POLITICAL TECHNOLOGIES AND INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS IN THE INFORMATION SPACE OF THE BALTIC SEA REGION

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The information space of the Baltic region has gradually developed since the free exchange of cross-border messages was made possible by media technology and international law. The international conflict between Russia and some countries of the European Union has become a factor hampering its sustainable development. Moreover, the conflict has adversely affected the functioning of many civil society institutions in the Baltic Sea region. This study focuses on the publications in the scientific media associated with the political technologies that may provoke conflict but must contribute to good-neighbourly relations in the region. We carry out a comprehensive political analysis and a specific examination of the Western scientific media to develop a package of measures that Russia can take to counter the conflict-provoking influences in the region. The current condition of the regional information space and information operations aimed at inciting Russophobia and forcing Russia out of the European political process is indicative of the politicisation of social sciences and the humanities and of the mythologisation of the policies of the regional social structures. The conflict must be urgently resolved, since the political technologies, which cause instability in the information space, damage the reputations of all the states involved. To reconcile the differences that underlie the information conflict in the Baltic region it is necessary to take into account common interests. There is a pressing need to join efforts in solving the challenging social problems that cannot be overcome without either international cooperation among the countries or effective social partnership.

Keywords: information security, Baltic Sea common information space, media, national interests, diplomacy, information operations, Baltic region, international co-operation

Introduction

The social conflict in the information space of the Baltic region has become one of the most serious problems for Russia's foreign policy. According to research, the information space of the Baltic region is an integral, although quite special, part of the global media communications [1; 2]. This space consists of the states with different political systems, history, culture and economy. At the same time, all the countries of the Baltic Sea basin share liberal ideology and Christian values that is common for Europe [3]. The duty of states to cooperate includes the information exchange aimed to improve the well-being of the European peoples in general and the Baltic region in particular. The need for cooperation has received international recognition at the level of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and all national administrations must ensure it in strict accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations (UN). Due to the consistent efforts of European states, the initiative to create the Baltic Sea Common Information Space (BCIS) was developed by 2005 within the framework of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) [4; 5]. However, it has never been fully implemented for political reasons.

In 2001—2005, during the meetings of Senior Officials on Information Society (SOIS) of the Council of the Baltic Sea States the concept of the Common Information Space of the Baltic Sea Region was presented. It aimed at providing access to various regional sources of information on the economy, trade and investment, as well as on business development [4]. This political initiative also did not receive a wide practical development. The common information space of the Baltic Sea region developed naturally. It became an arena for conflicting global media processes, Russian political science as well as the politics of some European states described as informational, or hybrid war [6—12]. The Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation, approved by Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of December 5, 2016 No. 646, defines the list of national interests in the information sphere. Its aim is the development of the international information security system (paragraph 8 d.), though such a system is extremely difficult to organize in the context of information war.

Professor at the University of Tartu (Tartu Ülikool) Vyacheslav Morozov reasonably notices that the relations between Russia and the Baltic countries, being a weak link in the Baltic region, can improve due to the reasonable context of national identity in current political discourse [13,

p. 317]. In 2004, it was obvious that the Baltic States were no longer seen in Europe as the embodiment of a "false", anti-Russian Europe [13]. However, after the events of 2014, the political situation has changed. The media space of the Baltic region was fragmented by national principle [2], the regional policy of Russia began to rely heavily on "soft power" [14], and some Western studies directly claim that the situation in the region is now moving to a "new cold war" [15]. Russia's European partners fear a revision of state borders [16] and believe there is a risk to the existence of rhizomatic (culturally diverse) information networks in the Baltic Sea region, the political space of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Program 2014—2020 [17].

The study hypothesis is that the interests of political structures competing for authority in the foreign policy studies shaped the policy of NATO countries on the information space of the Baltic region. The American scientist Jonathan Mercer rightly notes that the opinion of the world community, some scientific structures and prestige are crucial for world politics, since states having prestige have more power, though the political goals that determine the authority of a particular country must be consistent with its capabilities [18, p. 133]. The article uses the discourse analysis to interpret doctrinal political texts reflecting a complex of political technologies that in the social and political conditions of the Baltic region provoke a conflict in the information space.

