

The 4th International
Interdisciplinary Conference

PLACES

ABSTRACTS

26-28 March 2025
Riga, Latvia



PLACES 2025

Table of Contents

Academic Freedom vs Managerial Security	1
Academic Freedom and Collective Practices between Capital and Society	
Jan Albrecht; Julia Secklehner; Paride Bollettin	2
British Anthropology and Post-Colonial Encounter	
Isak Niehaus	3
Trapping the Grant Hunter. Fieldnotes on Autonomia, Engagement and Statist De-Activation from an Academic’s Office	
Marc Morell	4
Academic Freedom in Legal Research	
Anatolijs Krivins	5
Education and Research in the Western Balkans in the Age of Artificial Intelligence	
Oljana Hoxhaj; Belinda Halilaj	6
Strengthening Collective Resilience through Citizen Science	
Ineta Simonaitė	7
Teaching Family Law: Academic Freedom and Religious Beliefs	
Ergysa Ikonomi	8
Aligning Micro- and Macro-Level Expectations Towards Food	9
Control or Go with the Flow: Latvian Rural Youth Navigating Plates between Places	
Ilze Mileiko	10
Enhancing Confidence in Food Security in Era of Uncertainty: the Global Significance of Food Self-Provisioning	
Fangliang Wan	11
Family Food Practices in Latvia: Insights from a Multidimensional Perspective	
Jānis Šabanovs	12
Food-Self Provisioning: Alternative Food Solutions with a Micro-Level	
Huidi Ma	13
Health-Driven and Digitally-Enhanced Sustainability in Food Systems: Case of Spain	
Maija Kale; Ana Juan García	14
Necessity of Additional Labeling for High-Sugar Content Food Products: Legal and Public Health Perspectives	
Linda Šarķe; Andreta Slavinska	15
Autonomy, Bodily Agency and the Collective Good: Perspectives from Medical Humanities	16
Breaking Functional Imperatives: Excorporation in Chronic Fatigue and Pain	
Ginta Vēja	17

Challenges of Balancing the Right of Patient to Express His or Her Religious Beliefs during Medical Treatment with the Physicians' Duty to Respect Patients' Right to Self-Determination	
Laura Šāberte	18
Collective Embodied Experience of COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy in Latvia	
Andrejs Balodis	19
Minors in Medical Decision Making	
Jonada Zyberaj	20
More-than-Human Care: Relationality and Bodily Autonomy in Latvian Sauna Rituals	
Jana Kukaine; Anne Sauka	21
Phenomenology's Contribution to Public Health: Embodied Perspective on Adherence to Preventive Health Measures	
Māra Grīnfelde	22
Safe Use of Everyday Mobile Applications for Providing Telemedicine Services	
Rafaels Ciekurs	23
State, Reproduction, and Morality: Examining Attitudes Towards Infertility and Medically Assisted Reproduction in Latvia	
Diāna Kiščenko	24
Suspended Lives: Temporality, Agency, and Ethics of Care in Later Life	
Anna Žabicka	25
Threat to Embodied Agency and Vaccine Hesitancy	
Uldis Vēgners	26
To be, or not to be: Agency and Resilience of Early Career General Practitioners	
Inguna Potetinova	27
When the Patient is a Jehovah's Witness. Body Autonomy and Refusal of Medical Treatment in a Religious Community	
Agita Misane	28
Green Transition to Empower "Homo Climaticus"	29
Adaptation Strategies to Energy Poverty: Homo Climaticus Perspective	
Dina Bite	30
Eco-Spiritual or Ethno-National? Reflections on the Interplay between Ethnic Identity and Environmental Concerns in Modern European Paganism and Japanese Shinto	
Michael Strmiska	31
Energy Poverty in Latvia: Bringing the Gap Towards Sustainability	
Gunars Valdmanis; Laila Zemīte; Diana Zalostiba; Dāvis Kronkalns	32
Energy Transition Landscapes without Wind Turbines. Popular Protests in Sardinia and the Commitment of Permaculturists	
Maria Giovanna Cassa	33

Ensuring Sustainability in Healthcare: Latvian Hospitals and the 2026 Corporate Sustainability Reporting Requirements	
Emīls Georgs Siders; Kristaps Zariņš.	34
Expertise in Sustainable Entrepreneurship in the Latvian Manufacturing Industry	
Lāsma Tiunčika; Santa Bormane	35
From Individualised to Shared Responsibility: Limits and Horizons of Household Responsibility for the Green Transition	
Kārlis Lakševics; Jānis Brizga	36
Mitigating Effects of Climate Change: Business or Individual Responsibility and Interactions in Latvia	
Kristīne Blumfelde-Rutka	37
Rethinking Homo Climaticus through Longevity of Household Things	
Staffan Appelgren; Anna Bohlin.	38
Scenarios for Latvia in Context of the EU Climate Neutrality Objectives: Document Analysis	
Kārlis Bukovskis; Lelde Rozentāle	39
Social Sustainability in Circular Economy: Analysis of Citizen Behaviours and Policy Frameworks in Latvia	
Erika Lagzdina	40
Socially Responsible Green Transition: Sustainable and Socially Responsible Business Model for the Public Sector Hospitals	
Olga Veilande	41
Sustainable Packaging Indicators: Literature Review	
Laura Martinsone-Ozoliņa	42
The Role of Homo Climaticus and Sustainable Healthcare in Shaping European Happiness and Well-Being Indices	
Kristaps Zariņš; Emīls Georgs Siders.	43
Who can Discern Homo Climaticus Approaching? Looking at Generational Differences in Perceiving Climate Change in Latvia	
Agita Lūse; Zanda Gailume-Zohara	44
Sustainable Packaging in the Context of Circulation and Sustainability	
Laura Martinsone-Ozoliņa	45
Towards Sustainability: Factors Driving Green Business Transition of SMEs in Latvia	
Līga Sileniece; Dzintra Atstaja.	46
How to Ensure Freedom without Losing Security – Legal Aspects and Practical Problems	47
(Non)Observing the Rights of the Combatant to Health in Captivity: Experience of the Russian-Ukrainian War	
Tetiana Mykhailichenko	48

Acceptance of Inheritance with Limited Liability – Problem of Balancing the Rights of Heirs and Creditors	
Inga Kudeikina	49
Artificial Intelligence and Employment Compliance: Balancing Innovation with Legal Obligations	
Agnese Reine	50
Aspects of Terrorism Prediction in the Context of Public Security Threats and Risk Prevention	
Andrejs Vilks	51
Balancing Employee and Employer Rights in the Mutual Termination of Employment: Legal and Data Protection Perspectives in the Republic of Latvia	
Agnese Reine; Dace Tarasova	52
Biobanks: Balancing Interests for Health Policy	
Aiga Balode	53
Child’s Right to Maintenance as a Form of Social Security	
Artūrs Kurbatovs; Inga Kudeikina	54
Criminalisation of ”Information Collaborationism” in Ukraine as an Example of Lawful Restriction of the Right to Freedom of Speech under Martial Law	
Yuliia Zabuha	55
Criminological Aspects of Illegal Migration	
Aldona Kipāne	56
Illegal Occupation and the Intent of Genocide: Israeli-Palestinian Case	
Sintija Broka	57
Impact of Criminal Law Regulation on Spread of Infectious Diseases	
Nataliya Gutorova; Oleksandra Rudnyeva	58
Invisible Threat for Personal Safety: Fakes Prevention in Ukraine and Europe	
Alina Kalinina	59
Is Duty a Restriction of Freedom?	
Ilze Ziemane	60
Legal Regulation and Challenges of Patients’ Rights to Receive Safe and Choice-Free Healthcare Services	
Artūrs Matešs	61
No Freedom without Democracy: Loss of Latvia’s Independence in 1940	
Janis Grasis	62
Parental Authority and the Child’s Right to Social Security in Cases of Parental Separation	
Artūrs Kurbatovs; Inga Kudeikina	63

Perception of Application of the Principle of Mutual Recognition in Enforcement of Confiscation Orders Issued in Criminal Proceedings by European Union Member States in Latvia	
Julija Muraru-Klucica	64
Possibilities for Improving the Procedure for Resolving Disputes between Constitutional State Authorities	
Jānis Neimanis	65
Professional Development of Managerial Personnel in the Civil Service as a Component of the National Security of Ukraine	
Alona Lukashenko	66
Security in Risk Society: Bridging the Ideal and the Real	
Kristīne Kuzņecova	67
Subjects Entitled to Exercise Moral Rights in Copyright Law after the Author's Death	
Sintija Zalāne	68
Legal Regulation of Mineral Extraction in Roman Law	
Allars Apsītis; Dace Tarasova; Jolanta Dinsberga	69
Right to Parent-Child Contact as a Form of Social Security	
Artūrs Kurbatovs; Inga Kudeikina	70
Smuggling of Goods Committed on a Large Scale: Prospects for Improving Criminal Liability	
Viktoria Babanina; Serhii Cherniavskiyi	71
Social-Psychological Factors Contributing to the Development of the Criminal Personality in Postmodern Society	
Jelena Djubina	72
Tax Savings as Criminal Proceeds in Latvian Case Law	
Liene Eglaja	73
With the Naked Eye – Shortcomings of the Latvian Civil Procedure Law in the Regulation of Procedural Sanctions	
Martins Osis	74
Media Freedom and the Protection of Journalists and Quality Journalism	75
Compromised Authenticity? Advertiser Influence on Influencer Editorial Content	
Deniss Aleksandrs Sevelovs	76
Ensuring Safety of Journalists and Media Freedom in Latvia: Current Challenges and Possible Solutions	
Anda Rožukalne; Ilva Skulte; Alnis Stakle	77
Navigating Media Freedom in the Age of PR and Digital Transformation: Kristīne Misāne's Case	
Lasma Skestere	78

Pluralism in Latvian Language Media	
Sergei Kruk; Janis Chakars	79
Towards Responsible Media: Understanding Traits of the Baltic Countries through the Lens of Transparency and Accountability Analysis	
Anda Rožukalne; Aukse Balcytiene; Halliki Harro-Loit	80
Military and Diplomatic Instruments in Sustainable Protection against Hard and Soft Security Crises and NATO and the European Union	81
Addressing Climate and Geopolitical Crises in EU Energy Policy: Securitisation Dilemma	
Vineta Kleinberga	82
Civic Education as a Countermeasure to Hybrid Threats: Case of Latvia	
Ieva Berzina	83
Co-developing Post-Westphalian Statecraft of the European Union	
Zane Šime.	84
Consciousness Raising Paralysed: Consequences of Sexual Violence at War	
Anete Biķe	85
Consolidation of Security Research in the Baltic States through Synergies and Collaborations	
Sandra Vasilevska	86
Exogenous and Endogenous Crises in European Integration: Case Study of Climate Change	
Aleksandra Palkova.	87
Hybrid Activities as an Instrument of Foreign Policy in the Context of Russia’s Strategic Culture	
Māris Cepurītis.	88
International and Regional Response on the Crime of Aggression Against Ukraine	
Lela Totadze; Mari Tsulukidze	89
Main Drivers and Impediments for Defense Synchronisation for the Baltic States 2004–2023	
Olevs Nikers	90
New Players in Psychological Resilience Arena: Research Framework for Evaluating the Potential of Private Sector	
Lita Juberte Krūmiņa	91
Political Security and the Role of Political Stability and Parties’ Sustainability in Latvia amid Geopolitical Tensions	
Romāns Gagunovs	92
Portuguese Defense Policy Post-February 2022: Navigating Strategic Autonomy	
Sandra Fernandes	93

Role of ESA in Small Nations' Space Efforts	
Elina Greine	94
Russia-China Ideological Alignment? Beijing's three Initiatives	
Una Bērziņa-Čerenkova	95
Security Challenge of EU, NATO Cooperation, and Turkey's Role	
Dilge Özcoşkun	96
Status Seeking of Small States in the European Union: Case of Latvia and Its Role in the EU Policy Towards Belarus Following the 2020 Unrest	
Beate Livdanska	97
Story of Democratic Resilience	
Gustavs Briuks	98
Unpacking China's 'Community of Shared Future for Mankind': Discourse-Historical Perspective on PRC's Global Governance Narratives	
Dana Dūda	99
Urban Preparedness for Emerging Risks in the Baltic Sea Region: Comparative Insights from Riga, Helsinki, and Hamburg	
Didzis Klavins; Ieva Birka	100
Why Ukraine Must Win	
Thomas Cromwell; Tatjana Zakutajeva	101
Other Topics	102
Consequences of Ecocide for Public Health (on the Example of Ukraine)	
Sabriie Shramko	103
Interdependence between the State of Crime and the Normative Issues of the Status of Victims of Armed Conflict (on the Example of Ukraine)	
Alina Kalinina	104
Stalinism and Popular Culture. The Case of Jazz Music in the Soviet Republics of Eastern Europe	
Riccardo De Cristofano	105
Application for Temporary Protection – Legal and Practical Aspects of Examination and Decision-Making	
Jolanta Dinsberga	106
Differences in Value Orientations Between Men and Women: Insights From the European Social Survey Round 10	
Rasa Indriliunaite; Tadas Vadvilavičius	107
Enhancing Academic Writing and Data Literacy: Challenges Faced by First-Year Social Sciences Students	
Sniedze Vilde; Anna Jurčenko	108
RAPEX system: Role in Albanian Consumer Protection	
Belinda Halilaj; Oljana Hoxhaj	109

