis of public policy analysis. Public policy analysts[9][10] (Parsons, 2001; Dunn, 2006) agree that the policy is a political process or a cycle consisting of distinct stages (elements), each of which can be studied separately. The last stage of this process - evaluation - is an important policy process indeed, because the information of the evaluation reveals that the policy has been effective or the objectives, tasks, to meet the needs and expectations have been implemented. Policy evaluation is relevant to the policy process because, as stated by Dunn[11], provides relevant information concerning the expected and the actual implementation of the policy inconsistencies: conclusions about the scope of reducing problems; it contributes to the values on which policy is based on the disclosure and criticism; it helps to adapt or reformulate policies; it forms the basis for the restructuring of problem.

[7] Domarkas, V. ir kt. Institucinės dimensijos vaidmuo darnaus vystymosi koncepcijoje. Viešoji politika ir administravimas, 2012, T. 11, Nr. 3, p. 461–472. http://erem.ktu.lt/index.php/PPA/article/viewFile/2503/1876. [2016 07 06]. p. 462

[8] Wagener, H.J. Good Governance, Welfare, and Transformation. The European Journal of Comparative Economics, 2004, Vol. 1, n. 1, p. 127–143, European University Viadrina Frankfurt. http://eaces.liuc.it /18242979200401/18242979200401010106.pdf. [2016 07 06]. p. 142.

[9] Parsons, W. Viešoji politika: politikos analizės teorijos ir praktikos įvadas. Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2001.

[10] Dunn, W.N. Viešosios politikos analizė. Įvadas. Vilnius: Homo liber, 2006.

[11] Ibid., p. 70.

Since the policy evaluation concepts are quite different because of the multiplicity of policy, it cannot be evaluated by the same criterion. Dunn[12] provides several types of policy evaluation criteria: *effectiveness* - expressed in service units; p*roductivity* - expressed as a cost per unit, net benefits and cost - benefit ratio; s*ufficiency* - as a fixed cost and fixed-effectiveness; *justice* - as a criterion for Pareto, Kaldor-Hicks criterion, Rawls criterion; *the ability to respond* - as a compliance studies of citizens; *suitability* - public programs must be impartial and productive. According to Parsons[13], the key aspects of policy evaluation are: evaluation of policy and its components programs and evaluation of the people who work in organizations which are responsible for policy and program implementation. Performance indicators and figures that can be attributed to data analysis of secondary sources (e.g. Eurostat) in itself does not mean anything, thus policy analysts should be interested in the values and political relations on the basis of which indicators are constructed as well as the interpretation that they are given[14]. The advantage of such indicators is a crucial policy evaluation, since they help determine the level of progress in moving to set goals and reveals problem areas. Lyytimäki[15] notes that the indicators should provide accurate and reliable information, depending on changing environmental, social and economic conditions, pressures and responses related to the objectives of the strategy. According to Hardy Zdan (cit. By Lyytimäki[16]), chosen policy evaluation indicators should also identify trends and changes, track progress, and, if possible, to anticipate future developments.

Representative social, economic and environmental indicators reflect the selected period's results of sustainable development areas that can be used to evaluate sustainable development policy. Such indicators are listed by Eurostat (the EU statistical office) and provide comparable, reliable and objective panorama of the changing Europe. Eurostat collects data from national statistical authorities and combines them in a single methodology (Eurostatguide, 2014). This methodology for the evaluation of sustainable development policy in accordance with the social, economic and environmental areas of indicators in line with Dunn[17] is relevant to one of the ways of evaluation - *pseudo evaluation* - some descriptive

[12] Dunn, W.N. Viešosios politikos analizė. Įvadas. Vilnius: Homo liber, 2006. p. 356.
[13] Parsons, W. Viešoji politika: politikos analizės teorijos ir praktikos įvadas. Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2001. p. 481.
[14] Ibid. p. 485
[15] Lyytimäki J. Evaluation of sustainable development strategies and policies: The need for more timely indicators. United Nations. Natural Resources Forum 36, 2012, p. 101–108. https://www.academia.edu/8432599/Evaluation_of_sustainable_development_strategies_and_policies_The_need_for_more_timely_indicators. [2016 06 06].
[16] Ibid. p. 101
[17] Dunn, W.N. Viešosios politikos analizė. Įvadas. Vilnius: Homo liber, 2006. p. 357

techniques are used to provide reliable and valid information about policy consequences without trying to question the value of these consequences to the whole of society (evaluation units are obvious and indisputable). From these methods, according to Dunn[18], sustainable development policy evaluation by outcome indicators as analytical elements is assignable to one - *social systems reports* - which expresses the importance of social, economic and environmental indicators to policy and are oriented to the objective and changes. It is also dependent on other variables, and expresses the objective and subjective conditions for sustainable development. As submitted by Eurostat (2014), each sustainable development indicator has its own meaning which is the value corresponding to the sustainable development policy objective set (Table 1).

Table 1. Sustainable development indicators value (made by European Commission, Eurostat, 2014)

Indicator	Definition
Socioeconomic development	with the strategic objective to "promote a prosperous, innovative, knowledge-rich, competitive and eco-efficient economy, which provides high living standards and full and high-quality employment throughout the European Union".
Sustainable consumption and production	with the strategic objective to "promote sustainable consumption and production patterns".
Social inclusion and demographic changes	has the strategic objective of "creating a socially inclusive society by considering solidarity between and within generations and to secure and increase the quality of life of citizens as a precondition for lasting individual well-being".
Public health	has the strategic objective "to promote good public health on equal conditions and improve protection against health threats".
Climate change and energy	has the strategic objective "to limit climate change and its costs and negative effects to society and environment". This area has two indicators.
Sustainable transport	has the strategic objective "to ensure that our transport systems meet society's economic, social and environmental needs whilst minimizing their undesirable impacts on the economy, society and the environment".
Natural resources	has the strategic objective of "improving management and avoid over-exploitation of natural resources, recognizing the value of ecosystem services".
Global partnership	has the strategic objective "to actively promote sustainable development worldwide and ensure that the EU's internal and external policies are consistent with global sustainable development and its international commitments".
Good governance	has the strategic objective "to promote coherence between all EU policies and coherence between local, regional, national and global actions in order to enhance their contribution to sustainable development".

Overview of indicators reveals their meaning and importance of sustainable development in policy evaluation stage because their detailed elaboration allows to see the effectiveness of the policy and the effects of each of the areas in Table 1.

[18] Ibid.

IMPACT OF GOOD GOVERNANCE ON EVALUATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICY

According to Domarkas and others[19], the sustainable development concept usually covers three main aspects (social, economic and environmental) but the role is not highlighted although it has a significant impact on the economic, social and environmental objectives' coordination and their merger in this total. This is illustrated by the Johannesburg Implementation Plan[20] which states that the international institutions systems ensure that sustainable development strengthening is an evolutionary process so it is necessary to keep relevant arrangements under review, identify gaps, eliminate duplication of functions, constantly strive for a more integrated efficiency and coordination of sustainable development areas - environmental, social and economic.

In all Member States, including Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, efforts were made to identify territorial needs and shape strategies to mitigate the disparities in regions and within them. The implementation of stated objectives of sustainable development policy must be achieved by integrating them into regional and sub-regional institutions, including the development of strategies, peer review and monitoring regional cooperation. At a national level, the state must implement a sustainable development strategy within the set period of time and to coordinate civil society, local authorities and the private sector after forming a business coalition[21] Clark (2012) argues that *an active and effective good governance* enables the governing bodies, which can provide reliable quality services where and when appropriate. It also enables the public administration which can collect taxes fairly, wisely allocate and invest public funds and to manage public goods, including land and natural resources to global benefits. Good governance concept interpretation and integration into sustainable development policy evaluation phase will make it easier to orientate and to achieve the objectives set: *to make all efforts to create a Baltic socio-economic enabling environment; increase productivity; reduce the outflow of capital; strengthen the private sector; attract and effectively use international investment*. Bartle and Vass[22] in the concept of sustainable development in the

[19] Domarkas, V. ir kt. Institucinės dimensijos vaidmuo darnaus vystymosi koncepcijoje. Viešoji politika ir administravimas, 2012, T. 11, Nr. 3, p. 463.
[20] Strandenaes, J. G. Sustainable Development Governance towards Rio+20: Framing the Debate. London, 2012. http://www.stakeholderforum.org/fileadmn/files/SDG%20Paper%2Jan%20Gustav%20_2_.pdf.[2016 07 06].p.4.
[21] European Commission. Good Governance for Sustainable Development. Brussels, 2002. http://ec.europa.eu/ environment /archives/wssd/pdf/good_governance.pdf. [2016 07 06].p.2.
[22] Bartle, I., Vass, P. Economic regulators and sustainable development: promoting good governance. The University of Bath, 2006.p.44.

historical and scientific review says that sustainable development inclusion takes place with the help of political power which helps discern the problems of humanity, such as resource constraints on the growth of population. Figure 1 shows the integration of sustainable development in the process of good governance. This integration ensures human, natural, economic and financial resource management for sustainable development policy-making process.