It was obvious to the scientific community in 2013 that the possibilities and prospects for cooperation between the Russian Federation and the EU should be the subject of constant attention and discussion of the Russian and European expert-academic communities [19]. However, as can be seen from the leading regional media, after 2014 the already thorny path to partnership [19, p. 466—468] in the media policy of the Baltic region degraded into an explicit political conflict. The political technologies for creating an international conflict are reflected not only in numerous news media materials [4] but also in Western scientific literature [11; 12; 20—27]. This seems a natural target for critical analyses pursuing the task of demonstrating the limitations of a narrow national approach to information security problems in the implementation of some political programs in the Baltic Sea region.

At the same time, without a doubt, the "strengthening of interstate and interregional cooperation in the Baltic region" is of considerable scientific interest to progressive institutions of civil society [3, p. 12]. Objectively there is also another political tendency aimed at creating the atmosphere of conflict and mistrust. This article analyzes the political technologies exploited by Western scientific media for creating an "enemy image" [28] in the Baltic Sea region. Sharing the opinion of Professor

Konstantin Khudoley that "Russia must do everything possible to prevent the outbreak of [armed] conflict in the Baltic Sea region" [29, p. 18], it is necessary, however, to notice that the international conflict in the Pan-European media space has a negative effect on the anti-Russian sentiment in the Baltic States. In our opinion, the relations between all parties involved in the conflict should be normalized through the natural preference for transforming regional political "institutions by saturating them with new practices" [30, p. 88]. The method of political modeling applied in the process of creating and introducing new cooperation practices aims at forming good-neighbourly relations in the Baltic region by identifying conflict-takers and eliminating their influence on regional policy.

Russia and the EU states as participants
in an international conflict in the information space
of the Baltic region

In his interview on September 1, 2016, with John Micklethwait, journalist of the international information agency "Bloomberg", President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin, emphasized that "Russia has been pursuing absolutely peaceful foreign policy aimed at cooperation, and will continue to do so... As for the influence, … we want it to be absolutely peaceful and positive. What we have in mind is economic and humanitarian influence, which implies developing equal cooperation with our neighbours. This is what our foreign policy, as well as our foreign economic policy, is aimed at" [31]. It is obvious why the head of the Russian state address that symbolic invitation for cooperation to the global community to representatives of world business and voiced at the Far Eastern Federal University. He used the authority of the Bloomberg media holding to convince representatives of the business community that good neighbourliness in coastal spaces is mutually beneficial and military conflict resolution measures are not in line with the national interests of the Russian Federation, as they would inflict economic damage to the entire global community.

The resolution strategy for the contradictions in the Baltic region is definitely based on the striving for justice — the personal quality, which Vladimir Putin outlined in the above-mentioned interview as the dominant feature of the Russian mentality. The urgent need for a fair approach to resolving the conflict in the information space of both the Far East and the Baltic region is manifested in the strategic futility of confrontation between nations with a common history, culture and civilizational values facing the challenges of violent extremism, terrorism, uncontrolled migration and the digital divide in a postindustrial, transitive society [8].

The characteristics of media institutions [32] and media policy, which reflects the content of leading media, is determined by the ideological and diplomatic aspects of the national security of states. After the reunification of Russia and the Crimea, "the problems of self-identification and positioning in the new turbulent world came to the fore in the national consciousness of the Russians" [33, p. 183]. At the same time, in the context of global information confrontation, the media policy of many Western states is aimed at acquiring the right of foisting certain views on the world community [8, p. 73].

In the information space of the European Union, it is customary to talk about security in the context of a threat to democratic ideals coming from the east, from Russia. However, in the Russian Federation there is a growing understanding that a strong Russian state causes xenophobia in certain representatives of political forces of the European Union states. The aspirations of the peoples living on the shores of the Baltic Sea to productive political efforts to achieve a safe world and a fundamentally new, better quality of life for the people of the region are quite natural. Nevertheless, the political establishment of a united Europe shows restrained optimism to such an approach and frank resistance to Russian influence [26], which some states and a number of representatives of European civil society suggest to neutralize by implementation of the worst isolationist traditions of the Soviet era [22].

