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# CLIMATE DIPLOMACY OF ESTONIA, LATVIA, AND LITHUANIA: WHERE DO THEY COMPARE IN CLIMATE ACTION, BASED ON THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN THE UN CLIMATE CONFERENCES

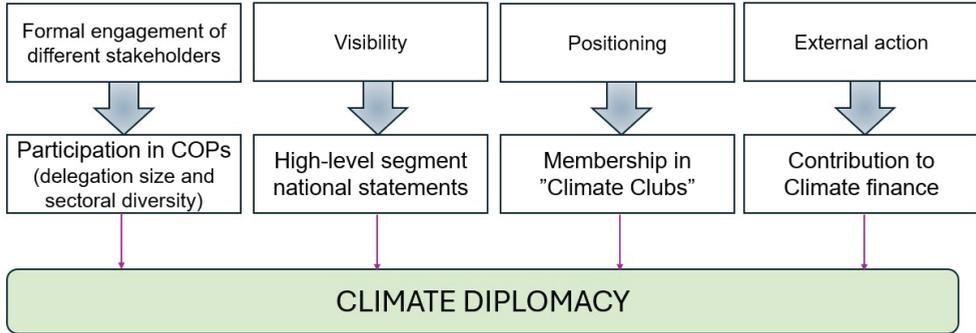
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**Abstract** – The study compares how Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia address global climate change internationally. Even though the institutions of the European Union play a pivotal role in setting the climate change mitigation goals, and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) are submitted collectively, the ambition and involvement vary significantly between different EU member states. Each country has diplomatic tools to negotiate, particularly during the Conference of Parties (COP), the climate conferences held annually in the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) since 1995, and through external action. Successful climate diplomacy in this study is understood as proactive participation in the above-mentioned conferences, including delivering high-level segment national statements, delegation size and the involvement of different stakeholders in the process, memberships and propositions in Climate clubs aiming at quicker decarbonisation, and contribution to the international climate finance by assisting developing countries. Climate diplomacy is evaluated by analysing the documents available on the UNFCCC website regarding participation, statements, and pledges to climate finance. The study finds that although no Baltic State stands out as a clear frontrunner in climate action, Estonia has become more outspoken in the international arena, particularly since COP26 in Glasgow. Meanwhile, Latvia and Lithuania can be considered more as bystanders. At COP28, Estonia became the first and, so far, the only Baltic State to have ever built its pavilion to present itself as ‘a consistent advocate for environmental stewardship and climate action’. Estonian participation record is also notable for the participation of academicians and researchers, while Latvian participation can be praised for the highest share of the civil society attending the conferences. Estonia and Latvia have involved various stakeholders other than the government representatives in the climate negotiation process. Meanwhile, the size of Parties (government and its agencies) is the biggest in Lithuania; Lithuanian and Latvian delegations tend to be the most diverse at the ministerial level – seven ministries have sent their delegates to the COPs, which may signify the political involvement is not limited to the ministry in charge of energy. However, Estonia remains more carbon-intense than Latvia and Lithuania, and none of the three have joined the most ambitious Climate clubs. This case study helps understand the role and negotiating potential of the EU member states in climate change talks, where each can become frontrunners, passive bystanders or obstacles in implementing the common EU position and contributing to global decarbonisation.

**Keywords** – *Baltic States; climate change policy evaluation; Conference of Parties; COP participation patterns; decarbonisation; high-level segment statement; net zero*



Study methodology algorithm