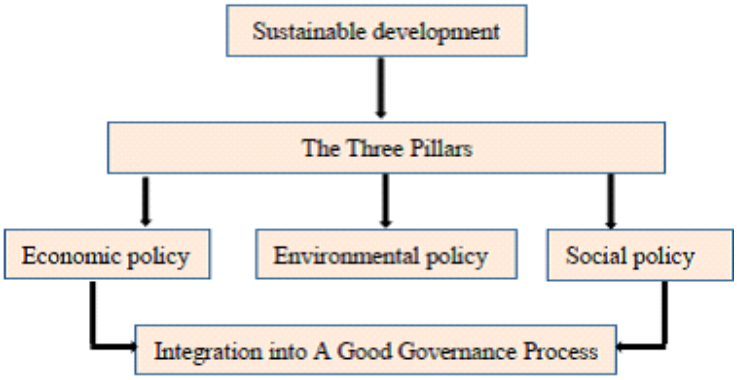

Figure 1. Integration of sustainable development in the process of good governance scheme (made by Bartle ir Vass[23])

Additionally, *good governance gets clear decision-making procedures of public bodies at the level of civil society participation in decision-making processes and the ability to enhance the rights and responsibilities through legal mechanisms*. Legal mechanisms are very important for a sustainable development policy implementation since most of the national legislature and the courts fully recognize the links between environmental protection, economic development and human rights[24]. With better coordination and greater support every effort - with regard to legal and good governance, environmental requirements and the empirical data collection and analysis - will be able to accelerate progress towards sustainable development. It can be argued that the correct management and organization, a stable legal framework and the implementation of justice, a mutual communication and dialogue of private sector and civil society, social movements, effective resoluti on of disputes and negotiations, general and public opinion, harmonization of ideas, social, political and cultural ethics and accountability are the features which can be attributed to good governance which is inseparable from the policy of sustainable development process (Figure 2). For this reason, when evaluating a sustainable development

[23] Ibid. p.51.
[24] Segger, M.C.C., Khalfan, A. Strengthening Environmental Governance & Law for Global Sustainable Development. The Centre for International Sustainable Development Law 2002. http://cisdl.org/public /docs/news/brief4.pdf. [2016 07 01]. p.2.

policy, a good governance must also be taken into account, so this value must be treated as an extremely important tool to achieve better results.

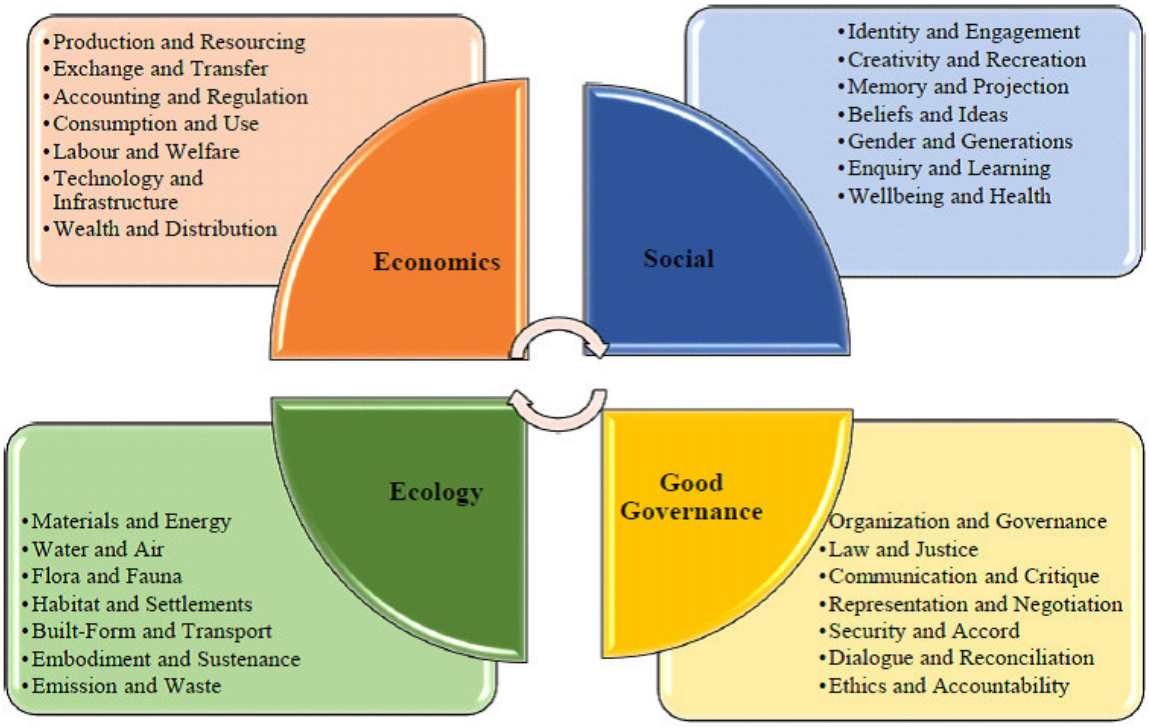

Figure 2. Sustainable development policies and good governance component ratio (adapted to Global Impact Cities Programme, 2014, p. 10–12)

This figure shows a policy of sustainable development and good governance in the ratio, to which many scientists studying the impact of good governance in this process[25]. The researchers say that good governance affects the efficient management of resources in which each country's government, business and the community work to determine the capacity of society to operate in a complex development process. This is confirmed by Kemp, Parto and Gibson[26] arguing that in good governance and sustainable development policies of mutual interaction process there should be included as many different stakeholders that are participating in the decision-making processes as possible who would make a commitment to create a harmonious and functioning process. This means that sustainable development is the

[25] Ghosh, R., Gabbay, R., Siddique, A. Good Governance Issues for Sustainable Development: The Indian Ocean Region. Delhi, 1999. https://books.google.lt/books?id=Qy6fYaAnJ0sC&pg=PR7&lpg=PR7&dq=7.%09Ghosh,+R.,+Gabbay,+R.,+Siddique,+A.+Good+Governance+Issues+for+Sustainable+Development:+The+Indian+Ocean+Region.&source=bl&ots=Gu-ltmq808&sig=V0z3jBQ4Cb33ZfzK6soYxBT_1nI&hl=lt&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiF8L6on6_WAhWmB5oKHZOXBWQQ6AEIJjAA#v=onepage&q=7.%09Ghosh%2C%20R.%2C%20Gabbay%2C%20R.%2C%20Siddique%2C%20A.%20Good%20Governance%20Issues%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%3A%20The%20Indian%20Ocean%20Region.&f=false. [2016 05 06]. p. 6–7

[26] Kemp, R., Parto, S., Gibson, R.B. Governance for sustainable development: moving from theory to practice. Int. J. Sustainable Development, 2005, Vol. 8, No. ½. p.17

starting point of interaction between the government, private sector and the citizens of the country.

In summary, it can be said that the main condition of long-term sustainable development is meaningless without good governance in any country because in spite of the resources the country would not be able to successfully deal with sustainable development challenges faced by the current generation and which the next generation will be inevitably faced against.

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF INDICATORS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF GOOD GOVERNANCE IN THE BALTIC COUNTRIES

Baltic Countries Strategy Papers presented similar strategic goals. These goals are related to economic development, improving the quality of public life, environmental protection, environmentally friendly vehicles, renewable energy sources in all sectors, the promotion of cultural values and national identity preservation. It is noted that Estonia takes great care of its people and the preservation of culture and this goal has become a Sustainable Estonia 21 strategy foundation. Latvia takes care of the preservation of national identity but pays close attention to the innovative society, youth, human resources development and education. Lithuania's strategic documents provide the option of maintaining their national identity among all the cultures of the European Union and emphasizes the regional and economic development, safe for the environment and human energies and public education. Although national strategies of the Baltic countries have differences all of them are connected by one and the most important task - to ensure human well-being which describes those aspects that people consider important in their lives, i.e. consumption and income, nutrition, health, work, education, housing, leisure, physical security, land and ecosystems, water, air quality, trust and authority. The overall context of the National Sustainable Development Strategies of the Baltic countries provides a long-term perspective of the most important challenges of sustainable development they face and indicates the options addressing priority issues in problem areas. Therefore, Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian national sustainable development strategies can be identified as a catalyst for change, which gives reason to improve sustainable development policies.