Since 1991 Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have been developing the Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council without the participation of Russia. Working outside the Council of the Baltic Sea States established in 1992 by the Copenhagen Declaration these small states seek to counter the influence of the Russian state by their "pro-European" policies. The lack of desire of the Baltic Council states to participate in mutually beneficial cooperation in solving the fundamental political problems of the Baltic region generates more and more conflict-prone messages and documents from all European Union countries. The marginal unwillingness to recognize the Russian language and Russian culture as one of the most important elements in the regional and global information space produces the same outcome. For example, the Joint Statement on the results of the 22nd session of the Baltic Council of October 28, 2016, says, "the Baltic States... regret that there have been no considerable developments with regard to the implementation of the Minsk Agreements. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania will continue to support all measures taken by the OSCE, the EU and NATO demanding Russia to play an active role in implementing its international commitments." [34] The position of the Baltic Council states in many respects impedes international integration and provokes an escalation of the conflict, which is disadvantageous to most

countries of the Baltic region. According to the authoritative opinion of the Russian sociologist Renald Simonyan, in this conflict "the uncritical perception of new myths both by one and the other side is largely due to the existence of two isolated information spaces" [1, p. 105]. With a high degree of probability "false stereotypes of the mass consciousness become a breeding ground for the escalation of interethnic confrontation" [1, p. 105].

It should be noted that the socio-economic and ideological problems of Europe [35] directly affect the media industry in the region. The Joint Statement following the 22nd session of the Baltic Council says, "Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania confirm their readiness to promote initiatives that encourage the media to offer the public high-quality, responsible, reliable and independent journalism... In particular, the Baltic States will continue to work together to explore the best ways how to reach out to those parts of society which are not easy to access due to the language barrier and different consumption of media content" [34]. Such statements declare a certain level of competence of those journalists who fail to reach understanding with their target audience reading international materials on the Baltic issues in English and Russian.

Modern political technologies of conflict management analysis in the information space of the Baltic region

The ambiguity of the situation in the information space of the Baltic region is becoming increasingly apparent for European scientists and institutions interested in constructive cooperation with the Russians. Professor of the University of Helsinki Kristi Raik notes, "Contrary to some expectations, the Baltic states' accession to the EU in 2004 was not followed by an improvement in their relations with Russia. Instead, the Baltic States became known as the "troublemakers" of EU — Russia relations. This was commonly explained by their history and national identity, which contributed to an understanding of the Baltic concerns as marginal." [25, p. 237].

The political myopia of some states that are fundamentally concerned about the presence of the Russian world in the Baltic States and oppose the idea of Russia's integration into the political space from Lisbon to Vladivostok accompanies the accusations against the Russian state in imperial ambitions [11; 23; 27; 36]. All the absurdity of anti-Soviet rhetoric in the news media in the post-Soviet space of the Baltic States received a decent scientific assessment in the works of Russian scientists Olga Vendina, Vladimir Kolosov, Alexander Sebentsov [37]. In the socio-political

reality the conflict in the information space of the Baltic states leads to the fact that "the contradictions between the political discourse and socio-economic realities, the discrepancy of information drawn from the TV and textbooks, with information disseminated through the Internet and obtained from personal experience, contributes not so much the strengthening of patriotism and national-state identity, as much as a skepticism about the events of the past and the present" [37, p. 90]. The controversial influence of a number of Baltic scientific media, which deserves independent doctrinal evaluation, raises even more concerns due to the fact that this phenomenon cannot be attributed to populism and low qualification of journalists.

It was in the beginning of the 21st century that a significant part of the Russian and foreign scientific community connected the main problems of assessing the security of the Baltic region with the accession of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia to NATO [35]. The political elites of these states still regard participation in NATO as the main guarantee of national security [12]. We can observe political hostility to Russia in some studies of Polish scientists who offer a new interpretation of the term "anti-diplomacy" [23], some Finnish political studies with rather extravagant titles assigning anti-Russian meaning to the term "democracy" [26], Western attitude towards the fate of the Crimea [34]. This is dangerous manifestation of the inability of some Europeans to reckon with the consequences of political transformations taking place in Russia.