Right to Participate in Public Governance and Its Impact on Decisions Made at the EU Level	
Viktorija Soņeca	110
Shaping European Sports Law: Integrating Governance Standards with Lex Sportiva Principles	
Marina Kamenecka-Usova; Janis Zidens; Signe Luika; Olena Agapova; Laine Donane; Ieva Stecenko; Ricards Grikis.	111
Populist Encounters: Tracing Populist Effects in Non-Traditional Political Spaces	112
Culture Industry, Right-Wing Populism and Conspiratorial Discourse: Case Study of Russell Brand	
Rico Isaacs	113
Economic Analysis of Populism: Causes and Consequences	
Ilze Vilka	114
From the “White House” to “Khan Sarai”: Populist Myth-making in the Contemporary Kyrgyzstan	
Aijan Sharshenova.	115
How do Populist States Engage with the UNFCCC and CBD Negotiations? Qualitative Findings	
Adam Barnett	116
Illiberal Democracy and Populism	
Peteris Plakans	117
Populism and the Arts: State Funding, Censorship, and Social Movements in the UK, Poland, and Latvia	
Martin Lang	118
“Ideal mother”, the Intensive Mothering Ideology and the Demographic Crisis: Parenting Attitudes in Latvia	
Elza Lāma	119
Authors Index	120
Authors ORCID list	122

Academic Freedom vs Managerial Security

Academic Freedom and Collective Practices between Capital and Society

Oral

***Mr. Jan Albrecht*¹, *Dr. Julia Secklehner*², *Dr. Paride Bollettin*³**

1. Department of Sociology, Masaryk University, 2. Department of Art History, Masaryk University, 3. Department of Anthropology, Masaryk University

Objectives*

The current academic landscape is experiencing growing tension between the commercialization and socialization of knowledge practices. In our presentation, we discuss some controversies arising from these tensions, focusing on Masaryk University in the Czech Republic as a case study. Examples include pressures to obtain funding as a criterion for evaluating academic performance, the marginalization of non-profitable research topics, and the strict quantitative assessment of student achievements. Often, faculty and students are expected to follow top-down and intransparent directives, which undermine academic freedom through processes of centralization and the hierarchical structuring of decision-making powers. At the same time, however, there is also an increasing demand from various sectors of society for more socially oriented academic practices. Examples include the self-organization of students into collectives to advocate for the inclusion of specific topics in academic discourse, the incorporation of Indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups' claims for epistemological pluralisation in the classroom, and calls for the popularization of knowledge produced within academia. Our goal is to explore how faculty and students navigate academic practices to respond to these demands. We will provide examples of research, teaching and learning, and dissemination activities that promote inclusive and collaborative practices, which have been continually implemented across various departments at Masaryk University. Taking this into account, we argue that, despite the pressures for commercialization, individualization, and hierarchization in academia, collective actions have the potential to create spaces for the development of alternative and more socially oriented knowledge practices.

British Anthropology and Post-Colonial Encounter

Oral

*Dr. Isak Niehaus*¹

1. Brunel University London

Objectives*

Contemporary scholars frequently assert that there is a stark contrast between colonial and post-colonial contexts of doing anthropology in the United Kingdom. During colonial times, anthropologists were almost exclusively white men, who relied upon on government and philanthropies for financial support to study the social systems and culture of colonised people. Therefore, it is inescapable to that anthropological work informed colonial policies, such as indirect rule. We assume that contemporary anthropologists are freer from blame. Today the boundaries that divided the anthropologists in the metropole and the research subjects in the colonies are more permeable. Anthropologists are recruited from more diverse backgrounds, women slightly outnumber men, and black scholars have attained at least some presence. Scholars of the Global South have increasingly begun to make themselves heard. The assertion of local identities and struggles for decolonisation are crucial issues of the day.

Materials and Methods

continued below

Results

In my presentation, I argue that this contrast is overdrawn, and that it would be incorrect to assume that the moral commitment and intellectual autonomy of anthropology follows a linear line of progress. Despite their diverse political affiliations, the work of prominent British anthropologists often transcended, and sometimes undermined, the narrow political interests of colonial and settler colonial governments. Moreover, the focus on gendered and racial identities of postcolonial scholars, obscures questions about what we are likely to write and whether we can produce work that intellectually engages future generations. I point out that the advent of contemporary audit cultures brought about new sets of bureaucratic controls over the production of anthropological work, far more pervasive than possible during colonial times. I argue that contemporary funding regimes, ethical reviews, the REF (Research Excellence Framework), scrutiny of speakers at departmental seminars, criteria for promotion and open access publication policies enshrine the interests of government and business corporations, and constitute a serious assault on the intellectual autonomy of anthropologists.

Conclusions

Finally, I suggest that contemporary scholars can do well to learn from the strategies our predecessors deployed in colonial times, in defence of the comparative and critical study of society.

Trapping the Grant Hunter. Fieldnotes on Autonomia, Engagement and Statist De-Activation from an Academic's Office

Oral

*Dr. Marc Morell*¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

A recent EU Horizon call encouraged applicants to submit research proposals upon the topic “Protest politics and cultures of opposition in democracy”. Appealing as the theme may read for progressive activist academics, the call stated that projects should contribute to the understanding of all forms of opposition with a particular emphasis on their capacity for resisting and bringing down authoritarian regimes, draw policy recommendations towards the inclusion of social mobilisation into democratic participation, come up with innovative forms of non-conflictual engagement in order to channel social mobilisation into civic engagement, and to rebuild citizens’ trust in electoral processes.

Materials and Methods

Such a crusade for gearing “civic” values towards the electoral process is not unique to what the EU academic funding matrix viewed as the task of the social scientist; it also pervades national research funding calls from EU member states. Parallel in time to the mentioned EU call, there was another one of the Latvian Research Council that followed similar lines. Here, though, given the considerable lack of social mobilisation in the current national scene, the concern was not about harnessing activism to the “democratic” status quo, but to create anodyne socially engaged “communities” that may eventually feed the electoral process.

Results

By drawing on my recent grant-hunting experience for research on social movements in Latvia and Lithuania, and via a careful reading of *autonomia*, the existing anthropological literature on “engagement” and on the increasing precariousness of the world of universities at large, I argue that current funding programmes for academic projects seek to precisely de-activate, co-opt and inseminate those initiatives that aim to tackle on social inequality, and they do so by trying to entice activist scholars into their neoliberal and bureaucratic governing practices.

Conclusions

Nevertheless, I conclude that it is impossible to undermine social struggles, because they actually move beyond the state.

Academic Freedom in Legal Research

Poster

Dr. Anatolijs Krivins¹

1. Daugavpils University

Objectives*

Academic research that contributes to the correct perception of rights demonstrates great diversity, reflecting the scientific interests of each researcher in a social context. The social element is also the basis for the differences between abstract and concrete thinking. Namely, abstract thinking tends to perceive meanings as arising from a specific context, while concrete thinking considers each meaning as directly related to a specific context. In pluralistic social contexts fostered by academic freedom, there is a higher level of social contrast, but linguistic codes and meanings tend to be more analytical. It undoubtedly promotes critical thinking and accelerates innovative change.

Laws, allowing learning of social and psychological standards that determine individual behavior, are undoubtedly considered an important element of socialization. The dominant legal idioms and paradigms in society not only reflect the way of life of the society, but also influence that way of life. The social and public context determines the dominant categories of legal emotions, which are expressed both in customary law and in written laws. Law is also a source of information – law informs about which legal emotions are allowed to be expressed in a given society and which are not. Today, the most important social meanings and values are concentrated in normative legal acts, so it is the results of the legislative process that offer the best means for understanding the changing nature of each society.

Academic freedom (especially in legal studies) promotes the expression and use of an individual's innate abilities, including talent, intelligence, and the ability to engage in innovative law making. Freedom, justice and equality are products of the common way of thinking and living that democracy has created. The development and observance of the mentioned values can only be achieved within the framework of democratically determined political mechanisms.

Education and Research in the Western Balkans in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

Poster

Dr. Oljaa Hoxhaj¹, Dr. Belida Halilaj¹

1. Department of Law, University "Ismail Qemali" Vlora

Objectives*

The Western Balkans is a region with diverse cultural and historical contexts. Education and research are pivotal in driving regional development and socio-economic growth. However, these sectors face significant challenges, including disparities in educational quality, limited access to resources, and infrastructural constraints. This paper aims to explore the impact of AI on education and research in the Western Balkans. It seeks to understand how AI technologies are being integrated, the benefits they offer, the challenges they pose and the opportunities for growth.

Materials and Methods

Through the application of the qualitative methodology, this approach provides a deeper understanding of how AI is globally integrated into education and research with promising results. AI technologies offer innovative solutions to some of these persistent problems. They can provide personalized learning experiences, automate routine tasks, and facilitate advanced research capabilities.

Results

Many schools and research institutions lack the necessary technology and internet connectivity to fully utilize AI tools. Additionally, there is a need for substantial investments in technology and training to build the necessary expertise and capabilities. Amidst these challenges, Artificial Intelligence (AI) emerges as a transformational force with the potential to revolutionize education and research. However, the extent of AI adoption and its impact in the Western Balkans remain unexplored, necessitating a focused investigation.

Conclusions

By investing in AI, the region can bridge educational gaps, foster innovation, and position itself as a competitive elite team in the global knowledge economy. Collaborative efforts between governments, the private sector, and international organizations are crucial to realizing these opportunities. By examining specific case studies and current trends, the paper provides a comprehensive overview of AI's role in enhancing educational and research outcomes in the region. This study also aims to offer policy and practical recommendations to maximize the benefits of AI while addressing the associated risks.

Strengthening Collective Resilience through Citizen Science

Poster

Mrs. Ineta Simonaitė¹

1. Kaunas University of Technology

Objectives*

This research aims to investigate the role of citizen science in strengthening collective resilience during global crises, focusing on society's trust and community mobilisation. The research seeks to examine how citizen science initiatives can complement the traditional top-down approaches to emerging crisis management, such as climate change, pandemics, or social unrest, fostering a more inclusive and responsive society.

Materials and Methods

A literature review was conducted, covering literature on citizen science, collective resilience, and crisis management.

Results

The results showed that citizen science strengthens collective resilience by engaging diverse social groups and promoting transparency and inclusivity. Initiatives that include digital tools and platforms open up opportunities for faster responses that allow to enhance the speed of crisis management. The real-time engagement of communities helps to discover their needs and collect a huge number of data.

Conclusions

Citizen science has a crucial role in strengthening collective resilience when facing crisis. By the society's engagement along with formal scientific research, the new approaches to crisis management can be revealed and applied in practice. To achieve even better results, citizen science should be applied more often, as it helps to gather larger data, include new approaches, and use different knowledge.

Teaching Family Law: Academic Freedom and Religious Beliefs

Poster

*Dr. Ergysa Ikonomi*¹

1. University "Ismail Qemali" Vlora

Objectives*

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the teaching and learning process. It guarantees the proper environment for exchanging ideas and knowledge. Academic freedom goes beyond what is already fixed in international documents or university acts. From the teacher's perspective, it concerns selecting the right and necessary materials, preparing to explain the matters to the students quickly, and especially understanding their impact and managing the students' questions and controversial opinions. It empowers the professor to freely express ideas without being intimidated. Teaching law is difficult enough because the teaching material consists of conventions, laws, by-laws, principles, doctrines, and precedents that the students must learn and accept as they are. Teaching law is also challenging because the students initially find it hard to lose their own beliefs of right or wrong and seek to equalize their "right" with "lawful." Teaching family law is demanding since the auditor's participants bear personal and family experiences that are misunderstood to conflict with the law when crossed with their religious beliefs. As a result, topics like divorce, same-sex marriage, adoption, family roles, domestic violence, and assisted reproduction are often accompanied by solid debate or resistance, not acknowledging them as "right." This paper explains how the student's religious beliefs are an obstacle to enjoying academic freedom for the professor and the rest of the students. The opposing opinion on solely religious grounds undermines and biases the content of teaching materials as they wrongly promote forbidden things, thus putting pressure on the professor. The paper offers a potential solution that can be applied to mitigate the issues arising from the "conflict" of legal teaching materials and religious beliefs.

Aligning Micro- and Macro-Level Expectations Towards Food

Control or Go with the Flow: Latvian Rural Youth Navigating Plates between Places

Oral

Ms. Ilze Mileiko¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

In today's world, as the dynamics of society keep shifting, the saying 'there is nothing more permanent than change' appears to hold new significance. In this light, change and its (im)permanence become even more topical for social sciences scholars who continuously explore how changes, such as migration, aging, and changing economic circumstances, impact individuals and communities. This paper focuses on the move from rural to urban areas as a focal point of change and explores its interaction with one of the basic human necessities: food. Two distinct ways how young people who move from periphery of Latvia to its capital relate to their daily food consumption are discussed. In one case, the approach is to meticulously plan and control the meal schedule, while in the other, all aspects related to food, from obtaining it to enjoying meals, become somewhat marginal and subjected to other circumstances and daily pressures of new city life. While both approaches may appear distinct at first glance, they can equally be seen as coping mechanisms for being away from home. Food tells a story of youth redefining what and where home is and how to arrange their existence in new conditions.

This paper is based on fieldwork that included in-depth semi-structured interviews with Latvian rural youth, as well as involving several interlocutors in using the photovoice method and documenting their daily experiences with food in food consumption diaries. It explores often overlooked daily patterns and structural challenges that impact the food consumption habits of the current youth generation.

Enhancing Confidence in Food Security in Era of Uncertainty: the Global Significance of Food Self-Provisioning

Oral

*Mr. Fangliang Wan*¹

1. Institute of Mountain Hazards and Environment, Chinese Academy of Science

Objectives*

“For empires, food symbolizes power; for individuals, it safeguards their rights. Without food, people face hunger, and ‘hungry people are easily controlled’” (Scott Reynolds Nelson, 2022). Climate change, geopolitical conflicts, and dismantled global industrial chains are threatening food security, while anti-globalization and post-modern thought intensify social “atomization”. This study explores how food self-provisioning (FSP) offers resilience in volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA era) as well as brittle, anxious, nonlinear, incomprehensible (BANI era) contexts, focusing on reducing global supply chain dependence, lowering carbon footprints, and fostering social cohesion and civil rights.