The aim of the studies was to evaluate the implementation of the policy of sustainable development in the Baltic countries in the context of good governance. In order to carry out the study one of the empirical research methods was selected - quantitative study, which was carried out on the basis of secondary data already collected. A quantitative study was selected

from Eurostat statistics - *economic, social and environmental protection and good governance indicators*. The study analyzes sustainable development indicators of Baltic countries in the period of 2008 - 2012. This period is important because the global economic and financial crisis took place in this period. The indicators of this period revealed the impact of global crisis impact to sustainable development policy, how differently Baltic countries were affected in economic, social and environmental areas. The list of statistical indicators supplied by Eurostat is extensive, so the indicators of work efficiency and productivity, of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion, climate change, energy, environmental pollution, biodiversity protection, citizens' participation and confidence in the government rates were chosen. These indicators allowed to undertake a study of the sustainable development policy in the context of good governance.

1. Socio-economic development. The indicators such as total real Gross Domestic Product per capita; total investment to Gross Domestic Product ratio; common household paint rate; real labor productivity per hour worked; the level of employment; the level of unemployment were analyzed in this area of development. It was found that in real GDP per capita in 2009, the Baltic countries' status has dropped (Table 2). This decline relates to the worldwide financial and economic crisis in 2008. Most real Gross Domestic Product per capita has decreased in Estonia (EUR 1 400 per capita) while in Lithuania and Latvia - EUR 1 100 per capita. This means that the economic decline failed to halt during this period. In 2011-2012, Gross Domestic Product per capita grew evenly in all three Baltic countries – EUR 400 per capita. It can be assumed that this change has been affected by the rapid introduction of fiscal incentives and the anti-crisis policy in national and European Union level: suspended increasing wages of employees of state apparatus and private sector in order to prevent job cuts, cropped costs of public administration, reduced payments transfer to compulsory pension fund, reforms of public sector and higher education have been taken more seriously. Sustainable development policy is evaluated positively because timely economic measures have been able to avoid more severe consequences - high unemployment, poverty and social exclusion, a large number of emigrants.

The access to foreign capital has become extremely difficult because of the financial crisis that stifled the world's economic growth. The financial crisis has reduced household and business confidence in economic stability, so the business sector savings and household savings decline have been highlighted.

Table 2. Socio-economic development indicators of changes in the Baltic countries in 2008-2012

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
1. ***Socio-economic development***					
1.1. *Real GDP per capita (EUR per inhabitant)*					
Lithuania	8000	6900	7100	7700	8100
Latvia	7000	5900	5900	6400	6800
Estonia	9500	8100	8400	9100	9500
1.2. *The total investment to GDP ratio (percent)*					
Lithuania	25.35	17.18	16.29	18.03	16.65
Latvia	29.65	21.58	18.22	21.33	22.79
Estonia	30.31	21.19	18.97	23.59	25.22
1.3. *Common household savings rate (percent)*					
Lithuania	1.1	5.41	8.24	4.19	0.89
Latvia	4.91	10.67	4.71	1.31	1.8
Estonia	11.94	10.48	10.11	11.12	4.53
1.4. *Real labor productivity per hour worked (EUR per hour.)*					
Lithuania	8.8	8.3	9.4	10.1	10.3
Latvia	7.3	7.2	7.6	7.9	8.2
Estonia	10.0	10.3	10.9	10.8	11.2
1.5. *Employment rate (thousands) woman./man (20-64 years of age group)*					
Lithuania	68.7/75.6	67.2/66.8	65.0/63.5	66.6/67.2	67.9/69.1
Latvia	71.9/79.3	66.5/66.8	64.5/64.0	65.3/67.5	66.4/70.0
Estonia	72.9/81.5	69.0/71.0	65.9/67.8	67.8/73.5	69.4/75.1
1.6. *The unemployment rate (percentage) woman./man (25-74 years of age group)*					
Lithuania	4.9/5.2	9.5/15.0	13.2/19.3	11.7/16.2	10.8/13.7
Latvia	6.4/7.4	12.4/18.5	14.2/20.7	12.2/17.0	12.5/14.7
Estonia	4.4/4.8	9.1/14.7	12.6/17.3	10.7/11.8	8.2/9.5

This led to the investment decrease, which had a significant impact on sustainable development in all areas. It was found that in the Baltic countries after the financial crisis in 2008, the investment to Gross Domestic Product ratio has decreased significantly (Table 2): compared to the year 2008, all three countries fell by almost 8 percent and continued to decline in 2009. A slight recovery was observed in 2011 compared to 2010. These changes were caused by rising average wages, decreasing unemployment, low inflation and unfavorable savings interest rates. In 2012, investments grew in Estonia -1,63 percent and Latvia – 1,46 percent. Meanwhile, compared with 2011 the investment to Gross Domestic Product ratio in Lithuania fell to 1,38 percent in 2012. Changing laws, high levels of corruption, unstable tax environment, and high tax rates discourage foreign investors to set up companies in Lithuania. For these reasons, Lithuania's sustainable development policy which deals with economic and social areas is evaluated negatively because the parties concerned are not sufficiently encouraged to get involved in socially responsible activities and public education and information for development. Estonian and Latvian indicators allow a positive evaluation of sustainable development policy because this policy creates a more attractive environment for investment.

In order to find out the Baltic household savings volumes, the overall household saving rate which will identify the countries the standard of living in 2008 - 2012 period was analyzed. The analysis of data showed that the total household savings rate in the Baltic countries varied very unevenly. In 2009, this figure has risen (in Estonia – 8,54 percent, Latvia – 5,76 percent, Lithuania – 6,52 percent). This means that total household saved more and consumed less. In 2010, Lithuania's total household savings rate grew which means that private consumption fell due to reduced funding. Deteriorating expectations and confidence in the government has increased the total household savings rate. However, this ratio decreased in Estonia and Latvia. In 2011, despite the weak signs of economic recovery the Lithuanian households' overall savings rate started to decline again. Compared to 2011 the total household savings rate decreased by 3,3 percent in 2012 which shows that Lithuanians began to save less due to lower household income. Latvian overall savings rate is negative in the period of 2011-2012. This shows that the Latvians in the economy look casual and spend everything they earn. In 2012, Estonia's total household savings rate fell by 6,53 percentages. This can be explained by the fact that Estonia's salaries are much higher because Estonians have higher financial cost saving opportunities. Therefore, Estonia's common household savings rate in the period of 2008-2012 is much higher than in Lithuania and Latvia. Estonia's sustainable development policy which affects the growth and development of the area can be evaluated positively because post-crisis suspension of the economic downturn proves to be a better preparation to solve the crisis. Meanwhile, Lithuania and Latvia indicators results evaluate sustainable development policy of these countries negatively.

Real labor productivity per hour worked index means one worker per hour worked in the added value expressed in euro. Increasing productivity allows creating more services or products and leads to growth in earnings. The analysis of data showed that in 2009 compared to 2008 labor productivity in Lithuania and Latvia fell respectively 0,5 euro per hour worked and 0,1 euro per hour worked while in Estonia it rose by 0,3 euro per hour worked (Table 2). This shows that Estonia was more prepared to deal with the crisis, preserving the jobs and productivity. It is observed that in all three Baltic countries labor productivity per hour worked increased steadily in 2010-2012. It should be noted that the Latvian labor productivity during the period of 2008-2012 remained low in comparison with Lithuania and Estonia. Estonia's minimum wage as well as labor productivity per hour worked was ahead of Lithuania and Latvia all the time. In Latvia, even though labor productivity was the lowest the minimum wage was increasing continuously. Meanwhile, in Lithuania, the labor productivity per hour worked

was significantly higher than in Latvia and grew gradually in 2009-2012 but the minimum wage remained the same, i.e., the lowest compared with Latvia and Estonia. Based on these results, Lithuania's sustainable development policy can be viewed as negative.

Employment and social situation is one of the biggest problems in the Baltic countries, especially in the financial crisis period and after it because a loss of the employment increased poverty and social exclusion. In order to find out the changes to employment of the population and the existence of gender inequality in Baltic countries in the period of 2008-2012, the employment rate among men and women aged between 20-64 was analyzed. The analysis of data showed that after the 2008 crisis, both men and women employment rate fell heavily. The overall women and men employment rate that fell in Estonia in 2009 – 14,4 thousand, Latvia – 17,9 thousand, Lithuania – 10,3 thousand. The employment rate in the Baltic countries also decreased in 2010. This means that the economic crisis has led to job cuts and suspended the creation of new jobs in these countries. It should be noted that in the Baltic countries the employment rate for women declined more slowly than for men. The reason for this is the fact that women in the labor market in Baltic countries are less active than men. There has been a slight growth of men and women employment because of the economic recovery and Gross Domestic Period growth in the Baltic countries in the period of 2011-2012. The sustainable development policy for economic and social development in the area of employment in Baltic countries is evaluated negatively because during the crisis the necessary political decisions that would have suspended the drastic decline in the employment rate and promote the wider use of its growth in the after-crisis period has not been taken timely. Sustainable development policy is evaluated negatively as well because there is still an obvious gender inequality which exists when the economy grows, the new jobs in the market emerge and the employment levels rise.