Russia is more interested than other countries in helping the world community to solve the problems in the quality of human life. Paradoxically, some foreign scientists wish to prove that Poland, Lithuania, Finland and a number of other countries are not responsible for the political situation in the Baltic States or some problems in the implementation of the political program of development of the Baltic Sea region. They insist on the fact that Russia is the source of all political problems. This odious and subversive political position is very far from social science, and especially from diplomacy. Therefore, those who carry out such policy are interested in deepening existing contradictions, right down to the real revival of the fascists, whose invention was the "paradiplomacy of intimidation" [20].

The professor of the University of the Basque Country in Bilbao (Spain) Noe Cornago writes about the positive connotations of the term "anti-diplomacy" as a way to emphasize the merits of frank and direct communication in comparison with diplomatic formality in the context of political views of Giuseppe Garibaldi. Subsequently, any positive connotation of the term "anti-diplomacy" disappears in the new semantics within the framework of the ideology of futurism, and then fascism, and its

use is "charged with negative content" [38, p. 23]. Anti-diplomacy is the result of intra-European contradictions. The problem of diplomatic relations between Russia and the EU countries is not much different from interstate relations within the EU itself. Protecting their own national interests, European governments quite often apply double standards with respect to the most complex foreign policy topics affecting the issues of population migration, the territorial integrity of states and some other politically and economically significant issues. Objective differences in the organization of the national economy of Russia and the economies of the EU states (language barriers, environmental standards, approaches to security, features of public administration, principles of the judicial system, etc.) create conditions for discrimination, mistrust and deep political conflicts.

The information space of the Baltic States creates a somewhat naive image of Russia supposedly burdened by the traditions of the Byzantine collectivism alien to the rest of Europe and the USA [39]. American scientists are alleging that President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin achieves his goals by combining imperative and soft power with elements of Soviet-style propaganda [36]. The principal difference between the diplomacy of Vladimir Putin from the ideals of anti-diplomacy by Giuseppe Garibaldi lies in the non-recognition of the current state of political affairs in the United States and Great Britain as a benchmark of justice. Russia's aspiration to develop in the context of a national culture without any thoughtless imitation caused some accusations in imperial ambitions. A number of politicians and scholars who are quite authoritative in the Baltic Council countries brought these accusations. Due to their stereotypes, they are convinced that Europe as a whole and the Baltic Sea region in particular can reach the goals of sustainable development without Russia [5; 11; 12; 21; 22; 24; 27; 40]. After the collapse of the USSR, Russia harmoniously fit into European politics, shares European values, participates in international communication and gradually expands its sphere of political influence, but with the strengthening of the Russian Federation its relations with European countries and NATO have been gradually deteriorating [35].

The conflict environment in the European media space is created by the complex of fictitious threats introduced into the mass consciousness, such as the revival of Russian Bolshevism, the imperial ambitions of the Russians and the danger of Russian military aggression against the states in the Baltic Sea region [26; 27; 31]. Countering the frightening myths about Russia is an extremely important condition for the normalization of relations in the information space of the region. An example of constructive communication in the Baltic region was the work of the EU-Russia

Research Center (CEURUS) in the Johan Skytte Institute for Policy Studies, established at the University of Tartu. However, in our opinion, its work cannot be fully successful without being connected to the projects of leading Russian scientific institutions, scientists and students from Russia.

Our attention to the research activity of the American Johns Hopkins University and the Institute of International Relations and Political Science at Vilnius University is due to the conflict-causing content of a large part of political studies on Russian issues funded by these institutions. Similar conflict-prone political structures operate in Poland, Sweden, Finland, generating a significant number of anti-Russian texts, in an attempt to shift political responsibility for the quality of national policy from the national governments of the Baltic Region States to Russia. Problems in the relations of peoples in the Baltic seem to be of a private institutional nature, derived from the interest of specific institutions in fomenting historical contradictions that are not do not pose a significant threat to the functioning of the common regional information space.