Materials and Methods

A literature review on food security, supply chains, and individual autonomy was conducted, incorporating Nelson’s (2022) insights on food and power. Chinese surveys and case studies on small-scale FSP were then analyzed, emphasizing localized cultivation methods, transport-linked emission reductions, and “crop exchange” programs to assess how FSP-based interactions alleviate social tensions and bolster collective resilience.

Results

Participants engaged in small-scale farming reported decreased reliance on external food sources, indicating stronger autonomy and resilience. Evidence suggests that minimized transportation and shortened supply chains help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Leisure gardening enhanced personal well-being, freedom, and achievement, while community-based “crop exchange” initiatives lessened social isolation and nurtured a more unified social structure.

Conclusions

FSP emerges as a pivotal strategy in reinforcing both individual autonomy and societal resilience under current volatile and complex conditions. By reducing reliance on global supply chains, lowering carbon emissions, and fostering collaborative communities, FSP provides a pathway to achieving broader civil liberties and social solidarity. Moreover, it aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), suggesting that a collective move toward self-provisioning can integrate economic viability, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion into a cohesive framework for future development.

Family Food Practices in Latvia: Insights from a Multidimensional Perspective

Oral

*Mr. Jānis Šabanovs*¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The aim of this study is to provide an in-depth exploration of the interplay between various factors influencing food consumption practices within families, with a particular focus on the multidimensional factors shaping these practices, including ecological, social, psychological, biological, and economic dimensions. It analyzes the connections formed among individuals in family relationship systems, their access to food, and their perceptions of it. By focusing on households as socio-economic units, the study highlights how family members collaboratively engage in acquiring, preparing, and distributing food, offering a nuanced understanding of food practices in family systems.

This qualitative study gathers data from diverse households across urban and rural Latvia, it employs semi-structured interviews to explore family members' food-related practices and perceptions, participatory observations to document real-life interactions and routines, digital ethnography to analyze the influence of online spaces, and visual anthropology to capture non-verbal and contextual aspects of food behaviors.

Preliminary findings underscore the critical role of intra-family relationships in shaping food practices. Interactions among family members influence food acquisition, preparation, and consumption, reflecting broader socio-economic and cultural contexts. Variations between rural and urban households highlight localized influences on family dynamics and food behaviors.

The research underscores the importance of intra-family dynamics as active agents in shaping food practices. By integrating micro-level familial interactions with broader systemic factors, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the drivers behind food consumption patterns in Latvian families. These insights offer a valuable foundation for addressing food-related challenges through family-centered policies and interventions.

Food-Self Provisioning: Alternative Food Solutions with a Micro-Level

Oral

*Prof. Huidi Ma*¹

1. Chinese National Academy of Arts

Objectives*

The main objective of this article based on data and information obtained from a questionnaire and social observation of Food-Self Provisioning (FSP) for Chinese showed it is still an indispensable source place of food as a micro-system in contemporary society in crisis times.

Materials and Methods

Our research adopts the methods and paths of questionnaire survey, social observation, in-depth interviews, and case tracking. Data from two surveys in 2019 and 2022 showed that 90 % of the households interviewed in China are in rural areas, and 67% of the households interviewed in urban areas, have practices and ideals for gardening at home. Analysis of the data showed that gardening at home is traditional and popular readily cultivated using narrow plots or planting boxes. The participants come from a wide range of social classes, the main motivation for growers is self-sufficiency rather than economic trade, and most growers use production methods that adhere to organic food standards. Especially during a pandemic, easing the anxiety of food shortfalls. These findings highlight its possibilities as a new solution for food self-sufficiency in the future.

Results

As a results, we find out the problems are being that this new idea has not yet become a consensus in the community, has not been included in the statistics of the commodity economy, has not received government policy support and technical guidance, and has not been integrated into urban and rural care systems. However, with the frequency of natural disasters, the downgrading of consumption, and the increase in the number of unemployed and unemployable people who's attitudes and ideas are shifting.

Conclusions

Today, human society is facing a great crisis of climate change, uncertainty, persistent epidemics, the risk of war and others that threaten the normal functioning of the grain and food's production, distribution, exchange and consumption, compelling us to seek new solutions. In the context, FSP has has the potential to shift perspectives and become an essential choice in times of crisis.

Health-Driven and Digitally-Enhanced Sustainability in Food Systems: Case of Spain

Oral

Dr. Maija Kale¹, Prof. Ana Juan García²

1. University of Latvia, 2. University of Valencia

Objectives*

This research aims to explore the intersection of health-driven strategies and sustainability within Spanish food systems, focusing on the communication strategies of food producers. By examining the communication strategies of food producers communicating sustainability initiatives related to climate change, biodiversity and pollution, as well as health-related issues - including intolerances - the study explores the themes, language and tactics used to engage consumers. It also assesses the challenges and opportunities of communication to align health-focused product strategies with broader sustainability goals, addressing pressing issues such as food intolerance and biodiversity loss.

Materials and Methods

This research uses a qualitative, multi-method approach to explore sustainability, health and communication in Spain's food systems. It begins with desk research, reviewing academic literature, government publications, industry reports and digital resources to contextualise Spain's agri-food landscape within broader trends. Fieldwork includes attendance at two major industry events in 2024 - the Food4Future Forum in Bilbao and the Valencia Digital Summit - where semi-structured interviews were conducted with six food producers from different agrifood sectors.

Results

Balancing environmental goals with production pressures remains an ongoing challenge. A key obstacle is the difficulty of communicating sustainability values effectively, with limited budgets and consumer reluctance to pay premium prices hampering targeted messaging. Instead, sustainability is often embedded in product quality rather than explicitly promoted. Interviews and insights from industry events reflect the growing demand for shorter supply chains, health-focused trends such as plant-based and functional foods, and innovations in sustainable packaging. Communication around food intolerance has the potential to be linked to increased biodiversity, but this is not yet a consistent strategy among food manufacturers.

Conclusions

Spanish food producers face the intertwined challenges of sustainability, health innovation and consumer engagement, requiring balanced communication strategies to increase trust in food systems and lead to more sustainable consumer engagement in the future.

Necessity of Additional Labeling for High-Sugar Content Food Products: Legal and Public Health Perspectives

Oral

Ms. Linda Šarke¹, Mrs. Andreta Slavinska¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

Sugar, particularly in its processed form, is one of the factors contributing to the global “obesity epidemic.” The definition of high-sugar products varies across countries due to the absence of a unified legal framework. The European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No.1924/2006 provides voluntary Nutrition claims such as “low sugar”, “with no added sugar”, and “sugar-free”. However, it does not mandate warnings for high-sugar products, which complicates consumers’ ability to make informed choices.

Aim: To justify the necessity of additional labeling for high-sugar content food products, based on current scientific findings and legal framework analyses, to improve consumer awareness and enable more informed decision-making.

Materials and Methods

This study employed an interdisciplinary approach combining nutrition science and legal analysis.

Research Framework: EU regulations: No.1169/2011, No.1924/2006, and No.178/2002. National laws: Latvia’s Food Circulation Supervision Law and Consumer Rights Protection Law. Front-of-pack labeling (FOPL) systems, such as Nutri-Score (France), traffic light labeling (UK), and the health star rating (New Zealand).

Methods: Analytical and descriptive methods to evaluate existing labeling practices and consumer perceptions. Comparative research to identify best practices in international contexts. Legal interpretation to assess regulatory frameworks and propose improvements.

Results

Excessive sugar consumption exacerbates global obesity, affecting all age groups. Current EU and national regulations omit mandatory labeling for high-sugar products, restricting informed consumer decisions. FOPL systems have been effective in informing consumers. International experience demonstrates that warning labels are encouraging manufacturers to reformulate products and promote a healthier food environment.

Conclusions

Implementing additional labeling for high-sugar content products would be a significant step toward strengthening consumer rights and public health. Such labeling could reduce misleading Nutrition and Health claims that emphasize only positive product attributes.

Developing a legal framework for clear and easily understandable warning labels, such as “high sugar content,” is essential. Public education campaigns should concurrently raise awareness of sugar’s health effects.

**Autonomy, Bodily Agency
and the Collective Good:
Perspectives from Medical
Humanities**

Breaking Functional Imperatives: Excorporation in Chronic Fatigue and Pain

Oral

*Ms. Ginta Vēja*¹

1. Department of Rehabilitation, Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

This paper explores the phenomenological concept of *excorporation* and its potential applications in describing the lived experiences of embodied subjectivity during the onset of chronic functional disturbances and disabilities, such as chronic fatigue and pain syndromes.

Drawing upon Merleau-Ponty's concept of *incorporation*, Erik Malmqvist and Kristin Zeiler (Malmqvist and Zeiler 2010; Zeiler 2013) have proposed to include into habitually acquired practical and pre-reflective bodily resources not only external objects and technologies, but also some beliefs and norms – e.g., regarding standards of sexed and racialized embodiment – which are corporeally expressed and shared. These cultural patterns become extensions of my sensory-motor capabilities and transform my grasp on the world in ways that often escape voluntary awareness: “because they form part of the bodily resources *from* which we attend to the things and people around us they rarely present themselves as something to be attended *to*.” (Leder 1990; Malmqvist 2014, 89)

The concept of *excorporation* is introduced to describe a reverse process by which our previously unquestioned, taken-for-granted engagement with the world and others is thwarted by unwanted and often painful experiences. Instead of silently enabling our practical and pre-reflective being in the world, the habitual structures stand forth as obstacles and, via continuous disruption of our body-world relationship, constitute objects of compelling attention.

Recent phenomenological studies (e.g., Malmqvist and Zeiler 2010; Zeiler 2013; Malmqvist 2014; Zeiler and Guntram 2014) have employed incorporation and *excorporation* to examine the ways in which norms of sexual difference both shape and disrupt embodied agency. I explore the potential for application of this conceptual tool to a broader area of experiential analysis, particularly, in thematization of cultural narratives and perceptions related to the standards of normal bodily functionality as they compellingly present themselves in living with chronic fatigue and pain.

Challenges of Balancing the Right of Patient to Express His or Her Religious Beliefs during Medical Treatment with the Physicians' Duty to Respect Patients' Right to Self-Determination

Oral

*Ms. Laura Šāberte*¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The aim of the research is to analyse whether and how the right of the capable adult patient to express his or her religious beliefs during medical treatment can be balanced with the certified physicians', who is also an attending physician, duty to respect patients' right to self-determination in the Republic of Latvia.

Materials and Methods

In the research the author analyses case law, legal acts, and scientific literature in the field of medical law. Likewise, to identify practical examples and problem issues, the author uses general scientific methods such as theoretical modelling method, analytical method, and deductive and inductive method and methods of the interpretation of the legal provisions such as grammatical, systematic, historical, and teleological.

Results

Patients have the right to self-determination, which allows them to make their own medical decisions freely, without control or influence. It also includes the patient right to refuse medical treatment based on his or her religious beliefs. The research revealed several key challenges concerning national legal acts which can disturb to achieve the balance between the right to freedom of religion and respect for the patient's right to self-determination in medical treatment in the Republic of Latvia.

Conclusions

The main conclusions of the research are as follows.

1. National legal acts should provide that medical education and ongoing professional development should include modules focused on cultural competence and religious sensitivity.
2. National legal acts should require medical institutions, especially in-patient facilities, to have communication guidelines for patients with specific religious beliefs.
3. National legal acts should provide that medical treatment institutions should develop clear protocols for handling situations where patients' religious convictions conflict with recommended medical interventions. This would involve interdisciplinary discussions that include ethicists, legal advisors, and religious representatives, for example professional health care chaplains, to find acceptable solutions that honour both medical ethics and patient beliefs.

Collective Embodied Experience of COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy in Latvia

Oral

*Dr. Andrejs Balodis*¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

In this paper, I will address the role of embodied experience in the phenomena of vaccine hesitancy. Objective is to investigate the implicit and pre-reflective motivation for health practices among Latvians and identify patterns in shared embodied experiences. I will argue that vaccine hesitancy has a socio-culturally specific expression related to its soviet past and historical circumstances.

Materials and Methods

- qualitative empirical phenomenologically informed research
- the method of Phenomenologically Grounded Qualitative Research (PGQR) (Køster & Fernandez 2023)
- theory of collective embodied experience and collective body memory (Fuchs 2012, 2017; Froese & Izquierdo 2018; Casey 1987)
- concept of sedimentation (Geniusas 2024)

Results

We conducted a phenomenologically grounded qualitative research to explain motivations behind vaccine hesitancy and refusal. Existing studies on the subject lack a comprehensive, in-depth explanation of the role of the embodied experience in vaccine hesitancy. The qualitative study (N=16) carried out in Latvia allows us to draw conclusions not only about individual but also collective models of health experience, emphasizing the socio-cultural and historical dimensions in the embodied experience.

Conclusions

In this paper I argue that descriptions of collective embodied experiences and particular, collective body memory contribute to understanding experiential and motivational context of vaccine hesitancy. Together with other phenomenological concepts employed in our PGQR such as embodiment, bodily certainty, lifeworld, sense of agency, normality, it sheds light on vaccine-hesitant behaviour and can provide bodily motivated reasons for it. By developing the concept of collective body memory allows to push a claim that embodied experiences of vaccine hesitancy are culturally and geographically specific.