Further analysis of the changes in the unemployment rate shows that the drastic increase in the unemployment rate occurred in 2009 during the economic crisis (Table 2). This fact is directly related to a decline in the employment rate, which was analyzed earlier. The unemployment level had seen noticeable growth in the Baltic countries in 2010 but at a reduced rate. This means that political decisions and actions taken by the Baltic countries led to the suspension of economic decline that followed the decrease of unemployment rate's growth. It should be evaluated by the fact that the increased unemployment rate led to an increased number of emigrants in the Baltic countries. During 2011-2012 the level of unemployment declined in the Baltic countries, in Latvia - female unemployment rate increased by 0,3 percent in 2012. Based on unemployment in the Baltic countries data analysis, sustainable development policy

is evaluated negatively. Sustainable development policy failed to decline in the unemployment rate, effective active labor market policy measures, and labor relations in the modernization.

2. Sustainable consumption and production. For the analysis of this area of development indicators such as the generation of waste, air pollution and passenger cars were analyzed. The waste is a significant problem throughout the world, including the Baltic countries. Humans are the only producers of waste, so they are responsible for the correct consumerist attitude. For analyzing the effectiveness of sustainable development policy concerning environmental welfare, the amount of waste generated (expressed in thousands of tons) has been analyzed in the Baltic countries in 2008, 2010 and 2012 (Table 3).

Table 3. Sustainable consumption and production indicators of changes in the Baltic countries in 2008-2012

	2008	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**
2. Sustainable consumption and production					
2.1. Waste generation (tonnes)					
Lithuania	6333352	-	5583082	-	5583082
Latvia	1495084	-	1498200	-	2309581
Estonia	19583855	-	19000195	-	21992343
2.2. Air pollution (tonnes)					
Sulfur Oxides					
Lithuania	33178	-	31514	-	36399
Latvia	9706	-	9153	-	7461
Estonia	76572	-	89436	-	45040
Oxides					
Lithuania	63385	-	60173	-	57782
Latvia	55196	-	57781	-	55638
Estonia	55497	-	53976	-	49591
Ammonia					
Lithuania	37420	-	38062	-	37971
Latvia	17669	-	18851	-	19021
Estonia	10786	-	10120	-	10755
2.3. Passenger cars (per 1,000 population)					
Lithuania	525	540	554	570	0
Latvia	431	426	307	299	305
Estonia	413	409	416	433	456

An analysis of the data showed that compared to Lithuania and Latvia in 2008, 2010 and 2012, most waste is produced in Estonia. In 2008, the amount of waste generated in Estonia exceeded the amount of waste generated in Lithuania by 3 times, and in comparison with Latvia - 13 times. In 2012, waste produced in Latvia grew but in comparison with Estonia, the number ratio decreased slightly. It should be noted that in Estonia and Lithuania, the amount of waste generated compared to 2008 decreased in 2010. It was influenced by the financial and economic crisis, the slowdown in economic activity. It should be noted that Estonia has a lot of waste

imported from Finland, whereas waste incineration plants of its own waste is not enough because such large amounts of waste can affect the imported waste. Meanwhile, Latvia compared to 2008 slightly increased in 2010. It can be argued that the economic activity has been particularly affected by the crisis. In all three Baltic countries, with the exception of Lithuania in 2010, waste produced grew. This fact can be justified by the recovery from the economic crisis, industrial strength, high material and energy losses. An important fact is that the waste generated by households also contributes to Table 3 presented characteristics. The growing amount of waste depends on household consumption. It can be said that Latvia and Lithuania have not sufficiently developed recycling as well as efficient use of resources. Sustainable development policy is closely related to human and nature ratio's balance. Waste generation has an extremely negative impact on the environment. Growing amount of waste generation suggests that sustainable development policy does not sufficiently promote the introduction of new technologies which can reduce the environmental pollution and damage to public health. No efficient production and consumption patterns were developed in the Baltic countries. It is obvious that there is a lack of effort in Lithuania to develop a sustainable economy, separate resource and waste generation from economic growth, use waste as a resource, regulate waste streams, to promote the public good behavior in support of environmental well-being and reduce the indiscriminate use of resources. Lithuania's sustainable development policy is not effective and efficient in economic terms – waste recycling would potentially create more jobs. This factor would reduce poverty, social exclusion, growth trends, promote employment and thus contribute to the socio-economic well-being. This policy is evaluated positively.

Emissions, which contribute to the formation of ground-level ozone, are particularly harmful to the environment, air, soil and public health. The increase in health care expenditure is affected by the air pollution harmful impact on public health. The adverse pollution effects on the ecosystem increase costs of soil, water treatment and environmental quality improvement. In order to evaluate a sustainable development policy of emission reduction in this area indicators of air emissions and their quantity (tons) were analyzed in the period of 2008-2012 (Table 3).

Analysis of the data showed that air pollution, ammonia and nitrogen oxides are highest in Lithuania in the period of 2008-2012 while the air emissions of sulfur oxides in the period of 2008-2012 are the largest in Estonia. Emissions of sulfur oxides promote fuel combustion and heat generation plants. Emissions of sulfur oxides in Latvia are the lowest compared to

Estonia and Lithuania. In Latvia, this rate influences extremely low production capacity. In 2009, Estonia and Lithuania have seen noticeable air pollution from sulfur oxides decreases. This fact is influenced by the economic recession and reduced demand for energy. In 2012, a sudden decrease of sulfur oxides air emissions in Estonia shows that this country began to use more renewable energy sources, thereby reducing the emission of pollutants into the environment. Meanwhile, the Lithuanian indicators in 2012 unlike in Latvia and Estonia show a sharp increase in air emissions of sulfur oxides, as compared to 2011. This shows that Lithuania has insufficiently implemented modern technologies that produce energy in a less polluting way.

An analysis of changes in the number of passenger cars in the Baltic countries found that in Lithuania, the number of cars per 1 000 inhabitants is the largest compared to Latvia and Estonia. This fact justifies the highest emissions into the environment in Lithuania compared to Latvia and Estonia. This means that the air pollution and the number of cars per 1 000 inhabitants is closely related to each other. Based on this data, the Lithuanian sustainable development policy is evaluated negatively because the public does not promote the use of cars that are eco-friendly, which emit fewer pollutants into the environment. It also does not facilitate the use of electric cars and public transport (Table 3).

Summarizing the air pollution indicators in the Baltic countries, sustainable development policy effectiveness in Lithuania compared to Latvia and Estonia can be evaluated the worst. Knowing that the state of the environment affects human social development, ecological safety and reliable state development perspective, Lithuanian policy on sustainable development does not promote modern and the use of clean power generation sources, the use of environmentally-friendly vehicles, eco-industrial development of any economic activity including agriculture, the organization of activities towards the people surrounding environmental improvement and pollution prevention measures to reduce the negative impact of anthropogenic activities on the environment well enough.

3. Social inclusion. Analysis of this development area has been considered as an indicator, such as poverty and social exclusion. Poverty is linked to the economic well-being and is identified as monetary poverty, material deprivation, and low labor intensity while social exclusion affects communication, connectivity, recognition in any activity and barriers to participation in society. Social inclusion is related to socio-economic development, reduction of poverty and social exclusion, the likelihood of labor market segregation, long-term unemployment, and gender inequality. It is known that the wages and low employment rate are

very low in the Baltic countries. In order to figure out how the poverty and social exclusion occurs at certain groups of age and gender, the indicators of men and women in different age groups, poverty and social exclusion were analyzed (Table 4).