After 2014, research activity by Johns Hopkins University, which traditionally pays special attention to US foreign policy interests, switched from externally neutral forms of intervention in the information space of the Baltic region (through analytical materials such as the collection of articles "Regional Development in the Baltic Sea Region" [42]) to the direct opposition of Russia and NATO. For example, the Swedish scientist Gudrun Persson, a specialist in the military history of Russia, in his article "Russia and the Baltic Sea Security" positions Russia's policy as a threat to regional security. He expresses serious concern about the fact that "Not only has Russia increased its aggressive behavior with nuclear weapons in and around the Baltic Sea, the official nuclear rhetoric is also unprecedented in Russian and Soviet history" [24, p. 14]. The American institute uses such clearly absurd, "scientific" prospects of atomic weapon deployment in the Baltic region to form anti-Russian sentiments in the Baltic and legitimize the presence of the American military in the region.

The studies of leading experts on Russia at the Institute of International Relations and Political Science of Vilnius University [12; 40; 43; 45] demonstrate the mythologization of the enemy's image of Russia and promote a provocative approach to the political problems of modern history. This continues the traditions established by Zbigniew Brzezinski, an honorary professor at Vilnius University. Tomas Janeliūnas, one of the leading political scientists at Vilnius University, writes, "The overwhelming number of experts believe that Russia seeks to gain superpower status and change the rules of the international system" [49]. Experts of the Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI) reached this conclusion without

participating in an academic exchange with Russia and without any sub-stantial evidence. However, they state that "Russia regards the EU as a competitor... does not see Europe as a single or even sovereign actor in the international system "[40]. It should be noted that Russia is geograph-ically an integral part of Europe, and Europe does not legally have sover-eignty, and all experts and political actors need to consider these facts in foreign policy.

The head of the Center for Russian and Eastern European Studies at Vilnius University Dovile Jakniunaite recognizes the complete futility of Lithuanian claims for compensation for the consequences of the "Soviet occupation of Lithuania". In view of the fact that "It is difficult for Lithu-ania to receive international support for its compensation claims", she rightly points out that no country in Eastern Europe demanded "compen-sation for damages caused during the Soviet occupation" [22, s. 165]. Analyzing the problem of "Soviet occupation" in her research, Dovile Jakniunaite [21; 22] maintains silence on the obvious fact that any dis-cussion about the fate of Poland and the Baltic states should take place in the context of the international legal consequences of the Second World War, which are not subject to revision. Realizing that "without the con-tribution of Russia, it is impossible to change the Lithuanian-Russian re-lations" [22, s. 165] Lithuania is not trying to interest Russia in construc-tive cooperation. At the same time in the spirit of scientific research Do-vile Jakniunaite admits that the situation in the Baltic States is "strongly influenced by the dynamics of Russian-American and Russian-EU rela-tions, but these relations are usually not associated with the goals and in-terests of Lithuania, and sometimes even undermine them" [22, s. 165].

Another representative of the Center for Russian and Eastern Europe-an Studies of Vilnius University, Remigijus Žilinskas, proposes an obvi-ous absurdity to ensure the security of Lithuania through the "allied force, mobilization reserve and the development of national concepts of armed and unarmed resistance" against the hybrid threat posed by Russia [12]. It seems rather provocative that a politicized approach towards the problem is transmitted through scientific sources, but it is also clear that such way of thinking is untenable and counterproductive.