Minors in Medical Decision Making

Oral

Dr. Jonada Zyberaj¹

1. University "Ismail Qemali" Vlora

Objectives*

The autonomy in medical decision making entails the ability of the person to decide which medical procedure is appropriate for him/her or just to refuse a treatment. Parents are considered to be the main decision-making actors in cases of health decisions on their children. When the parents failed to act in the best interest of the child, disagreements between parents and health care professionals on medical treatment of the minor usually are required to be solved by the court. In this process the minor should be considered as active partners in their care. Thus, minor decision capacity to intend becomes relevant and in accordance to their age, they can give or withhold their consent to their treatments which may be in conflict with the decision of the parents or with what is considered as his best interest.

Materials and Methods

The study consists in a legal analyze of the minor medical rights especially in Albanian and Kosovo by comparing the two legal frameworks of this countries.

Results

Medical consent ensures that the rights and the best interest of the minors are always protected. The state must guarantee the best interest of the child even when the parents, who are entitled to do it, may jeopardize the welfare of the child. Thus it is of a crucial importance to know the legal measures provided to guarantee the best interest of the child.

Conclusions

The autonomy of the minor in decision making in accordance to their capacity to intend, the role of different actors in the medical decision making of minors and the solution of the disputes which may arise from the different considerations of different actors are considered the main issues that require legal clarity and which can be considered without any hesitation as the challenges for the Albanian and Kosovo legislation.

More-than-Human Care: Relationality and Bodily Autonomy in Latvian Sauna Rituals

Oral

*Dr. Jana Kukaine*¹, *Dr. Anne Sauka*²

*1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University, 2. Department of Philosophy and Ethics, Faculty of Humanities,
University of Latvia*

Objectives*

By considering Latvian sauna rituals, our research explores an entangled, care-full, responsive, and intra-active understanding of bodily autonomy that transcends the binary oppositions of strength and vulnerability, individuality and community, and the self and the other. We approach the Latvian sauna as a material site of engagement with more-than-human agencies, focusing, in particular, on the elemental and non-animal agencies, such as water, fire, and plants. In our research, we analyze how these actors participate in more-than-human care relationships and engender a non-dualistic and trans-corporeal bodily autonomy intrinsic to the healing and restorative effects of Latvian sauna practice.

Methodologically, our research adheres to feminist and posthuman philosophies, eco-phenomenology, and the phenomenology of the body, employing studies of Latvian folklore and traditional medicine. Moreover, we strongly believe that art is a necessary part of theoretical practice; therefore, we also turn to contemporary art as a knowledge vehicle to think with. In particular, we focus on the representation of sauna rituals in the photo project by Iveta Gabaliņa, following the idea that an image is sometimes worth a thousand words. Artistic imagery, therefore, can deliver valuable insights and evidence for ideas that might otherwise be considered too poetic or “out there” to be accepted by mainstream academic discourse.

Phenomenology's Contribution to Public Health: Embodied Perspective on Adherence to Preventive Health Measures

Oral

*Dr. Māra Grīnfelde*¹

1. Social Sciences Research Centre, Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

In recent decades, a vast number of studies have drawn on insights from phenomenological philosophy to examine issues relevant to health. Despite this focus, phenomenologists have been hesitant to engage with topics related to public health. This reluctance may stem from the seemingly conflicting orientations of public health and phenomenology: while public health adopts a collective, population-based approach, phenomenology has centered on the individual. In this paper, I will argue that at least one set of issues relevant to public health can benefit from a phenomenological perspective—the question of adherence (or lack thereof) to preventive health measures. I will demonstrate that phenomenology provides a novel, embodied perspective on the motivational possibilities underlying adherence to preventive health measures.

Materials and Methods

The argument proposed in this paper is based on data from a phenomenologically grounded qualitative research study on COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy, which I conducted together with my colleagues. The study employed the methodological approach of 'Phenomenologically Grounded Qualitative Research' (Køster & Fernandez, 2021, which integrates concepts from phenomenological philosophy with qualitative interviews. To support my argument, I will draw on the phenomenological distinction between good and bad objectification. Good objectification refers to a focus on one's body that aligns with one's subjectivity, whereas bad objectification involves a focus on the body that disrupts one's subjectivity.

Results

Drawing on data from our phenomenologically grounded qualitative research study and the phenomenological distinction between two types of bodily objectification, I argue that adherence to preventive measures depends on the nature of bodily objectification involved—specifically, whether it constitutes good or bad objectification.

Conclusions

The embodied perspective on the motivational possibilities for adherence to preventive health measures provides both an additional lens on the multidimensional issue of the motivational structure of health behavior and new insights for improving strategies to enhance adherence to preventive measures.

Safe Use of Everyday Mobile Applications for Providing Telemedicine Services

Oral

*Mr. Rafaels Ciekurs*¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The rapid adoption of telemedicine solutions has transformed access to healthcare services, providing patients with convenient and remote care. This paper aims to analyze the security risks associated with mobile applications used for telemedicine and propose measures to ensure effective data protection in this field.

Materials and Methods

This study examines relevant Latvian and European legal frameworks, including the “Medical Treatment Law,” the “Personal Data Processing Law,” the “Patient Rights Law,” and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Analysis includes reviewing legal documents, case studies, and security breach assessments. Additionally, the study considers the European Commission’s “European Health Data Space” initiative.

Results

The most critical aspect in telemedicine is protecting sensitive data during medical treatment processes. The Latvian “Medical Treatment Law” emphasizes the confidentiality of patient data. Both the “Personal Data Processing Law” and GDPR require that any personal data processing adheres to strict security standards. The European Commission’s “European Health Data Space” initiative provides practical solutions to enhance secure data processing and interoperability. Furthermore, Article 96 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia guarantees the right to privacy, necessitating a robust approach to data protection also in telemedicine.

Conclusions

Ensuring the safe use of mobile applications in telemedicine requires a combination of secure technology, strict adherence to legal standards, and ethical medical practices. Healthcare providers must transition to platforms designed for secure communication and data protection. National and European legal frameworks provide a solid foundation, but continuous improvements in security measures and awareness training for healthcare professionals are essential. By addressing these challenges, telemedicine can remain a reliable and trustworthy solution for modern healthcare needs.

State, Reproduction, and Morality: Examining Attitudes Towards Infertility and Medically Assisted Reproduction in Latvia

Oral

Mrs. Diāna Kiščenko¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

This paper examines how prevailing gender norms and moral orientations in Latvia shape existing attitudes toward the state-funded infertility treatment program, egg donation, and potential surrogacy. It focuses on the perspectives of individuals who have experienced infertility, as well as those of politicians and medical practitioners

Materials and Methods

The study is based on sixteen semi-structured interviews and an analysis of policy documents.

Results

Drawing on Marshall Sahlins' three types of reciprocity (1972) and Marilyn Strathern's (2012) ideas about the relationship between gift and commodity in the context of human body part donation, this article argues that a moral tension exists regarding human reproduction in Latvia. On one hand, politicians and doctors articulate state support for infertility treatment in terms of market economy principles. State support is framed as a transaction, with the state positioned as an investor, and individuals expected to fulfil this investment by producing children. On the other hand, gamete donation and potential surrogacy are portrayed as gifts, encouraged to be presented as an altruistic act that is distanced from the fundamental principles of the market economy.

Conclusions

This contrast suggests that while politicians and doctors perceive the state's involvement in regulating reproductive processes as morally justified, they view the personal motivations of individuals participating in state-regulated reproductive practices (such as donation and potential surrogacy) as ambiguous and morally questionable.

Suspended Lives: Temporality, Agency, and Ethics of Care in Later Life

Oral

Ms. Anna Žabicka¹

1. University of Vienna

Objectives*

Efforts to protect vulnerable populations often create a paradox – safeguarding physical well-being can diminish the very agency that gives life meaning. This paper explores how institutional framings of frailty and vulnerability can unintentionally reinforce dependency, narrowing possibilities for self-determination and meaningful life.

Drawing on long-term ethnographic research in a Latvian nursing home during the COVID-19 pandemic, the analysis highlights how protective restrictions reshaped residents' experiences of time, intensifying existential boredom and deepening social isolation. With visits suspended and routines disrupted, the temporal flow of mundane daily life stretched, while the absence of future events compressed time, heightening anxieties about limited time they had left in this life. This disruption in temporal rhythms affected residents' moral timelines (Long 2020) – narratives that shape how individuals reflect on their lives and legacies. As the contours of social engagement diminished, residents grappled with a loss of agency, reflecting on what it meant to be seen, remembered, or to matter within institutional care. This inextricable link between temporality and personhood underscores the subtle but profound ways in which pandemic policies reordered not just physical spaces, but the moral landscapes of aging.

While the pandemic serves as a case study, the argument interrogates broader ethical tensions in care systems that prioritize safety over autonomy. Benevolent or compassionate ageism (Verbruggen, Howell, and Simmons 2020; Vervaecke and Meisner 2021) – framing older adults as fragile and in need of protection – can reinforce invisibility and deprive individuals of opportunities for connection, identity, and belonging. Grounded in anthropological debates on aging and care, this paper explores how protective measures shape experiences of personhood, agency, and meaningful life, reflecting on the ambivalence at the core of care – how mitigating risk can inadvertently limit the conditions under which life feels meaningful and self-directed.

Threat to Embodied Agency and Vaccine Hesitancy

Oral

Dr. Uldis Vēgners¹

1. University of Latvia

Objectives*

In ethical discussions one approach has been to criticize vaccine-hesitant persons as irresponsible free-riders. However, this is a simplified and reductive approach to vaccine hesitancy and a more contextualized approach is needed in which vaccine hesitant persons' experiential and embodied perspective is taken into account. Based on our phenomenologically grounded qualitative research on the embodied motives of vaccine hesitancy I want to argue that vaccination efforts (especially in the form of mandatory vaccination) and dominant societal attitudes toward vaccine hesitant persons can be experienced by them as a threat to their embodied subjectivity and agency. In the face of this threat which leads to such experiences as helplessness (sense of loss of control) and despair (hopelessness) some of our participants reported attempts to reclaim their embodied subjectivity and agency by refusing to vaccinate. Their vaccine hesitancy is not about the vaccine itself anymore, but rather about withstanding the threat and reasserting themselves as subjects of their experience and embodied agents. Furthermore, from an embodied perspective embodied agency (or 'I can') is a necessary condition for autonomy and moral agency (and the sense of responsibility). In light of this, our participants' refusal to vaccinate can be interpreted as an attempt not only to regain one's embodied agency but also as an act which enables them as possible moral agents. In other words, from their embodied experience it could be viewed as the ultimate embodied and ethical response.

This research is funded by the Latvian Council of Science, project *Hesitant bodies: phenomenological analysis of the embodied experience of vaccine hesitancy*, project No. lzp-2021/1-0360.

To be, or not to be: Agency and Resilience of Early Career General Practitioners

Oral

*Mrs. Inguna Potetinova*¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

According to the World Health Organization, most of a person's health needs are met at the primary health care (PHC) level throughout their lifetime. However, the shortage of general practitioners (GPs) is a serious problem in many countries worldwide, including Latvia. In addition, young doctors have little motivation to pursue a career in family medicine, and one in three existing general practitioners is of pension age. However, the resilience and well-being of healthcare professionals directly affect patient safety, and the quality of care provided.

Based on semi-structured interviews with early-career general practitioners in Latvia and participant observations further on, I ask what prevents final-year students from opting for family medicine, in other words, what makes them turn away from such pressing collective needs. I also ask how, under the pressure of different socio-economic circumstances (e.g. low prestige and lack of challenge, lower financial opportunities, bureaucratic burden, stereotypes, etc.), the choice for PHC is made and what factors motivate young professionals to stay in the profession. I am particularly interested in the actors and/or processes that make up resilience besides their personal capabilities, and what role more-than-humans play in it.

Resilience as a phenomenon worthy of study is relatively new, and such an inclusive approach, moving away from the anthropocentric view, will give new impetus to the resilience literature. Research of this kind is limited and there is a lack of in-depth knowledge on such integrated human-more-than-human relationships that could challenge the current anthropocentric paradigm. The ethnographic research method has the potential to provide more data and thus deeper insight, which is essential to gain new knowledge and reveal important nuances.

When the Patient is a Jehovah's Witness. Body Autonomy and Refusal of Medical Treatment in a Religious Community

Oral

*Dr. Agita Misane*¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The paper will discuss the reasons for the refusal of medical treatments, most commonly, of blood transfusion by members of the Jehovah's Witnesses community as well as their approach to alternative treatments and expectations from the medical professionals with particular reference to the best and worst practices in Latvia and worldwide.

Materials and Methods

The study is based on interviews with Witnesses, their congregation leaders and lawyers, analysed within the phenomenological framework and focused on believers' own experiences.

Results

Preliminary results of the study indicate that Jehovah's Witnesses are generally open to medical treatment, however, they are also prepared to take risks in those cases when the most common treatment is against their belief as is in their strict refusal of blood transfusion. At the same time, the community has taken measures to provide most hospitals with blood transfusion alternatives.

Conclusions

It is important to understand that believers' religious goals usually prevail over their health concerns. Attempts to appeal to their self-preservation instinct or other common arguments do not work in such cases since believer's rationale differ from that of a medical professional. Hence, insufficient communication from both sides becomes an important obstacle for the development of the treatment strategy.