Table 4. Women and men at risk of poverty and social exclusion in the Baltic countries, a percentage of total population (Eurostat, 2014)

	2008	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**
*3. **Social inclusion***					
3.1. Women at risk of poverty and social exclusion (24-54 year age group)					
Lithuania	22,5	25,2	32,1	30,6	29,1
Latvia	26,6	30,7	35,1	39,3	35,3
Estonia	15,2	18,7	20,3	22,4	21,9
3.2. Men at risk of poverty and social exclusion (24-54 year age group)					
Lithuania	20,6	25,8	34,4	32,9	29,8
Latvia	25,9	31,8	37,4	40,1	34,7
Estonia	16,4	18,5	20,8	24,7	21,5

The analysis of the data showed that the economic recession has dealt the biggest blow in the Baltic countries for women and men in the age group 25-54 in 2009. They are working-age people, so it can be concluded that people who suffered from poverty and social exclusion are individuals who have lost their jobs during the crisis. During 2010-2011, a growing percentage of men and women in 25-54 age group suggest that because of the delayed effects of the crisis poverty and social exclusion not only did not stop but also gradually increased. It can be said that those who became unemployed have the highest poverty and social exclusion risks because this ratio was growing in this working-age group. In 2012, due to the strong economic recovery and the fight against poverty and social exclusion in the Baltic countries, the number of people aged between 20-64 balancing on the edge of poverty and social exclusion has decreased slightly. The data suggests that unlike in Estonia, in Lithuania and Latvia men who were living on the edge of poverty and social exclusion make up a higher percentage of the population, which means that the number of men who have lost their jobs is higher. This confirms the existing gender inequalities in labor market, so women's intensity is much lower. This explains that the economic recession has affected a higher percentage of men. It is evident that gender inequality in Lithuania is the largest because the number of women living on the edge of poverty and social exclusion during the crisis was almost two times higher than men. In Estonia, gender inequality in the labor market has settled more since the economic recession affected both women and men almost equally. The percentage of men living on the edge of poverty and social exclusion decreased more than women because of the recovery of the economy. This suggests that the more active job market, the more men were employed more

often than women. Based on the data it appears that sustainable development policy of gender equality issues are solved better in Estonia than in Latvia or Lithuania. However, the overall summary of these results does not allow the Baltic countries' sustainable development policy to be evaluated positively because of the drastic amount of working-age people dropping out of the labor market. For these reasons, it can be said that a sustainable development policy did not protect the people's needs at a critical time and did not provide social security systems, which would reduce the number of individuals living on the edge of poverty and social exclusion. For these reasons, Lithuania's sustainable development policy is evaluated negatively.

4. Demographic change. Nation, language and cultural survival depends on the demographic situation in the country. Sustainable development policy of Baltic countries pays particular attention to preserving the national identity and the problem of aging population. Low birth rates are a problem in each state. In order to find out how the demographic situation is in the Baltic countries, the indicator of total fertility rate which is measured by number of births per woman will be analyzed (Table 5).

Table 5. The number of births per woman in the Baltic countries (Eurostat, 2014)

	2008	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**
4. ***Demographic changes***					
4.1. The total fertility rate					
Lithuania	1,45	1,50	1,50	1,55	1,60
Latvia	1,58	1,46	1,36	1,33	1,44
Estonia	1,72	1,70	1,72	1,61	1,56

The analysis of data showed that the birth rate has gradually increased only in Lithuania (2008 – 2012) but this rate is very small and does not provide changes of generations and demographic balance. In all three countries, a noticeable decline in birth rates was seen in 2009, which means that the financial and economic recession has negatively affected decisions to have children. In 2010, in Estonia, the birth rate increased slightly, decreased in Latvia but Lithuania remained the same as in 2009 – 1,5 newborn baby per woman. In 2011, in Estonia and Latvia, the birth rate declined while in Lithuania it has slightly increased. Compared with 2011 the birth rate in Estonia decreased, in Latvia and Lithuania it increased in 2012. Despite such fluctuations, the birth rate surpassed the pre-crisis level of fertility in Lithuania only but in other Baltic countries, it remains low. In 2012, the economy was already recovering hence other factors not only economic instability regulate the birth rate. These reasons can be attributed to unfavorable attitude of employers towards families with children, unresolved extracurricular and recreational activities in schools, the issue of housing for young families,

maternity benefits, a modified approach to family values. The changed approach of women to their role as mothers has had an impact on the birth rates. Modern women seek an education, career development, maturity. Based on the indicators the sustainable development policy in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia can be evaluated as ineffective in terms of family creation, i.e. negatively.

5. Climate change and energy. One of the key policy objectives of sustainable development is installation and use of renewable energy in all energy spheres. This is an extremely important issue as currently used resources - oil, natural gas and fossil fuels are damaging the environment, public health, energy security, drive a climate change. Renewable sources in Baltic countries are wind, solar, aerothermal, hydrothermal, hydropower, and biomass, biogas, including landfill and sewage treatment plant gas. In order to evaluate how sustainable development policy promotes renewable energy consumption in the Baltic countries, indicators of climate change and energy are analyzed in the heating and air-conditioning sectors, energy and transport sectors and are expressed in percentages (Table 6).

Table 6. Climate change and energy indicators of the Baltic countries in 2008-2012 (Eurostat, 2014)

	2008	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**
5. ***Climate change and energy***					
5.1. The share of renewable energy in heating and cooling sectors (percent)					
Lithuania	32,8	34,4	33,2	33,7	35,5
Latvia	42,9	47,9	43,8	44,8	47,4
Estonia	35,5	41,8	43,3	44,1	43,1
5.2. The share of renewable energy in the electricity sector (percent)					
Lithuania	4,9	5,9	7,4	9,0	10,9
Latvia	38,7	41,9	42,1	44,7	44,9
Estonia	2,1	6,1	10,4	12,3	15,8
5.3. Renewable energy in the transport sector (percent)					
Lithuania	4,2	4,3	3,6	3,7	4,8
Latvia	0,9	1,1	3,3	3,2	3,1
Estonia	0,1	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,3
5.4. Greenhouse gas emissions (thousands tons)					
Lithuania	24.932	20.462	21.119	21.680	21.622
Latvia	11.496	10.850	11.987	11.140	10.978
Estonia	19.546	16.189	19.892	20.484	19.188
5.5. Natural gas imports (thousand tons of oil equivalent)					
Lithuania	2.499,7	2.189,3	2.484,5	2.752,2	2.655,6
Latvia	1.095,3	1.399,8	903,1	1.409,7	1.378,2
Estonia	770,5	525,1	562,5	503,3	545,4

An analysis of the data (Table 6) found that the share of renewable energy in heating and cooling sectors compared to 2008 increased significantly (in Estonia – 6,3 percent, in Latvia - 5 percent, Lithuania – 1,6 percent) in 2009. Strongly influenced by the Russian natural gas

supply reduction in Europe the Baltic countries have also been forced to look for alternative energy sources. High dependence on one country whose economy is not stable, strategic raw materials and energy affects not only economic prosperity but also the country's national security. In 2010, apart from Estonia, in Latvia and Lithuania the share of renewable energy in the percentage of heating and cooling sectors decreased (in Latvia – 4,1 percent, Lithuania – 1,2 percent) in relation to the continuing economic crisis and its impact on the country's energy stability. Apart from Estonia, in Latvia (2,6 percent) and in Lithuania (1,8 percent) this indicator has increased in 2012 which means that with the recovering economy and the opportunities that arise these countries have started to use more renewable energy sources for heating and cooling sectors. It should be mentioned that the development of renewable energy sources increases the amount of energy extracted and the variety of energy sources in the Baltic countries. For these reasons, the need for imported energy and the dependence on energy exporting countries (in Lithuania's case - dependence on Russia) is reduced. Lithuania compared with Estonia and Latvia in the period of 2008-2012, uses the smallest amount of renewable energy in heating and cooling sectors. Based on this data, it can be said that a sustainable development policy in Lithuania is not sufficiently effective and efficient and does not consider the needs of users as there are no increases for heating and cooling energy from renewable sources resulting in not creating new jobs, improving the environment, not lowering conventional energy species, not intending to search for ways to reduce Lithuania's dependence on oil and gas. These factors may be associated with a lack of good governance not only in state institutions but also among political authorities who are responsible for a coherent energy. Lithuania‘s sustainable development policy in this sector is evaluated negatively.

An analysis of the share of renewable energy in electricity data (Table 6) found that the Latvian share of renewable energy in electricity is several times ahead of Estonia and Lithuania in 2008-2012. It should be noted that Latvia generates a lot of electricity from its own waters. Estonia (2,1 percent.) in 2008 was significantly behind Lithuania (4,9 percent.) in this area. However, since 2009 Estonia has overtaken Lithuania and significantly increased the use of renewable energy. Lithuania is quite far behind from Estonia and Latvia. It can be stated that Lithuania‘s sustainable development policy does not guarantee the development of renewable energy sources in electricity production to an economically, technically and environmentally useful level, does not fulfil the expectations of people on the main electricity production from renewable energy sources development criteria - competitive, available for consumers at

reasonable prices, so this sustainable development policy in this area can be evaluated negatively.