A well-known Baltic political scientist Professor Gediminas Vitkus consistently expresses scepticism regarding the very possibility of nor-malizing Russian-Lithuanian relations [11; 27]. Having received a philo-sophical education at Moscow State University in Soviet times, Professor Vitkus pursued very specific goals when in 2009 in the journal of the University of Sapporo (Japan) wrote: "While many European countries still cherish certain illusions about Russia, the Lithuanian politicians and the general public do not. Due to specific historical experiences, Lithua-

nians do not harbour any doubts whatsoever that Russia will attempt to employ its new advantages that have emerged because of a considerable increase in energy source prices. Not for economic development, not for the welfare of its people, but for political dominance and revenge for the lost Cold War." [27, p. 25]. Such a sincere desire to be at the forefront of global political confrontation is strange for a relatively small country and surprising for a scientist who studied and worked in the state that lost the cold war. Thus, examples of political manipulations using scientific media demonstrate the attempt of certain individuals to see the conflict in the information space of the Baltic region only from the side that benefits investors of such a science.

Ways of resolving international conflict
in the information space of the Baltic region

The cultural identity of the peoples of the Baltic region is clearly manifested in the process of interaction within the framework of the common information space. At the same time, the information space on practice is formed by a system of information communication networks of general use. They function according to common technical rules on the basis of uniform political and legal principles, ensure satisfaction of the information needs of the population, and guarantee the realization of human rights and freedoms in the information sphere.

It so happened that the Baltic region found itself at the epicentre of a spiritual conflict of Romanesque and Hellenistic Common European values, which does not have a definite solution. For objective economic and socio-cultural reasons in the Baltic region, many European innovative multimedia projects (Euronews, European Broadcasting Union, Erasmus +) are being implemented with Russian participation [8, p. 265]. At the same time, Russian media and cultural forums successfully operate in large cities with a Russian-speaking population in free competition environment [35; 46]. However, this positive fact will always cause Russophobia although only among those representatives of the Romanesque culture who focus on the right-wing system of values.

While political situation is rapidly changing, the conflict unfolds between nascent Russian democracy and social groups with retrograde thinking that are accustomed to earning their political capital from the international confrontation in Europe. Such conflicts became a booming echo of the Cold War devoid of any progressive perspective. Objectively, gradual Pan-European and Eurasian integration should have smoothed out the existing contradictions in the economic interests and production

standards between the states of the Baltic Sea region. Instead, conflicts arise under the influence of a number of stereotypes in the information space of the region. The reason for this is the desire to protect the interests of small nations at the cost of discrimination of a wide range of Europeans who speak Russian. It is obvious that in order to realize the positive potential of the cultural diversity of the Baltic region "models of organization of intercultural relations that are different from multiculturalism and assimilation are necessary" [47].

In the context of transparency of the global media space and substantive differences in political cultures [43], the political vision that each Baltic state has of its own national interests acquire great importance. The situation when "the boundaries between national states are erased..., kinship and attachment to native land of the people is neutralized... leads to the perception of patriotism as an irrational feeling" [44, p. 67]. So the patriotic education of young people in Russia should be carried out in the context of the centuries-old history of the state [48, p. 31], taking into account the historical features of international relations in the Baltic region [3]. Professor Jean Toschenko is absolutely right when he consistently advocates "for the rule according to which any person having the citizenship of his/her country is free to live, work and move around the territory of the former USSR or the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] at the same time fulfilling the duties of a citizen of the state where at the moment this person lives and works" [49, p. 30].

The political and military threats arise under conditions in which the national interests of certain states acquire extremist antisocial content contradicting the European values and interests of civil society members in the sustainable development of the region. Extremist intentions form the "appearance of war" [6, p. 46]. Social discrimination can cause acute conflicts at the national and international level. Such conflicts according to the laws of social dynamics in the information society originate inside the social networks and then manifest themselves in non-democratic forms of the protest movement, aggressive foreign policy. Largely as a result of the fact that "the political media space is beginning to exist not only in reality but also in virtual space" [50], "the unconditional image of democracy formed in Europe... has been shaken" [43, p. 52]. The restoration of democratic ideals requires the abandonment of the policy of multiculturalism and the formation of a unified system of values and ideals in the process of social partnership between states and civil society institutions within the sphere of education and culture.