**Green Transition
to Empower
“Homo Climaticus”**

Adaptation Strategies to Energy Poverty: Homo Climaticus Perspective

Oral

Ms. Dina Bite¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

One of the aims of the project “*Socially Responsible Green Transition: Strengthening Governance Solutions to Empower Homo Climaticus in the Healthcare Sector (GreenCare)*” is to advance the theoretical and empirical understanding of the concept of Homo Climaticus. This involves operationalizing the concept with a focus on empowering individuals, healthcare institutions, and policymakers to collaborate and co-create adaptive mechanisms for climate change mitigation and adaptation. By defining Homo Climaticus as a climate-conscious human identity, we aim to promote pro-environmental behaviors, responsible decision-making, and sustainable everyday practices.

The objectives of this paper are:

1. To clarify the conceptual framework of Homo Climaticus.
2. To analyze qualitative data on coping mechanisms for energy poverty.

Materials and Methods

Methods: This study includes a review of relevant scientific publications and a secondary analysis of 22 interviews conducted in 2023 and 2024.

Results

When it comes to the informants’ choices regarding pro-environmental behaviors, they tend to act more pragmatically, often disregarding climate-friendly solutions. This partly reflects issues of social inequality and limited resources, but in a broader context, it points to psychological, economic, and social constraints.

The interview results highlight several factors contributing to an underdeveloped climate-conscious human identity and a lack of climate literacy, which manifest in the informants’ everyday routines, attitudes, and beliefs.

Conclusions

The findings of this study emphasize the complexity of fostering a climate-conscious human identity within the context of energy poverty and broader societal constraints. While the concept of Homo Climaticus presents a vision of individuals embodying climate-conscious behaviors and sustainable practices, the reality reflected in the informants’ choices reveals significant barriers to achieving this ideal. However, advancing the theoretical and empirical understanding of Homo Climaticus is a crucial step toward promoting sustainable practices and addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by energy poverty and climate change.

Eco-Spiritual or Ethno-National? Reflections on the Interplay between Ethnic Identity and Environmental Concerns in Modern European Paganism and Japanese Shinto

Oral

*Prof. Michael Strmiska*¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

Scholars of comparative religion have long expressed the view that native or indigenous religious traditions are “closer to nature” than the globally distributed “world religions” such as Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. This evaluation rests upon a romantic view of native or indigenous peoples as “noble savages.” The Japanese religion of Shinto and modern European Pagan religious movements both claim to place the highest value on the natural world, often referring to nature and the earth as sacred or even divine. However, both forms of religion are also motivated by ethnic identity concerns that often interact with right-wing, ethnonational political viewpoints, raising the question of the relative value of nation or nature in these religions and the relative attention paid to ethnicity or the environment. This paper will critically examine the historical development and contemporary interplay of the contrasting eco-spiritual and ethno-national strands in Japanese Shinto and Pagan revival movements such as Asatru in Scandinavia, Romuva in Lithuania, and Dievturi in Latvia, and explore the efforts by European Pagans and Japanese Shintoists to create more eco-spiritual versions of their respective religions, while fighting against the historical tendency for the more ethno-national dimension to dominate religious life.

Materials and Methods

This paper will combine ethnographic research into European Pagan religious movements with analysis of other scholars’ studies of Japanese Shinto and Euro-Pagan movements utilizing anthropological and sociological theories.

Results

It will be shown that while both Shinto and European Pagan religions uphold the sacredness of nature, this value is undercut by the greater commitment to maintaining ethno-national identity.

Conclusions

The concluding discussion will explain how the nature element in these religions remains a potential resource for pro-environmental development in the future.

Energy Poverty in Latvia: Bringing the Gap Towards Sustainability

Oral

Mr. Gunars Valdmanis¹, Dr. Laila Zemīte¹, Dr. Diana Zalostiba¹, Mr. Dāvis Kronkalns¹

1. Riga Technical University

Objectives*

The aim of the study is to identify and analyse energy poverty indicators in Latvia, compare them with other European Union countries, and evaluate the effectiveness of existing policies in solving this problem. Particular attention is paid to the ability of households to maintain sufficient heat in housing, the share of expenditure on energy resources and municipal debt and the energy efficiency of housing.

Materials and Methods

Data from Eurostat, EU SILC and other international sources on 11 energy poverty indicators were used as part of the study. The analysis includes household energy expenditure, income levels, housing quality and energy efficiency. The comparative approach was used to analyse Latvia’s situation vis-à-vis Lithuania, Estonia, Finland and Germany, taking into account climatic conditions and socio-economic factors.

Results

The results show that Latvia is in the lowest positions in most energy poverty indicators compared to the countries analysed. High energy expenditure, low energy efficiency in housing and a high burden on utilities have a particularly negative impact on low-income households. In Latvia, 26% of the population faced a risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2022, one of the highest rates in EU. Similarly, 5th place in the energy expenditure ratio and public debt figures indicates a significant problem.

Conclusions

Energy poverty in Latvia is widespread and characterised by high energy expenditure, low income and low energy efficiency of housing. Compared to other EU countries, Latvia’s situation calls for urgent political measures, including housing renovation programmes, energy price regulation and additional social support for the poorest households. The introduction of structural and targeted solutions is

Energy Transition Landscapes without Wind Turbines. Popular Protests in Sardinia and the Commitment of Permaculturists

Oral

Dr. Maria Giovanna Cassa¹

1. University of Sassari

Objectives*

In June 2024, a large number of people gathered in northern Sardinia, Italy, to protest against the installation of wind turbines in the region. This was part of intensive work by several local committees set up to oppose decisions by the central Italian and European governments to promote the installation of large wind farms on the island. The protest took on the characteristics of a popular uprising against the energy transition and led to the collection of 210,000 signatures in support of a citizens’ initiative law on the issue. Among the activists in these committees are permaculturists: people who carry on local projects according to the principles of permaculture, and who therefore have a strong environmental awareness and have designed their everyday lives to be resilient and sustainable. Indeed, permaculture proposes a set of tools for designing sustainable systems based on the three ethics of “earth care, people care and fair share of resources” to ensure life for future generations. The paper proposes a reflection on the protests as a paradigmatic example of how political, environmental and identity issues are mutually reinforcing. Indeed, identity discourses in Sardinia have historically been rooted in the use and ownership of land, and even today this issue provides the backdrop for public demands for political autonomy from the mainland and for the region’s food and energy sovereignty. Exploring permaculturists’ views on this issue provides an opportunity to disentangle the many meanings that the category of sustainability can take on, depending on the cultural frame of reference. The data collected are part of an ongoing ethnography of permaculture in Sardinia as a techno-performative everyday revolution based on a different ontology of care and relationship between humans, non-humans and the environment.

Ensuring Sustainability in Healthcare: Latvian Hospitals and the 2026 Corporate Sustainability Reporting Requirements

Oral

Mr. Emīls Georgs Siders¹, Prof. Kristaps Zariņš¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The European Union’s Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) mandates a significant expansion of sustainability reporting obligations, targeting a broader range of organizations, including healthcare institutions. This paper explores the readiness of Latvian hospitals to meet CSRD requirements, focusing on the implications for public health, transparency, and environmental stewardship.

As of 2026, hospitals such as Paula Stradiņa Klīniskā universitātes slimnīca, which meet criteria related to employee count, turnover, and assets, will be required to disclose detailed information on their environmental, social, and governance (ESG) impacts. This marks a pivotal moment for the healthcare sector, where sustainability practices will become integral to operations. However, challenges such as resource constraints, data management, and alignment with European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS) could hinder compliance.

This paper argues that, beyond regulatory adherence, corporate sustainability reporting offers hospitals opportunities to enhance their societal role by reducing environmental footprints, fostering social equity, and improving institutional credibility. Through effective implementation, Latvian healthcare institutions can serve as leaders in promoting sustainable practices, reinforcing public trust and advancing the European Green Deal’s objectives.

By addressing the practicalities of CSRD compliance and its potential to drive systemic change, this research contributes to broader discussions on empowering “Homo Climaticus”—individuals and institutions prioritizing climate-friendly choices. The findings emphasize the necessity of support mechanisms and innovative strategies to ensure that the green transition in healthcare is both achievable and socially responsible.

Expertise in Sustainable Entrepreneurship in the Latvian Manufacturing Industry

Oral

*Mrs. Lāsma Tiunčika*¹, *Dr. Santa Bormane*²

1. University of Latvia, 2. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The present contribution of businesses towards sustainable development is not sufficient. To facilitate smoother transition to sustainable business practices, the purpose of the present study was to fill the educational gap by identifying criteria that estimate the expertise levels in sustainable entrepreneurship, and using the criteria to examine the expertise levels in sustainable entrepreneurship in the Latvian manufacturing industry.

Materials and Methods

The present research is divided into two phases, and combines results from application of five research methods, among which are qualitative, quantitative, and semi-quantitative analyses. In the first phase, systematic literature review was conducted, covering the recent publications in sustainable entrepreneurship. The criteria were selected based on the secondary data analysis and content analysis methods. Through the application of normative regulation analysis, the legal aspects of sustainable entrepreneurship were also considered in developing of the set of criteria. In the second phase of the study quantitative data were collected to analyze the expertise levels in sustainable entrepreneurship in the Latvian manufacturing industry.

Results

The results of the first phase revealed that a new theoretical approach must be used to better illustrate the concept of sustainable entrepreneurship. As a result, a set of criteria was developed to examine expertise levels in four dimensions of sustainable entrepreneurship. The quantitative study in the second phase revealed that the overall expertise levels among large Latvian production companies are fair. Supplementary statistical analysis revealed other considerable interactions.

Conclusions

Despite the limitations, the present study has identified gaps in theory and, thus, clarifies the concept of sustainable entrepreneurship especially with regard to the present legal framework. Additionally, the study provides a comprehensive summary of sustainable entrepreneurship criteria, evaluates the present situation, and functions as an educational resource to promote competence in sustainable entrepreneurship.

From Individualised to Shared Responsibility: Limits and Horizons of Household Responsibility for the Green Transition

Oral

Mr. Kārlis Lakševics¹, Dr. Jānis Brizga¹

1. Green Liberty

Objectives*

While an increased awareness of the social and environmental impacts of current modes of living can be observed in individual, business, and government sectors in Europe, the carbon footprints and lifestyle commitments to high-carbon consumption remain high. Many efforts of climate governance result in responsibility ping-pong from one actor or sector to another, such as businesses blaming demand and lack of regulation and individuals blaming business models and lack of infrastructure for more sustainable living. This points to a need for a better understanding of what models of responsibility could actually achieve reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Materials and Methods

Building on a multi-method research approach, including stakeholder laboratories, expert interviews, and Delphi workshops across several European countries, in this paper we explore under what responsibility arrangements European stakeholders believe the widespread emergence of “homo climaticus”, or a climate-responsible citizen to be possible.

Results

We show that such an imagination requires a different conceptualization of responsibility than popular models of individual and household responsibility paint a picture of. For significant emission and consumption reduction to be achieved in socially responsible and fair manner, a model of responsibility that builds on inter-household sharing, justice, and future-orientation is needed. Additionally, it is likely to be ineffective without a supporting eco-social policy mix that spans both welfare and business regulation policy sectors and aspires for supranational business and welfare competition harmonization.

Conclusions

As the range of lifestyle changes necessary to implement until 2050 to come close to the Paris climate target of limiting climate change to 1.5° C is extensive, developing an adequate individual responsibility means investing in comprehensive provisioning systems and infrastructures of sharing. In Latvia and elsewhere, this would cover not only transport and housing fields where emissions are high, but due to inequalities in carbon footprints and consumption – also through welfare policies.

Mitigating Effects of Climate Change: Business or Individual Responsibility and Interactions in Latvia

Oral

*Mrs. Kristīne Blumfelde-Rutka*¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The issue of climate change is one of the most pressing challenges of our time, affecting ecosystems, economies, and communities worldwide. As the impacts of climate change become increasingly evident, the debate over who bears the responsibility for mitigating these effects businesses or individual consumers has gained significant importance. The aim of this research is to explore the distribution of responsibility between businesses and individual consumers in mitigating the effects of climate change.

Materials and Methods

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, by analyzing data from Eurobarometer surveys and conducting in-depth interviews with various companies. Surveys provided comprehensive insights into public opinion and behavioral trends. Seven qualitative interviews were conducted with representatives from various companies. These interviews aimed to understand how businesses perceive climate change and the specific activities they undertake to mitigate its impact. The interviews provided in-depth perspectives on corporate strategies, challenges, and best practices in addressing climate change.

Results

Businesses, with their significant resource capabilities, are positioned to implement large-scale changes, yet individual actions collectively contribute to substantial environmental impact. The study underscores the importance of integrated policies that encourage both corporate accountability and individual responsibility, fostering a synergistic approach to climate change mitigation.

Conclusions

Consumers are increasingly fatigued by the continuous imposition of responsibility on them alone. It is crucial for companies to demonstrate their commitment to mitigating climate change through visible and impactful initiatives, fostering a cooperative effort that engages both businesses and consumers. The study underscores the importance of integrated policies that encourage both corporate accountability and individual responsibility, fostering a synergistic approach to climate change mitigation.

Acknowledgments: this research has been supported by the Latvian Council of Science within the fundamental and applied research project No. lzp-2020/1-0047 “From indifference to making difference in climate policy: improving the interaction between political narrative and societal perceptions in Latvia”.

Rethinking Homo Climaticus through Longevity of Household Things

Oral

Dr. Staffan Appelgren¹, Dr. Anna Bohlin¹

1. University of Gothenburg

Objectives*

This presentation discusses how people relate to objects in their households as these age and undergo change, and explores under what circumstances keeping things is preferred to acts of discarding or buying new. Given that environmental impact is significantly reduced when things are used for longer, the paper identifies the social and material configurations that lead to belongings remaining in households for extended periods of time rather than being divested. Through studying human-thing entanglements as they evolve, the presentation explores how the material-affective dimensions of objects affect domestic practices of use and retention – knowledge crucial for reducing consumption levels as well as reducing waste.