An analysis of the share of renewable energy in transport data (Table 6) showed that the share of renewable energy in the transport sector in Lithuania was higher than in Latvia and Estonia 2008-2012. It can be explained by the fact that the structure of the fuel significantly changed and the consumption of less polluting fuels increased. This means that the production of biodiesel, bioethanol and the agricultural areas used to grow plants for this production increased. It is noted that bio-fuel production rates did not decrease during the crisis period in the Baltic countries. This means that a significant part of the biofuel was exported. It appears that bio-fuel production capacity has increased in Lithuania. Lithuania‘s sustainable development policy for renewable energy in the transport sector can be evaluated positively because it promotes plant-based biofuels, aims to minimize pollution of the environment and also public welfare in respect of health.

Carbon dioxide is the main greenhouse gas. This waste is generated during the manufacturing process and extensive use of transport. These emissions have a significant impact on climate change and the consequences can adversely affect not only economy, but also social welfare and health. Greenhouse gas emissions are one of the main objectives of the Baltic countries for implementing sustainable development policy. To evaluate sustainable development policy in the Baltic States, the indicator of greenhouse gas emissions expressed in thousands of tons was analyzed (Table 6). The analysis of the data showed that Lithuania during the period of 2008-2012 was ahead of Estonia and Latvia. It is noted that this indicator decreased in Lithuania after 2009 (in 2008 - 24 932 thousand tons, in 2009 - 20 432 thousand tons). This was influenced by the shutdown of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant. In 2009, there is a significant decline of this indicator which could be related to the global economic and financial crisis that reduced the production and use of transport in the Baltic countries. In 2008 - 2012 period, the greenhouse gas emission values differ very slightly in Lithuania and Estonia while the Latvian rate is almost two times lower. This might be because of the "Riga syndrome" which was the center of the entire production, transport and high population density (up to 30 percent Latvian population) in the city of Riga. Meanwhile, the rest of Latvia is very sparsely populated, there is no intensive production, the business is not being developed, and there is no intense traffic. Based on the current results, Lithuania's sustainable development policy can be evaluated negatively because of poor promotion of measures that ensure the potential of low-cost energy saving and wind power plants and small hydro operation, insufficient carbon

capture and storage. Sufficient attention has not been paid to informational measures either - social advertising which form the ecological populations and behavior of employees to save energy and modernization of housing.

The energy dependency continues to be one of the biggest problems in the country and that could have a negative impact on economic security, public socio-economic needs and expectations. A particularly important task is to meet the energy consumers' expectations - competitive price interactions, variety of resources for energy production allowing choosing the cheapest and most readily available energy resource in households and industry. To evaluate sustainable development policy in relation to energy dependence, indicator of imported natural gas in the Baltic countries, expressed in thousands of tons of oil equivalent, was analyzed (Table 6). The analysis of the data obtained showed that Lithuania has imported more natural gas than Latvia and Estonia during the period of 2008-2012. The big difference is observed between the Lithuanian and Estonian indicators. This difference can be explained by the fact that Estonia is rich in oil and shale gas - the resources that are processed in the country itself so there is no need to import large quantities of natural gas as there is in Lithuania or Latvia. Latvia generates a lot of electricity from its own waters as was mentioned earlier. Meanwhile, Lithuania has failed to extract tangible benefits from its own soil. Compared to 2008 natural gas imports in the Baltic countries decreased in 2009. This is an effect of the economic and financial crisis on reduced production, which caused lower imports of natural gas. Latvia is also dependent on imports of natural gas because of its bearing and oil, yet they started pumping. Based on these results, sustainable development policy in Lithuania and Latvia can be evaluated negatively. Both Baltic countries did not use all possibilities to pump oil. It appears that in order to ensure energy independence in Lithuania, it's sustainable development policy is formed and implemented poorly, does not ensure economic security, does not look for ways and solutions for renewable energy production, does not care about public health, environmental quality, better air quality, job creation, does not fulfil people's expectations in regards to lower energy prices. For these reasons, the sustainable development in this area is evaluated negatively.

6. Sustainable transport. The transport sector has a considerable impact on the sustainable development process particularly in the economic and social development. Developed and functioning transport infrastructure is an integral part of the modern economy. This is related to production and service companies supplying raw materials, personnel, the final product and services. Transport in Baltic countries is very important since the economic growth and improved living standards depend largely on the growth of the number of employees

and employee productivity. However, the Baltic countries are facing social problems such as an aging population, declining birth rates and emigration. These factors do not allow to increase the number of employees. This means that the economic growth and better living standards can be achieved by increasing employee productivity in the Baltic countries. This factor contributes to transport infrastructure's exploitation and development. In order to evaluate sustainable development policy in the transport sector the indicator of the modal split in various areas was analyzed. The unit used for measuring the transport performance is the passenger-kilometer. Passenger-kilometer represents one passenger travelling a distance of one kilometer. This indicator is defined as the percentage of transport by passenger cars, buses, coaches and trains in total inland passenger transport performance, measured in passenger-kilometer (Table 7).

Table 7. Sustainable transport indicators in the Baltic States 2008-2012 (Eurostat, 2014)

	2008	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**
6. ***Sustainable transport***					
6.1. Modal split of passenger transport					
Passenger cars (passenger-kilometer, percent)					
Lithuania	90,9	92	91,7	90,8	91
Latvia	78,7	80,2	78,2	76,2	76,9
Estonia	81,4	83,1	83,6	84,1	83,6
Motor coaches, buses and trolley busses (passenger-kilometer, percent)					
Lithuania	8,2	7,1	7,6	8,3	8,2
Latvia	16,1	15,1	17,1	18,9	18,3
Estonia	16,5	15	14,4	14	14,6
Trains (passenger-kilometer, percent)					
Lithuania	1	0,9	0,7	0,8	0,8
Latvia	5,2	4,7	4,7	4,9	4,8
Estonia	2,1	2	2	2	1,8
6.2. Modal split of Freight Transport					
Road transport					
Lithuania	58	59,9	59,1	58,8	62,3
Latvia	38,7	30,2	38,1	36,2	35,8
Estonia	55,3	47,3	45,8	48,5	53
Rail transport					
Lithuania	41,9	40,1	40,9	41,2	37,7
Latvia	61,3	69,8	61,9	63,8	64,2
Estonia	44,7	52,7	54,2	51,5	47
6.3. Air pollution by particulate matters <10µM (all sectors of the issue, tons)					
Lithuania	25.475	24.660	24.530	24.740	25.426
Latvia	36.102	37.567	36.492	33.952	36.634
Estonia	26.869	24.605	33.110	42.846	21.957

The analysis of data showed that the most common passenger transportation means in the Baltic countries are cars, which include minibuses up to 9 seats. Table 7 shows that the financial crisis in 2009 has not affected the passenger traffic flow of cars (Estonia – 83,1 percent, Latvia – 80,2 percent, Lithuania - 92 percent) but the percentage was lower in 2008. This result could

be affected by the financial crisis that caused reduced passenger number (e.g. tourists and employees) and more people used cars rather than coaches, buses and trains. This factor is related to the negative impact of the crisis of tourism and public transport sectors. In 2009, the percent of kilometers traveled of one passenger by coach, bus and train dropped in the Baltic countries. In Lithuania compared to Estonia and Latvia the train, coach and bus transport modes have the least passengers per kilometer traveled. Low use of trains may be impacted by worn out and not up to the European Union standards railway infrastructure, an underdeveloped electrified railway network and shortages of the interaction with other means of transport. The high number of passenger cars and vans determine low coach and bus travel rate. Based on these results, Lithuania's sustainable development policy in the transport sector can be evaluated negatively because of slow economic growth, sluggish railway reform that discourages passengers from using environmentally favorable measure - trains. The decrease of passengers traveling by train or bus is determined by the number of Lithuanian residents own dependence on light-duty vehicles which are convenient and lead to more comfortable and convenient communication. Sluggish sustainable development policy in the transport sector is determined by the disproportionate distribution of passenger transport in Lithuania and causes not only environmental but also social problems. This isolates the problem of rural and suburban areas of major population centers, creates jobs, reduces people's integration into society, displacing vulnerable groups of people from the labor market, exacerbating social exclusion, and increases social benefits costs. Most people are forced to choose their own car for work but this could be a problem for low-income earners. Great car traffic causes noise, promotes environmental pollution, and emits more carbon dioxide – factors which negatively affect public health. Sluggish Lithuania‘s sustainable development policy is evaluated negatively because it does not encourage people's good behavior and ecological approach by choosing a less hostile environment measure - the train or bus instead of a car.