Overcoming the collective social trauma in the post-Soviet space is a prerequisite for resolving the conflict in the information space of the Baltic region. According to Professor Andrey Zdravomyslov, "a view of so-

ciety only through the prism of a traumatized mind, as a rule, distorts the overall picture. A healthy society finds strength to overcome injuries not only through media activities... but, above all, through a different composition of social action that creates a social basis for recovering from the trauma" [51, p. 9]. In this sense, the inability of national administrations to interact normally in a regional media space can significantly aggravate the crisis in a society. Since the countries of the Baltic region are united by common traditions and interests of preserving cultural diversity [3; 52], they are to overcome the contradictions about traumatic past of the peoples in the Baltic region (such as consequences of international armed conflicts and political radicalism at the national level). Multilateralism requires the consolidation of the efforts of the scientific community with an understanding of the need for good neighbourliness.

There is a certain positive experience of cooperation between Russia and the EU in the field of professional journalism. The TV channel "Euronews" is an important segment of the common information space of the Baltic Sea region because this media, thanks to the flexibility of its editorial policy, is available to the mass audience in all countries of the region without exception. The agreement on cooperation between the Russian Federation and the TV channel "Euronews" was concluded on June 29, 2001. The All-Russian State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company (VGTRK) acquired a 1.8 % stake in the Secemie consortium and became one of the shareholders of the channel. Subsequently, the share of VGTRK in the consortium exceeded 16 %. French law guarantees the independence and objectivity of the editorial policy of the TV channel "Euronews" although the channel's shareholders are more than twenty public and state TV companies from Europe and the Mediterranean. The largest packages belong to such leading national media holdings as France Televisions (France), RAI (Italy), VGTRK (Russia) [8, p. 266].

Conclusions

Undoubtedly, informational cooperation on the issues of protecting the health and improving the quality of life of the population, counteracting environmental threats, exchanging opinions on global climate change issues is relevant to the Baltic region [53, p. 160]. Therefore, in our opinion, mutually beneficial regional cooperation in specific areas of state structures' and civil society institutions' activities may be the issue of particular importance for establishing good-neighbourly relations. In this context, it seems necessary to supplement Clause 23 of Section V "Stra-

tegic goals and main directions of ensuring information security" of the Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation with a regional component — a system for protecting traditional Russian spiritual and moral values by increasing the authority of Russian scientific institutions and the media in Europe.

The common information space assumes the consolidation of the progressive public around the regional megapolises' media agenda. In this context, it is important that St. Petersburg, the largest city on the Baltic Sea coast, would be interested in enhancing its global competitiveness as a scientific, academic, cultural and industrial center with some competitive advantages in the region. That competitiveness is "determined by its demographic potential, port traffic, as well as a favourable geo-economic position, the status of the "sea gate" of Russia" [54, p. 71]. In order to counter the identified conflict-causing influence in the Baltic region, it is necessary to develop national non-profit organizations in the Russian geopolitical centres that can influence the political agenda in the region. Only the model when political structures that are close in their legal status conduct the dialogue with those who propagate Russophobia can have a positive influence on the authority of the Russian Federation as a rule-of-law state.

The attainment of the ideals of the Council of Europe in the Russian megacities can turn emerging Baltic Europe without borders into an economic and cultural centre of the European continent. Without any doubt, there is a need to modify the ideals of the Council of Europe taking into account the best cultural and legal traditions of Russia. Positive changes in the model of interaction between these two will occur only if the European partners are interested in considering Russian interests. It seems rational to organize progressive model of interaction of Russian non-profit organizations with existing progressive and regressive (conflict-prone) structures in the EU by creating recommendatory norms of Russian corporate law in the media and scientific sphere. Such a recommendation should define the circle of responsible and conscientious partners in the Baltic region for Russian society to establish systematic and substantive communication links.

Creating Russian scientific information networks is an ambitious task, which should be solved in order to enjoy prestige in Europe and fully use intellectual potential available in the Baltic region. Constructive initiatives have social prerequisites for the effective cooperation that allow seizing every reasonable opportunity and using material incentives for guaranteed leadership of Russian megacities in the modern international system. An attractive social and cultural environment for people does not imply conflicts on a national basis. It can only be a re-

sult of a mutual understanding of the interests in the domain of international integration accompanied by sustainable development trends in the post-industrial era.

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