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Arms Purchases in the Baltic States and Transfers to Ukraine: Balancing National Security Interests.

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All three Baltic States gained independence in the 1990s and treated Russian Federation with a reservation from early on. The events in Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014, 2022) revealed a real Russian mindset and geopolitical aspiration. While being NATO members from 2004 Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania felt safe, but still invested and continue to invest heavily in national security. All three countries meet NATO's benchmark for defense spending and even go beyond that figure as the threat remains very close. On one hand, increased budgets allow for the expansion of military capabilities and acquire modern arms for national armies, but on other hand, the need to support Ukraine with arms remains crucial for national security. Most eastern NATO countries treat the fight in Ukraine as a national interest: if Russia will be stopped in Ukraine it will not be capable to inflict any harm on bordering NATO countries. As a result, national decision-makers have to make hard choices on balancing mentioned needs, deciding what particular capabilities need to be transferred to Ukraine, and what capabilities have to be reserved for national needs, to repel Russian aggression. The research results indicate a different national approach being used while balancing national security interests. The US leadership remains the key in coordinating support for Ukraine, setting a premier example in support of Ukraine, encouraging, and pushing other countries to perform.

Are you a PhD student or early-career researcher?

Yes

What discipline or branch of humanities or social sciences do you identify yourself with?

Political Science

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No, I am submitting a Closed Panel abstract

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