Materials and Methods

The presentation is based on research carried out within the project *Staying (with Things: Alternatives to Circular Living and Consuming*, Swedish Research Council 2020-2025). Methods used are ethnographic fieldwork in Swedish households, including participant observation, focus groups, in-depth interviews and “cupboard interviews”.

Results

Results show three main orientations towards the aging and transformation of belongings: curatorial, user-oriented and transformational. A common trait is that people have a remarkable temporal competence when managing the assessment and predictions of the longevity of their belongings, and tend to spend more time and energy on preventing unnecessary consumption than is often acknowledged in public debate on the “throw-away society”. Sometimes this is motivated by environmental concerns, other times social or economic.

Conclusions

Given that people already spend much time assessing and negotiating the transformation and wear and tear of their belongings, the paper questions attempts to increase the burden of caring for possessions. In order to empower “Homo Climaticus”, there is a need to move away from discourses problematising individual behaviour and instead formulate strategies and interventions that resonate with and channel the (sometimes accidentally climate-friendly dispositions and acts that people already display.

Scenarios for Latvia in Context of the EU Climate Neutrality Objectives: Document Analysis

Oral

*Prof. Kārlis Bukovskis*¹, *Ms. Lelde Rozentāle*²

1. Rīga Stradiņš University, 2. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The objective of climate neutrality is not only an environmental issue, but also a potential opportunity to strengthen Europe’s competitiveness, create new jobs in green sectors and increase energy independence, which is particularly important in the current geopolitical situation. It is important for Latvia to assess the potential benefits and risks in each development scenario, taking into account both economic interests and sustainable development goals. The objective of this research is to evaluate the scenarios for Latvia in adopting to the EU climate neutrality goals

Materials and Methods

Documents analysis

Results

The results of the research demonstrate that the continuation of the sustainable European Green Deal is the best solution in the long term, as it ensures adaptation to global trends and promotes innovation. In this context, Latvia should focus on the development of renewable energy, electromobility and sustainable industry, including using the forest potential of Latvia in a smart and sustainable manner. Meanwhile, the minimal transformation or relegation scenario for the implementation of the European Green Deal could bring short-term economic benefits, but in the long term would create serious environmental, economic and security risks, especially if Latvia is isolated from global innovation and green technology flows. The Green Deal provides an opportunity for Latvia to strengthen its energy security by reducing dependence on external fossil fuel suppliers, which is particularly crucial in the current geopolitical climate. Finally, protectionist policies should be added to the discussion, which can be useful as a support instrument for the transition of the Green Deal to remain competitive and promote local production but should not hamper long-term development and innovation

Conclusions

Consequently, Latvia should invest in the development of local green technologies and improve the implementation of climate policy in order to maximize EU funding and innovation opportunities, while maintaining competitiveness in the global market and developing energy export potential.

Social Sustainability in Circular Economy: Analysis of Citizen Behaviours and Policy Frameworks in Latvia

Oral

*Dr. Erika Lagzdina*¹

1. University of Latvia

Objectives*

The paper presents initial findings of the study that focuses on developing a theoretical model that explores how citizens and households engage with key circular economy material flows—such as plastic, food, textiles, construction materials, and mobility—at the micro level. It aims to understand the factors influencing household circular economy practices and define “human needs” to be satisfied in a socially sustainable manner. The paper investigates how municipalities and regional waste management authorities design policies to support citizens’ engagement with circular economy practices.

Materials and Methods

A comprehensive review of both scientific and grey literature, encompassing 60 sources, was conducted to establish a theoretical foundation and connect it with relevant policy and practice. Survey data on citizen behaviors were collected in two stages: an initial pilot phase (n = 50), conducted in bilingual settings with university students, and a subsequent online survey targeting the general public (n = 100). Additionally, two focus group discussions were held to gather contextual insights into citizen choices and needs. A multidisciplinary expert discussion method was employed to identify priority topics for further investigation in relation to local and regional policy frameworks. The initial phase of the municipal case studies, selected to represent diverse waste management regions in Latvia, involves content analysis of policy documents and the collection of statistical data from the perspective of circular economy.

Results

The survey indicates a discrepancy between individuals’ attitudes toward sustainability and their acceptance of circular economy practices at the personal level. Key barriers to engagement include insufficient information, inadequate infrastructure, and limitations in skills and socio-cultural factors. While the green transition is increasingly incorporated into local policy frameworks, the human dimension remains poorly articulated.

Conclusions

The Human-Scale Development theory provides a valuable framework for studying the circular economy through the lens of social sustainability, offering insights that can drive meaningful policy improvements.

Socially Responsible Green Transition: Sustainable and Socially Responsible Business Model for the Public Sector Hospitals

Oral

Mrs. Olga Veilande¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

Since the sustainability and corporate social responsibility impact the environment and society, both factors in connection with the climate change have become a topical issue in sustainable development also in the public sector hospitals.

To facilitate the **green transition**, on 02.01.2024. Riga Stradiņš University has launched the fundamental and applied research (GreenCare project Nr. lzp-2023/1-034) that aims to develop an **environmentally sustainable and socially responsible business model for public sector hospitals**.

The most frequently mentioned component of a business model is the firm's value offering (*value proposition*). Within the context of sustainability and climate change, there are *four major components*: environmental, social, governance and economic (profit).

Limitations: Considering the aims of the GreenCare project, this study focuses only on environmental components and social responsibility in the business model for public sector hospitals.

Key words: green transition, corporate sustainability, business model, ESG.

Materials and Methods

A literature search was performed to gain the latest research results in Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect/Elsevier, and Google Scholar to retrieve studies on:

- (1) measures of sustainability in healthcare;
- (2) corporate sustainability models.

Results

Based on the acknowledged sustainability practices in healthcare, a **justified business sustainability and social responsibility-based model** is proposed for public sector hospitals.

Additionally, the study summarizes the evolution of the sustainability concept within the framework of green transition and emphasizes the role of the leadership in sustainability management.

Conclusions

Sustainable development requires an integrated approach that aims to combine the promotion of economic prosperity with social inclusion and environmental stewardship.

The study has important **implications for practice and research** as it increases understanding of the framework of the sustainability in healthcare as well as shows the importance of the leadership in sustainability management.

Next steps are to uncover perceptions, practices and behaviour related to green transition in healthcare and elaborate policy recommendations for a pilot project.

Sustainable Packaging Indicators: Literature Review

Oral

Ms. Laura Martinsone-Ozoliņa¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

To show the indexes of sustainable food packaging in the context of the circular economy and the it's guidelines

Materials and Methods

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating policy analysis, monographic methods, literature review

Results

The issue of sustainability, as well as environmentally friendly and long-lasting packaging, has been discussed for several years. And in recent years it has been increasingly highlighted. Similar to the concept of circular economy and sustainability. Sustainable packaging refers to the design, production and use of packaging materials and systems that reduce environmental impact, save resources and promote social responsibility throughout the product's life cycle. The aim of sustainable packaging is to reduce the environmental impact of packaging, considering factors such as material extraction, energy consumption, waste generation and disposal or recycling. Sustainable packaging is a relatively new concept and lacks a specific and complete definition. By combining several studies, the author wants to develop indicators or measuring instruments by which consumers and manufacturers can recognize sustainable packaging

Conclusions

The definition of sustainable packaging is not unambiguous, it is subject to wide interpretation, as we have already seen in the study, however, the responsible institutions must unite and create a unified system of criteria according to which it is possible to assess the sustainability of packaging, thus facilitating the choices of both the manufacturer and the consumer.

Currently, there are not many educational opportunities related to packaging, nor do we have a clear system that would provide at least basic knowledge about packaging, therefore it is necessary to create a form, table, indicators by which it is possible to recognize packaging. [i] Packaging is an essential factor in our society, without it we cannot survive. However, at present there is no one clear and direct answer as to what sustainable packaging really is.

The Role of Homo Climaticus and Sustainable Healthcare in Shaping European Happiness and Well-Being Indices

Oral

Prof. Kristaps Zariņš¹, Mr. Emīls Georgs Siders¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

Epicureanism and modern European happiness and well-being indices are comparable, as both seek a deeper understanding of human well-being. Epicurus believed that happiness arises from mental tranquility, the fulfillment of basic needs, and close social connections, while avoiding excessive materialism. Similarly, contemporary European countries with higher happiness indices strive to ensure a balanced life, emphasizing social security, mental and physical health, as well as a sense of freedom and participation. For example, in countries where work-life balance is achieved, such as Denmark and Finland, residents often express greater life satisfaction and higher emotional well-being.

Epicurean teachings on the importance of friendship and community closely align with today's indicators: in countries that foster strong social bonds and family values, such as Sweden and the Netherlands, happiness indices are high. Likewise, Epicurus' ideas about avoiding fear and suffering reflect the importance of security and stability in modern indices. For instance, in countries with high economic security and social protection, like Norway and Switzerland, individuals are more at ease and feel happier.

Furthermore, Epicurus emphasized the role of knowledge in reducing fear. Modern indicators show that in countries with accessible education and healthcare, such as Germany and France, happiness indices are higher, reaffirming that human well-being is based on both internal and external factors.

Who can Discern Homo Climaticus Approaching? Looking at Generational Differences in Perceiving Climate Change in Latvia

Oral

Dr. Agita Lūse¹, Mrs. Zanda Gailume-Zohara¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

New concepts have been proposed recently, aiming to sketch the possible contours of future human existence on a planet struck by climate crisis, for instance, a NEED-humanism (Not-Eurocentric, Ecological and Economically Durable) (Pinxten 2024). The archetypical projections of Homo Clima (Skoglund 2014) and Homo Climaticus (Prestrud 2008; Álvarez 2018), in turn, invite intergenerational efforts and commitments. It appears to eclipse earlier discourses, such as human beings as ‘the crown of creation’ or contemporary people ‘stealing from future generations’ (Moriarty & Honnery 2011, 212). One can interpret the longing for new forms of humanism as efforts to discern the social and moral horizon by which people could orient themselves in a world unsettled by rapid change (Hastrup & Skrydstrup 2013, 22).

However, data and analysis on the relevance of those efforts for distinct generations are scarce (Poortinga et al. 2023; Garai Fodor & Huszák 2024; Varga & Csiszárík-Kocsir 2024). What commonalities and differences are evident in generation-specific responses to environmental issues and climate change? What imprint has life under Soviet rule left on patterns of thinking about the environment? What long-standing sentiments have been attributed to ethnic identities (Langa 2022)? In their search for answers the authors will draw on data from a national representative survey conducted in Latvia. The respondents have been asked to reflect on the extent of their interest in climate change and their perception of the seriousness of this problem, as well as their personal experience with the impact of climate change on their lives and, more specifically, on their health. In addition, questions probing recent habit change related to the respondents’ energy consumption patterns and daily habits and their response to the impacts of climate change in this respect were asked.

Sustainable Packaging in the Context of Circulation and Sustainability

Poster

*Ms. Laura Martinsone-Ozoliņa*¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

To show the **Sustainable packaging in the context of circulation and sustainability, its importance.**

Materials and Methods

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating policy analysis, monographic methods, literature review.

Results

Sustainable packaging and its importance in the world are growing more and more. And it is clearly visible to everyone. More and more packaging manufacturers, food manufacturers, retail chains and consumers are paying attention to packaging, its sustainability and environmental impact.

Primarily, it is necessary to develop packaging guidelines, determining which materials are to be used for each product, which packages must be recycled and in what way, and in cooperation with packaging and product suppliers, new packaging that meets the criteria of sustainable packaging must be created.

Conclusions

In summary, sustainable packaging encompasses the utilization of materials and designs that prioritize environmental responsibility, emphasize recyclability, ensure food protection, and align with the principles of the circular economy. It represents a holistic approach to packaging that seeks to minimize negative environmental impacts while meeting the needs of consumers and businesses alike.

Towards Sustainability: Factors Driving Green Business Transition of SMEs in Latvia

Poster

*Mrs. Liga Sileniece*¹, *Prof. Dzintra Atstaja*¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are recognized as crucial for successful green transition. However, SMEs are hesitant to engage in the green transition. The aim of the authors is to investigate the green business transition of SMEs by clarifying factors driving green business transition.

Materials and Methods

A thematic analysis of relevant scientific literature was conducted to identify key elements driving green transition of SMEs. The survey of SMEs was conducted to investigate perceptions toward green business transition drivers and the impact of green business transition on future business developments.

Results

Survey respondents (N=333) do not consider green transition to be an opportunity for their companies to grow (*Mean* = 4.42), but along with this, it is still not considered to be a threat to their competitive advantage (*Mean* = 3.78). At the same time, green transition is thought to be stimulating cost increase in companies (*Mean* = 6.38), but it is seen as an inevitable process (*Mean* = 7.9).

The most highly evaluated are statements that green business transition is pressured by legal regulations (*Mean* = 8,91), politicians (*Mean* = 8,08), and company management's environmental awareness (*Mean* = 7,77).

Conclusions

1. External forces appear to overshadow internal motivators. Thus, the majority of Latvian SMEs make changes towards green transition as a response to legal pressure. Due to a lack of strong internal drivers, it might be a limiting factor in how far SMEs will go beyond the law on voluntary basis.
2. SMEs do not generally perceive green transition as a growth opportunity or as a big threat. Majority of SMEs would consider going green as simply a burden, rather a strategic opportunity.
3. While green business is seen as a beneficial long-term strategy, many SMEs struggle to fully embrace it due to the upfront costs involved.