The indicator of modal split of freight transport (railways and roads) is defined as the percentage of each inland mode in total freight transport performance measured in ton-kilometers. Not only passengers’ transformation is relevant and significant in the Baltic countries in the sustainable development process. A crucial factor for the Baltic countries economic growth and social development is the freight traffic, which has the highest share of the transport services export. For this reason, the road and rail infrastructure in the Baltic countries has to be adapted to the free movement of freight transport in these countries. This is particularly true in Lithuania because this country is a transit corridor between neighboring

Western, Central and Eastern European countries as well as Belarus, Russia and other countries. To evaluate sustainable development policy for freight transport distribution in respect to each mode percentage of the country's freight transport expressed in ton-kilometers in size is analyzed (Table 7). The analysis of the data obtained showed that in Lithuania unlike in Estonia and in Latvia the road, freight transport flows are larger than rail freight. Freight traffic on the rail is concentrated two times more than on the road in Latvia. This fact leads to the fact that Latvia is carrying more freight to Russia than to Western Europe and the connections between the two countries by rail is more developed. Lithuania is closer to Western Europe and therefore has a greater chance to carry more freight than in Latvia or Estonia. The higher percentage of freight transported by road in Lithuania is determined by country's poor railway infrastructure that does not meet European Union standards, i.e. the railways are not adapted to the direct transport of goods from Lithuania to Western Europe. For this reason, the freight traffic is more directed towards the road and this factor has a negative impact on the environment especially air pollution, road life and quality and public health. Based on the results, Lithuania's sustainable development policy for freight transport in this area can be evaluated negatively because political decisions to modernize and develop railway infrastructure in the transport of goods from Lithuania to Western Europe have not been taken timely. There was no improvement of the railway infrastructure inside Lithuania in order to promote freight transport of the greenest and cheapest means of transport - container trains. Lithuania‘s sustainable development policy does not take into account the sustainability of public health, consumer expectations and interests, environmental improvement, job creation, economic growth opportunities because freight traffic is not diverted to rail transport.

The vehicle is the biggest source of air pollution by far. This air pollutant is the most damaging to the human health. The growing number of vehicles respectively increase the burden on the atmosphere. Air pollution by particulate matter negatively affects ecosystems and loss of biodiversity. The analysis of data (Table 7) shows that Latvia in comparison to Lithuania and Estonia (with the exception of Estonia in 2011), in 2008 - 2012 period has the highest air pollution. There are more passenger cars per 1 000 inhabitants and road load in Lithuania than in Latvia but air pollution is not higher. This fact is influenced by the fact that in Latvia, unlike in Lithuania‘s and Estonia‘s industry, energy companies, the traffic volume and population density are concentrated in the city of Riga and the suburbs ("Riga syndrome"). This factor is evenly distributed throughout the territory in Lithuania resulting in a smaller concentration of particles so it quickly fades. Nevertheless, in Lithuania, emissions levels are

high. This means that residents of Lithuania under-use public transport, electric cars and bicycles. Passenger and freight traffic flow is more directed to roads and the motors activate the flow of solid particles. Based on the analysis of data, Lithuania's sustainable development policy is evaluated negatively. The companies do not have access to freight transport by rails because of the poor rail infrastructure. If that were not the case, air pollution would be much lower than it is now because of widely used road transport. Remaining public transport problems contribute to the population's dependence on private transport which results in a large number of cars that promote the release of particulate matter. The quality of the environment and public health is deteriorating because of this weak sustainable development policy in the transport sector. This makes socially vulnerable groups suffer - the elderly and children, due to growing public costs of combating these problems.

7. Natural resources. Preserving biodiversity areas is particularly important to the Baltic countries and it is an integral part of sustainable development policy in economic, social and environmental aspects. The protection of biodiversity is essential in order to preserve the natural and cultural heritage, which is an important value in each Baltic country (it has been often mentioned in the national strategies). This way, the landscape and biodiversity are preserved, the ecological balance in the landscape (the environment and the quality of the environment) is ensured, the use of natural resources is balanced, the conditions are formed for educational tourism (economic development), entertainment and spiritual rest (social development). It also allows scientific research. To evaluate sustainable development policy in this area, the indicator of the biodiversity of protected areas expressed in square kilometers is analyzed (Table 8).

Table 8. Protected biodiversity areas in the Baltic countries in 2008-2012 (km^2) (Eurostat, 2014)

	2008	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**
Lithuania	65200	65200	65200	-	-
Latvia	64589	64589	64589	-	-
Estonia	45226	45226	45226	-	-

The data analysis showed that protected biodiversity areas in the period of 2008 - 2010 compared to Estonia and Latvia are the greatest in Lithuania. This does not mean that Lithuania cares more about the preservation of biodiversity than other Baltic countries. Protected biodiversity areas in the Baltic countries are proportionally distributed according to the size of the country. In Estonia, protected biodiversity areas are the smallest (45,226 square kilometers) because this country is the smallest of the three Baltic countries. Latvia is smaller than Lithuania

as well so this indicator varies slightly (Latvia - 64 589 square kilometers, Lithuania - 65 200 square kilometers). It should be noted that protected areas have not changed in 2008 - 2010 which means that the country's economic activity is strictly controlled, i.e. it is not allowed to develop the road transport infrastructure, residential areas and the farming in these areas. It appears that the Baltic countries pay the same attention to the protection of biodiversity. Based on the analysis of data, Lithuania's sustainable development policy in this area is evaluated positively. This policy helps increase public awareness of the importance of biodiversity and the natural resources, to reduce the loss of biodiversity and ensures an uninterrupted ecosystem service flows - nature's resources which provide economic or social benefits.

8. Good governance. Indicators such as policy coherence and efficiency, openness and participation of citizens' trust in this area of development were analyzed. The indicator of policy coherence and effectiveness involves the new cases before Court of Justice of European Union, which are linked to Member State failure to fulfill its obligations. Two of the biggest common market irregularities related groups are made up of tax and environmental issues under the policy of sustainable development sector. Baltic national strategies emphasized that policy coherence and effectiveness should be based on better regulation. One of the ongoing policies of sustainable development issues are new infringement cases relating to the common market. This indicator shows how many pending cases exist in the Baltic countries. To evaluate sustainable development policy in regulation the vertical dimension of this policy, i.e. the coherence of the European Union and national level is analyzed. Baltic national strategies and targets cannot contradict with the provisions of the European Union so it is important to encourage the European Union's sustainable development policy coherence in all areas and the consistency of the Baltic countries' national actions to strengthen cooperation to achieve sustainable development. The analysis of data (Table 9) showed that in the period of 2008 - 2012, Latvia is the only state of the Baltic countries, which had no cases that led to failing its obligations. Lithuania had two cases, one in 2008 and one in 2012. Estonia has the largest number of infringements related to the common market of European Union. This means that Estonia during the process of implementing the sustainable development policy at the national level, unlawfully implemented the common market rules related to taxes and the environment. It appears that Estonia has difficulties in implementing sustainable development policy and good governance. This fact leads to a lack of interaction between economic, social and environmental areas and good governance among different levels of government. Based on these results, Lithuania's sustainable development policy is evaluated positively because of an

apparently harmonious interaction between economic, social and environmental areas and close coordination of the authorities at local, regional, national and Community levels.

Table 9. Good governance indicators in the Baltic countries in 2008-2012 (Eurostat, 2014)

	2008	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**
7. ***Good governance***					
7.1. New with the EU Single Market, infringement cases (item)					
Lithuania	1	-	-	-	1
Latvia	-	-	-	-	-
Estonia	2	5	7	1	-
7.2. Individuals use of e-government services (inhabitant, percent)					
Lithuania	18	-	18	-	18
Latvia	14	-	22	-	31
Estonia	33	-	43	-	47
7.3. Citizens' confidence in the European Parliament (inhabitant, percent)					
Lithuania	57	52	57	51	56
Latvia	41	41	45	48	43
Estonia	61	65	62	53	57

An open and democratic society and citizen participation is an especially important aspect in the sustainable development policy process. This indicator shows that people use internet to communicate with the authorities. This figure includes citizens aged between 16 to 74 years and is expressed as a percentage of the total in this age group of persons. To evaluate sustainable development policy interaction and communication between the public and the authorities' indicator of citizens' use of e - government services were analyzed. The analysis of data showed that in the period of 2008 - 2010, Estonian citizens compared to Lithuania and Latvia mainly used e - government services. It should be noted that the citizen communication with public authorities to obtain the information has increased in Estonia and Latvia while remaining stable in Lithuania (18 percent in 2008, 2010 and 2012). Based on the data obtained, Lithuania's sustainable development policy is evaluated negatively because of the absence of encouraging citizen participation in this process. The reasons may be that the benefits of electronic services are not sufficiently explained to people, they distrust the quality or Lithuanians are more conservative than the Latvians and Estonians. The use of e-government services have economic and social aspects – they allow managing affairs of the public administration institutions in more comfortable places at convenient times and provides quicker service.