How to Ensure Freedom without Losing Security – Legal Aspects and Practical Problems

(Non)Observing the Rights of the Combatant to Health in Captivity: Experience of the Russian-Ukrainian War

Oral

*Dr. Tetiana Mykhailichenko*¹

1. Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University

Objectives*

The study aims to outline the (in)effectiveness of IHL of ensuring the right to health of a war's prisoner on the example of the Russian-Ukrainian war.

Materials and Methods

The research is based on legal acts, academic publications, and media reports, employing dialectical, comprehensive, and content-analysis methods.

Results

While IHL provides minimum guarantees to combatants in captivity, its effectiveness is questionable.

1. Torture and Abuse After Capture.

Russians have been committing impunity torture since 2014. In 2018 the first report was compiled with evidence of torture, inhumane treatment, sexual violence, murders, etc. It is based on the testimonies of former prisoners. This practice continues.

The situation has acquired a threatening trend since 2022. A video of torture and castration of a captured Ukrainian soldier, who was later killed, went viral. It caused an aggression wave: the OHCHR after noted 50 cases of beatings, torture and ill-treatment of ru-POWs during their capture or interrogation.

2. Conditions in Prisoner-of-War Camps.

IHL guarantees prisoners' right to life and health, including making requests to IHOs, in particular the ICRC empowered to monitor conditions and provide aid, etc. While IHOs constantly have access to captured Russians, Russia denies similar access for Ukrainian captives. The ICRC never publicly stated how many POWs they visited from each side, limiting to a total figure from both sides. Although from 2022 it is known Russia keeps Ukrainian combatants in general-type colonies without necessary adaptations for POWs, deprived of medical care, proper food, and humane conditions.

Conclusions

The Russian-Ukrainian war highlights systemic gaps and weaknesses in IHL enforcement. Russia blatantly disregards international obligations, fostering mistrust in global institutions. This inaction frustrates citizens seeking justice and soldiers on the frontlines, increasing tension and undermining faith in the international security system. Reforms of IHL are necessary in order to construct effective guarantees for POW and create a real mechanism for deterring violations of IHL norms.

Acceptance of Inheritance with Limited Liability – Problem of Balancing the Rights of Heirs and Creditors

Oral

Prof. Inga Kudeikina¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

On January 1, 2025, the amendments to the Civil Law of the Inheritance Law entered into force, with which the responsibility of the heirs for the debts of the legatee was limited to the amount of the inherited property. Acceptance of this type of inheritance limits the personal liability of the heir and protects his individual assets from the claims of creditors. In each inheritance case, a list of the inherited property must be drawn up, and the heir will respond to the demands of creditors only with the property of the decedent specified in the list. Thus, economic stability and protection of heirs against the risk of insolvency will be promoted. Acceptance of inheritance with limited liability is an essential step in ensuring the social protection of the heirs. However, won't such an arrangement worsen the position of creditors and the possibilities of recovering the deceased's debts? The aim of the study is to investigate the interaction of the rights of creditors and heirs in the case of acceptance of inheritance with limited liability, analyzing how this legal institution ensures a fair balance between the rights of heirs and creditors. The research uses general scientific research methods.

Conclusions:

The inheritance acceptance system balances the rights of both heirs and creditors, providing heirs with:

1. The inheritance acceptance system ensures a balance between the social protection of the heirs and the rights of creditors, promoting fair redistribution of inheritance and debt collection.
2. Respecting the inheritance is an essential mechanism for protecting the interests of both heirs and creditors.
3. Adequately adjusted procedures strengthen the economic stability of the heirs and at the same time guarantee fair satisfaction of creditors' claims.

Artificial Intelligence and Employment Compliance: Balancing Innovation with Legal Obligations

Oral

Mrs. Agnese Reine¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

Development of Artificial Intelligence (hereinafter “AI”) has profoundly impacted nearly every area of human life, transforming industries, enhancing daily tasks, and driving innovation across different fields, including employment legal relations. Increasingly, employers are integrating or planning to integrate the AI into the workplace operations, that can offer efficiencies and innovation opportunities. However, use of different kind of AI solutions in the employment legal relationship raises new complex legal challenges, particularly related to data protection. AI solutions can be used in the recruitment process thereby facilitating and speeding up the process, also in already established employment legal relationship. However, such use of technologies might pose potential risks to the fundamental rights and freedoms of candidates and employees, particularly regarding the processing of personal data.

On August 1, 2024, the European Artificial Intelligence Act (hereinafter “AI Act”) entered into force. The AI Act establishes a risk-based framework imposing specific obligations on providers and users of AI systems, determined by the level of risk associated with their deployment.

AI systems utilized in employment, workforce management, and access to self-employment have been classified as “high-risk” due to their potential to significantly affect individuals’ career prospects and livelihoods. These systems are recognized as having the capacity to impact fundamental rights, necessitating heightened scrutiny and compliance. Therefore, to ensure a balance between employers’ legitimate rights and interests and employees’ fundamental rights, particularly regarding personal data protection, employer must conduct a detailed risk analyses related to the data processing in AI systems, including decision-making process and interpret and apply the provisions of the AI Act in conjunction with the requirements set forth under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Aspects of Terrorism Prediction in the Context of Public Security Threats and Risk Prevention

Oral

Prof. Andrejs Vilks¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

To study the possibilities of predicting terrorism in the process of strengthening of public safety, preventing its threats and risks.

Materials and Methods

The research results and publications of foreign scientists have been used in the study of forecasting approaches and methods for strengthening public security. In order to obtain justified results objectively, the descriptive, comparative and analytical methods have been used in the study.

Results

According to the Global Terrorism Index (GTI), the assessment of the spread of terrorist threats in Latvia is fixed at a minimum level. Latvian law enforcement agencies recognize the threat of terrorism being low. However, since 2023 there have been registered six terrorism-related crimes in the country, showing its increasing tendency. In July 2024, the Eurobarometer study on the perception of the threat of terrorism as the most important problem of the Union, almost every third resident of Latvia has recognized it as the most important. Manifestations of radicalism and extremism are increasing in the European countries. Forecasting potential manifestations of terrorism is important in strengthening public security. 2. Terrorism prediction methods. One of the most frequently used method is the case analysis or identification and knowledge of objects related to manifestations of terrorism and extremism. Innovative methods include artificial neuron networks and typing methods. Using the Global Terrorism Database, the content analysis method is applied. 3. The use of terrorism forecasting methods in strengthening public security is related to the identification of threats and risks of possible violence and the increase the potential of the anti-terrorism system.

Conclusions

The threat of terrorism in the context of the global geopolitical situation is ambiguous. The cognitive and forecasting methods play an increasing role in their objective cognition. Terrorism forecasting is one of the most underrated tools in the strengthening of public safety.

Balancing Employee and Employer Rights in the Mutual Termination of Employment: Legal and Data Protection Perspectives in the Republic of Latvia

Oral

Mrs. Agnese Reine¹, Ms. Dace Tarasova¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

Employment legal relationships encompass both the necessity of ensuring the protection of employees' interests and fundamental rights, as well as safeguarding the interests of employers. While within the framework of employment legal relationships it is generally considered that the employee is in a less protected position, it is crucial to ensure a balance between the rights of the employee and the employer, including in cases of termination of employment legal relationship.

Mutual agreement between the employer and the employee to terminate employment legal relationships is one of the most common methods of ending employment in practice. Although the current legal framework provides the possibility of terminating employment legal relationships by mutual agreement, it does not specify several conditions that are significant for balancing the rights of both parties involved. Examples include payment for unused vacation, severance pay, the possibility of mutual agreement cancellation, compliance with personal data protection regulations, and others.

As mentioned, one of the essential components of a mutual agreement is also the inclusion of personal data protection provisions. To protect both the employer's interests and ensure the safeguarding of the employee's fundamental rights, specific data protection conditions should be stipulated in cases of mutual agreements.

The inclusion of such provisions in a mutual agreement would reduce problematic situations arising from the application, misapplication, or non-application of Article 114 of the Labor Law.

Biobanks: Balancing Interests for Health Policy

Oral

Mrs. Aiga Balode¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

Health care policies in many countries are increasingly focused on providing precision medicine and patient-centred care in a more affordable and effective manner, ensuring equal access and equity. These policies emphasize the importance of biomedical advancements and the potential to introduce new treatments and technologies. The aim is to understand how government regulations, ethical considerations, and cost management play crucial roles in realizing these advancements and to explore the importance of biobanks and efficient data governance in supporting both research and patient treatment.

Materials and Methods

The study examines recent technological advancements in biobanking, including AI and big data analytics, and their impact on patient involvement and the understanding of research and treatment connectivity. A case study of the Children's Clinical University Hospital of Latvia is conducted, with a specific focus on its role as a flagship for biobank integration in both treatment and research.

Results

Biobanks are identified as essential for understanding diseases, developing new treatments, and, in the future, playing a more integral role in health care policies. The analysis shows that the advancement of technology in biobanks, such as AI and big data analytics, raises important questions about patient involvement and the connectivity between research and treatment. The case study of Latvia's Children's Clinical University Hospital highlights the importance of biobank infrastructure in enabling international cooperation and enhancing the quality of patient treatment.

Conclusions

The study concludes that biobanks are a critical component of precision medicine and patient-centred care, particularly in the context of Latvia. For biobanks to fulfill their potential, it is essential to ensure high data quality, integrate digitalization into biobank infrastructure, and promote international collaboration. The involvement of patients in biobanks and a better understanding of the relationship between research and treatment will be key to improving health care outcomes and advancing personalized medicine.

Child's Right to Maintenance as a Form of Social Security

Oral

Mr. Artūrs Kurbatovs¹, Prof. Inga Kudeikina¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

A child's right to maintenance is a crucial element of social security, ensuring means for sustenance and development. This article examines the development of maintenance regulation in Latvia and the European Union to improve equal access to maintenance and enhance the effectiveness of social security guarantees, regardless of the family's economic situation.

Materials and Methods

The article employs legal research methods, including statutory, comparative, and case law analysis, covering regulation development in Latvia and other EU countries. Empirical data analysis and the role of state institutions are also examined to assess state responsibility and improve rights enforcement.

Results

1. A child's right to maintenance is an essential aspect of social security that directly affects their well-being and opportunities for development.
2. The analysis revealed several obstacles hindering the effective provision of maintenance, including parental ability to pay, lengthy legal proceedings, and insufficient involvement of state institutions.
3. There are significant differences in the regulatory framework of different countries concerning the claiming and receiving of maintenance, indicating a need for a harmonized approach at the international level.
4. Socioeconomic conditions significantly impact the realization of a child's right to maintenance, and state support mechanisms are often insufficient to ensure a child's full well-being.

Conclusions

1. A child's right to maintenance is an integral part of their well-being and development, and the state is responsible for ensuring and protecting these rights.
2. To enhance the effectiveness of social security guarantees, it is necessary to strengthen state support mechanisms and improve policies that provide for more effective and faster legal proceedings for maintenance recovery.
3. State institutions must enhance their role in maintenance recovery to protect children's rights and address insufficient maintenance. Increased involvement in assessing parental solvency and providing support is also required.
4. Harmonization of international legal regulations is needed to ensure equal opportunities for children, irrespective of family economic status or location.

Criminalisation of "Information Collaborationism" in Ukraine as an Example of Lawful Restriction of the Right to Freedom of Speech under Martial Law

Oral

Dr. Yuliia Zabuha¹

1. Department of Criminal Law, Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University

Objectives*

To assess the legality of criminalizing "information collaborationism" in a democratic state under martial law.

Materials and Methods

The study applies general scientific methods such as induction, deduction, analysis, synthesis, and abstraction.

Results

In 2022, Ukraine legislator added a new Art. 111-1 to the Criminal Code of Ukraine which establishes criminal liability for so-called «collaborationism». «Information collaborationism» includes: (1) public denial of Russian armed aggression against Ukraine, and (2) public support for the aggressor state or denial of Ukrainian sovereignty over occupied territories (Part 1 of Art. 111-1 of the CCU).

The legitimacy of restricting freedom of speech must pass the following three-part, cumulative test:

1. Is the restriction based in law?

The restriction aligns with the Constitution of Ukraine (Articles 34(3) and 64(3)) and the Laws «On Information» and «On Media», which permit limits on expression to safeguard national security and territorial integrity.

1. Is there a legitimate reason (aim) for the restriction?

The criminalization addresses the need to counter Russian propaganda during an active hybrid war. Russian narratives aim to justify aggression and destabilize Ukraine, prompting the legislature to protect statehood and resist these threats.

1. Is there a legitimate reason (aim) for the restriction?

Article 111-1 restricts only the dissemination of information legitimizing Russian aggression. This targeted limitation of speech aligns with the legitimate aim of protecting national security.

Conclusions

Under hybrid warfare, a democratic state can restrict freedom of speech to safeguard national security. Criminalizing «information collaborationism» is a justified and proportional response to the specific threats posed by Russian propaganda during wartime. Moreover, Ukraine has belatedly criminalized «information collaborationism».

Criminological Aspects of Illegal Migration

Oral

*Dr. Aldona Kipāne*¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The aim of the research is to examine the criminological aspects of illegal migration, focusing on its causes, the involvement of organized crime, and its impact on social and legal systems. The study seeks to identify key factors contributing to illegal migration and propose preventive measures to address these challenges effectively.

Materials and Methods

The study utilizes a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. Legal documents, statistical data, and reports from international organizations such as the UN, EU, and IOM serve as primary sources.

Results

Illegal migration is a global phenomenon that poses significant challenges to public security and impacts both national and international criminological and legal frameworks. Studying the criminological aspects of illegal migration helps to understand how this phenomenon is connected to crime, socio-economic factors, and the effectiveness of legal frameworks.