Another important aspect is the Baltic countries' people's trust in the European Union institutions. Citizens' trust in these institutions is relevant for an effective and democratic sustainable development policy implementation because it increases the likelihood of a more active participation in the elections, encourages politicians and political parties to make

decisions that are acceptable to civil society. This indicator reveals the image of the European Parliament. To evaluate sustainable development policy, the indicator of citizens' trust in the European Parliament ratio expressed as a percentage of the Lithuanian, Latvian or Estonian population was analyzed. The analysis of the data (Table 9) showed that Lithuania's compared to Estonia's and Latvia's the number of citizens who trust the European Parliament decreased by 5 percent in 2009. Such a result could be influenced by the economic frustration which led to the closure of the Ignalina nuclear power plant, emigration and economic crisis which the politicians were not ready for. Distrust and frustration in the national government could give rise to the chagrin in the European Parliament. Despite suffering from economic difficulties in 2010, citizens' trust in the European Parliament noticeably increased in Lithuania (57 percent) and Latvia (45 percent). It appears that the trust of the Baltic countries' citizens in the European Parliament's competence has increased so the acceptance of the European Union has increased as well. In 2011, this indicator shows a sharp decline in the Baltic countries. Such a result could be influenced by the economic downturn, increased taxes, higher unemployment and wage decline. Another reason may be that the Baltic people believed in the benefits of European Union membership too much but membership in the European Union did not protect against the negative effects of the crisis so the population was disappointed. This data indicates that in the Baltic countries, citizens' approach to sustainable development policy and its ability to ensure public welfare and economic security has changed. In 2012, the number of people trusting the European Parliament has risen again. This result was influenced by the recovery of the economy, increased employment, the solving of economic and social problems. The higher the citizens' trust in government, the more positive sustainable development policy is. There are also more people engaging in public welfare development, environmental improvement, economic growth, good behavior promotion.

The study results revealed that according to the socio-economic development, quality of the environment and good governance indicators provided by Eurostat, it is possible to evaluate a sustainable development of the Baltic countries and to carry out a comparative analysis. These indicators revealed problem areas in these countries, which despite the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian similarities are different. It shows that a sustainable development policy is unequally effective in different areas, has different impacts on public welfare, quality of life, people's motivation to participate in sustainable development and good governance processes. Citizen participation, trust, communication with the authorities, interaction and collaboration at national, regional and local levels affect a sustainable development policy in the process of

coordinating political action, decision-making, involving the public. The study analysis revealed that the indicators of sustainable development are important and relevant to the evaluation of sustainable development policy in the context of good governance.

CONCLUSIONS

Sustainable development process requires a variety of interrelated decisions and actions related to the economic and social development and environmental protection. Public policy is directed towards the achievement of the objectives and purposeful seeking of solutions. The changes brought about the Globalization led to poverty, unemployment, gender inequality, economic instability, social exclusion, the emergence of the increasing environmental pollution, and the growing and changing needs of society, demographic changes. These problems have led to the emerging of a sustainable development policy as a public policy. Sustainable development policy is intended to ensure the general public welfare, education and employment opportunities, a stable economy, the successful implementation of pollution reduction programs. In this context, it appears that the policy covers a wide scope of activities and influence the general welfare and the development of society. So this policy must be structured to draw attention and combat socio-economic problems, improve the environmental status and the level of the population's needs.

An analysis of the sustainable development policy concept showed that the scientific literature often places a great deal of emphasis on the democracy, respect for human rights and freedom of citizens in the national, regional and local levels in the economic, social and environmental spheres, as well as confidence in the government, also the consensus between the government, civil society and the business in achieving the objectives of sustainable development policy. These are the signs of good governance that appear in sustainable development policy. An analysis of the concept of good governance shows that this phenomenon is related to the social and economic welfare of citizens and communities, also to transparent, accountable and democratic institutions at the national, regional and local levels. Good governance in sustainable development process is as an instrument that inspires citizens for responsible behavior, social justice and labor productivity, competitive regional integration, the authorities' expansion and social protection, renewable energy deployment and use and also calls to respond to climate change, improves infrastructure-based competition and social well-being.

An analysis of legal acts and national strategies of the Baltic countries confirms that these countries are interested in the welfare of its citizens' economic, social and environmental areas. An analysis of quantitative indicators supplied by Eurostat in the period of 2008-2012 revealed that despite the historical and demographic similarities the Baltic countries have achieved different results. Detailed analysis of the Baltic countries sustainable development indicators revealed that Lithuania has worse results in many areas compared to Latvia and Estonia. These results do allow evaluating Lithuanian sustainable development policy negatively. Due to the lack of good governance indicators, it is difficult to evaluate sustainable development policy in the context of good governance.

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SUBALANSUOTOS PLĖTROS POLITIKOS VERTINIMAS GERO VALDYMO KONTEKSTE: LYGINAMOJI BALTIJOS ŠALIŲ ANALIZĖ

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S a n t r a u k a

Augančios ekonominės problemos, veikiantys socialinių grupių interesai, didėjantys aplinkosauginiai reikalavimai ir besiformuojantys pasauliniai instituciniai tinklai darnų vystymąsi pavertė itin svarbiu procesu, kurio pagrindas yra kryptinga darnaus vystymosi politika. Ši politika privalo skatinti ir užtikrinti ekonominių, socialinių ir aplinkosauginių klausimų integravimą. Šiuose politiniuose pokyčiuose ypatingą vaidmenį vaidina visuomenės ir interesų grupių dalyvavimas, atvirumas, viešumas, skaidrumas, demokratija, pasireiškiantys kaip gero valdymo principai. Darnaus vystymosi politikos sėkmę ir gero valdymo reikšmę šios politikos cikle apibrėžia viena pagrindinių politikos analizės funkcijų – politikos vertinimas. Darnaus vystymosi politikos vertinimo poreikis grindžiamas tuo, kad šios funkcijos dėka valstybinėms institucijoms yra suteikiama informacija apie tai, ar šios politikos intervencija buvo reikšminga, efektyvi, veiksminga ir priimtina pilietinei visuomenei bei suinteresuotosioms šalims, kokių jos padarinių sulaukta. Gero valdymo principai vertinant darnaus vystymosi politiką užima itin svarbią vietą, kadangi prisideda prie ilgalaikių įsipareigojimų ir strateginių uždavinių, politikos nuoseklumo per vertikalų ir horizontalų koordinavimą, atviro ir skaidraus suinteresuotųjų pusių dalyvavimo ir konsultavimo proceso, taip pat priartina darnaus vystymosi politiką ir strategijas arčiau vietinių bendruomenių ir žmonių. Gero valdymo konteksto įtraukimas į darnaus vystymosi politikos vertinimo stadiją padidintų socialinės, ekonominės ir aplinkos apsaugos sričių politikų veiksmingumą, stiprintų demokratinių institucijų atsaką žmonių poreikiams bei pagerintų infrastruktūrą. *Straipsnio tikslas* – įvertinti darnaus vystymosi politiką Baltijos šalyse gero valdymo kontekste. *Straipsnio uždaviniai:* 1) atskleisti darnaus vystymosi politikos vertinimo teorinius aspektus darnaus vystymosi kontekste; 2) išnagrinėti Baltijos šalių darnaus vystymosi bei gero valdymo teisinius ir strateginius dokumentus; 3) identifikuoti Baltijos šalių darnaus vystymosi rodiklių sąveiką gero valdymo kontekste. *Straipsnyje naudoti tyrimo metodai*: mokslinės literatūros, teisinių bei strateginių dokumentų analizė, lyginamoji antrinių duomenų analizė (Eurostato statistiniai duomenys). Atlikta Baltijos šalių teisės aktų ir strateginių dokumentų analizė patvirtina, kad šios šalys yra suinteresuotos savo piliečių gerove ekonominėje, socialinėje ir aplinkosaugos srityse. Kiekybinio tyrimo metu surinktų Eurostato rodiklių analizė atskleidė, kad, nepaisant istorinių ir demografinių panašumų, Baltijos šalys pasiekė skirtingų rezultatų, ko pasekoje darnaus vystymosi politika buvo vertinama labai įvairiai. Išsami Baltijos šalių darnaus vystymosi rodiklių analizė atskleidė, kad Lietuvos rezultatai Latvijos ir Estijos atžvilgiu daugelyje sričių yra prastesni. Dėl tokių rezultatų Lietuvos darnaus vystymosi politika yra vertinama neigiamai. Trūkstant gero valdymo rodikliams yra sunku įvertinti darnaus vystymosi politiką gero valdymo kontekste.

Pagrindinės sąvokos: subalansuota plėtra, politikos vertinimas, geras valdymas, Baltijos šalys.

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