From a criminological perspective, illegal migration is studied as a phenomenon that may lead to or facilitate criminal activities, including human trafficking, smuggling, and document forgery.

Conclusions

Illegal migration is a multifaceted issue requiring comprehensive strategies. Preventive measures should address root causes, including poverty and instability in source countries. Strengthening international cooperation and harmonizing legal frameworks are essential for combating organized crime networks involved in illegal migration. Enhanced border control technologies and awareness campaigns targeting vulnerable populations can help reduce the risks associated with illegal migration. Future research should focus on the long-term social impact of illegal migration and the effectiveness of implemented policies.

Illegal Occupation and the Intent of Genocide: Israeli-Palestinian Case

Oral

Ms. Sintija Broka¹

1. Ph.D Fellow at RSU

Objectives*

This study examines the legal dimensions of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, focusing on Israel’s violations of international law and potential genocidal intent. Despite decades of scholarly attention on this complex conflict, legal analysis remains pivotal for understanding the implications of Israel’s occupation of Palestinian territories. The research explores the application of the IV Geneva Convention, the right to self-determination, and belligerent occupation law. It investigates the connection between Israel’s illegal occupation and indications of genocidal intent from 1967 to 2023, emphasizing transgressions in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Materials and Methods

The study uses legal methodologies - historical research, and doctrinal analysis of treaties, conventions, and resolutions. It reviews case law from international and domestic courts concerning occupation, human rights abuses, and genocide. Empirical research through case studies documents human rights violations and examines the effects of legal mechanisms on affected populations.

Results

The findings reveal a systematic Israeli strategy to dispossess, discriminate, and persecute Palestinians while expanding settlements and institutionalizing apartheid practices. These actions, taken collectively and in a long-term, demonstrate a persistent and deliberate intent to undermine Palestinian society, amounting to genocidal intent as described in Article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The study calls for a comprehensive international approach to document violations, enforce accountability, and implement punishment mechanisms under international criminal law. Such efforts require strong political will from the global community to uphold justice and the rule of law.

Conclusions

This analysis contributes to broader research on Gulf states’ foreign policy, with particular attention to the United Arab Emirates’ inter-role conflict regarding the Israeli–Palestinian dispute. It provides critical insights into regional dynamics and the potential role of international law in addressing longstanding grievances and promoting peace.

Impact of Criminal Law Regulation on Spread of Infectious Diseases

Oral

Prof. Nataliya Gutorova¹, **Prof. Oleksandra Rudnyeva**²

1. Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University, 2. Scientific Research Institute of State Building and Local Government of National Academy of Law Sciences of Ukraine

Objectives*

This article **aims** to raise awareness and stimulate serious discussion about the impact of criminal law on the spread of infectious diseases.

Materials and Methods

The study is based on empirical and analytical data from the World Health Organization, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, international human rights documents, the Acquis Communautaire, legal acts of Germany, Latvia, Poland, and Ukraine, the practice of the ECHR, and judicial practice and judicial statistics of Ukraine. Legal, comparative, analytical, synthetic, systemic, sociological, inductive, and deductive research methods were used.

Results

The study revealed severe problems in criminal law regulation in infectious disease prevention. In many cases, criminal legislation reflects an outdated approach to the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases. Despite significant advances in medical science in this area, many criminal laws provide for discriminatory measures against people living with HIV or suffering from infectious diseases. In some cases, the method of transmission of infection (sexual transmission) itself is the basis for criminalizing an act without taking into account the danger of the disease to the health of the victim. These and other violations of the principle of proportionality of restrictions on human rights and freedoms in a democratic society do not comply with human rights standards and hurt the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases. A study of judicial practice in Ukraine also showed that many decisions violate the principle of legality.

Conclusions

Criminal laws and practices regarding the transmission of infectious diseases should be reviewed from the perspectives of a) modern medical science's achievements in the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases and b) the compliance of such laws with the principles of non-discrimination and proportionality of restrictions on human rights and freedoms in a democratic society.

Invisible Threat for Personal Safety: Fakes Prevention in Ukraine and Europe

Oral

Mrs. Alina Kalinina¹

1. Academician Stashis Scientific Research Institute for the Study of Crime Problems, National Academy of the Law Sciences of Ukraine

Objectives*

To investigate the main current threats to the information security of citizens in Europe and Ukraine, as well as means of combating their spread.

Materials and Methods

The theoretical basis of the research is specialized literature on the information security, websites of media literacy projects, public organizations etc. The methodological basis for the research is content analysis of news, media, social networks and cyber police statistics.

Results

The main function of fake news is manipulation, i.e., intentional actions on the minds of the audience, which is deprived of the ability to separate the truth from lies and finds itself in a subordinate position to the manipulator. Large-scale disinformation campaigns are a major challenge for Europe and require a coordinated response from EU countries, EU institutions, online platforms, news media and EU citizens (<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/online-disinformation>).

According to their content, fakes in Ukraine are divided into: fakes as an element of information warfare, fakes as a “tool” of fraud, and random fakes.

In 2023, the cyber police of Ukraine supported more than 6.4 thousand criminal offenses, detected 3.6 thousand cyber crimes, and served suspicion notices to 1.7 thousand people for committing 3.7 thousand criminal offenses.

Information hygiene and critical analysis of all information received by an individual is the key to protecting yourself from threats that exist in the information sphere (i.e., information warfare) and from the actions of fraudsters.

Conclusions

New security threats are constantly emerging for the information security of both citizens and institutions (including government agencies). The main way to combat them is through online anti-fake tools that are open to the public.

Is Duty a Restriction of Freedom?

Oral

Mrs. Ilze Ziemane¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The aim of the study is to examine the duties of individuals specified in normative legal acts regarding security provision in the country and the resulting restrictions.

Materials and Methods

An analytical method was used in the study to examine normative legal acts and other sources of law in order to determine individuals' duties and conduct their analysis.

Results

As a result of the study, an assessment will be provided regarding the importance of duties in ensuring security, their compatibility with rights and freedoms, as well as conclusions will be drawn about the role of duties in ensuring a rule-of-law democratic state.

Conclusions

The main conclusions from the study will be as follows:

1. Duties arise from the legal system as a whole;
2. Rights and duties are inseparably linked;
3. Duties may be associated with restrictions;
4. An individual's duty, which limits their freedom, is related to a legitimate goal and the sustainable existence of the state.

Legal Regulation and Challenges of Patients' Rights to Receive Safe and Choice-Free Healthcare Services

Oral

Mr. Artūrs Matešs¹

1. Department of Doctoral Studies, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

Legislation allows every patients' to have the rights to receive quality healthcare treatment, choose a healthcare professional that provides the necessary treatment and also choose a medical facility where the healthcare services would be provided to them – those can be classified as the fundamental patients' rights. Nevertheless a risk that medical harm sustained through the performance of specified treatments to a patients' may occur during the reception of professional healthcare is a possibility, due to the high risk nature of the medical industry. It is proven that every one in ten patients in the European Union have encountered the occurrence of this type of an adverse event whilst receiving healthcare treatments. Therefore, it is vital to evaluate if patients' who seek for medical help are always entitled to get qualitative, safe and choice-free healthcare services, and what are the causes that can affect patients' fundamental rights, and how medical facilities can improve healthcare services that are provided to the patients.

Materials and Methods

Author, to highlight the results and conclusions, used the analytical comparative scientific method, case-law cases, judicial and scientific literature.

Results

Author identifies that not in every clinical case patients' received a qualitative and safe healthcare services, because there is quantitatively large number of claims for the reimbursement and court cases. Author considered that harm to patients' health is mostly associated with diagnostic injuries and inadequate performance of surgery.

Conclusions

If the patients' has received an inadequate healthcare service, it can not be considered as qualitative medical care and will affect patients' choice of seeking further medical help (there will be no trust from patients' side). It means that medical facilities should define an adequate action plan to prevent further accidents providing healthcare services to obey a certain legislation.

No Freedom without Democracy: Loss of Latvia's Independence in 1940

Oral

Prof. Janis Grasis¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

On May 15, 1940, a coup d'état took place in Latvia, which greatly restricted democratic freedoms. It ended the period of democracy and parliamentarianism in Latvia during the inter-war period. In Latvia, Parliament had been dismissed, the functioning of the Satversme (Constitution) had been suspended and, thanks to the exceptional situation, the government held practically unlimited power. The objectives of this Article is to explore the influence of the undemocratic regime in the loss of independence of the Republic of Latvia in 1940:

- 1) characterisation of the undemocratic regime;
- 2) relations with the USSR;
- 3) government errors in the events of 1939-1940.

Materials and Methods

Legal acts, monographies, scientific articles and different other materials were reviewed and analysed, and subsequently conclusions and recommendations were made.

Descriptive, analytical and deductive-inductive research methods were used in this article.

Results

The government of the Republic of Latvia, without the existence of the Saeima (parliament), made the serious mistakes in the events of 1939-1940, which led to the dismantling of the state: no government in exile was formed; it is no understandable why to gave up without shooting etc. The actions of the head of government Karlis Ulmanis were very strange after 14 June 1940 because, in fact, with his signatures, he participated in the dismantling of the country.

Conclusions

With the coup d'état of 15 May 1934, without restoration of democracy later, gradually, step by step, the dismantling of the independence of the Republic of Latvia began. This process culminated in the de facto elimination of the independence of the Republic of Latvia and subsequent illegal annexation by the USSR.

Parental Authority and the Child’s Right to Social Security in Cases of Parental Separation

Oral

Mr. Artūrs Kurbatovs¹, Prof. Inga Kudeikina¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

Parental authority and a child’s right to social security in cases of separated living are critical issues directly impacting a child’s welfare and development. Following parental separation, the child’s right to maintain relations with both parents and access adequate social security faces various legal, procedural, and social challenges, including inadequate enforcement mechanisms, inconsistent judicial interpretations, and socio-economic barriers. This article analyzes the legal dimensions of parental authority and the child’s right to social security, examining regulatory developments in Latvia and other EU member states to propose solutions for more effective protection of children’s rights, emphasizing uniform standards and improved legal frameworks in separated family situations.

Materials and Methods

The article employs legal research methods, including regulatory analysis, comparative law, and case law examination.

Results

1. Significant differences exist in the regulatory frameworks and judicial practices across countries regarding parental rights and children’s social security rights, leading to unequal rights protection.
2. State support mechanisms are frequently inadequate to ensure a child’s full social security and both parents’ involvement post-separation.
3. Socioeconomic factors significantly influence the realization of a child’s social security rights, necessitating improved state support mechanisms to mitigate these effects.

Conclusions

1. Parental authority and a child’s right to social security are essential for the child’s emotional and physical well-being, with the state responsible for safeguarding these rights.
2. Policy improvements are needed for more effective state support mechanisms and expedited judicial processes to protect children’s rights in cases of parental separation.
3. State institutions should take a more prominent role in safeguarding a child’s right to contact with both parents by providing mediation and psychological support services.
4. International harmonization of legal regulations is required to ensure equal opportunities for children regardless of parental residence or family circumstances.

Perception of Application of the Principle of Mutual Recognition in Enforcement of Confiscation Orders Issued in Criminal Proceedings by European Union Member States in Latvia

Oral

*Ms. Julija Muraru-Klucica*¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The principle of mutual recognition is a core principle in EU criminal law which provides a free movement of judgments execution in criminal proceedings within the European Union. The main aims of this article are to explore, examine, and analyze the essence and forms of the application of the principle of mutual recognition to facilitate the recognition and enforcement of confiscation orders issued by European Union Member States in criminal proceedings as well as the procedures for rendering such judgments enforceable in Latvia. Within the context of latest development of Union's area of freedom security and justice it is vital to identify routes ahead and offer suggestions for improvement of the existing legal system.

Materials and Methods

The research has employed methods of legal interpretation to analyze legislation and the inductive and deductive method to draw conclusions and formulate suggestions.

Results

The effective application of the principle of mutual recognition is seen as crucial for enhancing the overall effectiveness of the criminal justice system in Latvia. The research highlights the need for ongoing dialogue between EU member states to address discrepancies in court practices and interpretations of the principle of mutual recognition. It is necessary to supplement the legal framework of mutual recognition in criminal matters with a clear definition of the following terms: mutual recognition and mutual trust.

Conclusions

The proper implementation of principle of mutual recognition can enhance legal cooperation, streamline processes, and ultimately strengthen the integrity of the criminal justice system in Latvia. Inconsistent interpretations and applications of the principle across different Latvian courts create barriers to a unified perception of mutual recognition. Establishing clear guidelines and fostering a shared understanding among judicial authorities is essential to mitigate these discrepancies.

Possibilities for Improving the Procedure for Resolving Disputes between Constitutional State Authorities

Oral

Dr. Jānis Neimanis¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The political everyday life of Latvia reveals how necessary it is to have an independent resolution of disputes over competences. The Constitution determines different rights and obligations for various constitutional organs of state power and part thereof. Conflicts often arise between them regarding the scope of rights and obligations, various restrictions, etc. Therefore, it is necessary for these conflicts to be resolved outside the political arena by an independent and competent arbitrator. In order to resolve a dispute between a constitutional state authority (part thereof) and another constitutional state authority (part thereof), they must have the status of parties to the case. However, the Constitutional Court Law recognizes only some of them as entitled to submit an application. The aim of the paper is to explore examples of best practice and provide proposals for improving the security of the legal environment in Latvia.

Materials and Methods

Constitutional Court Law and court practice; analytical method, comparative method, inductive and deductive method

Results

Recommendations to legislator and discussion paper for academics

Conclusions

Improving the competence of the Constitutional Court, expanding the circle of persons who can submit an application to the court; reviewing the scope of contested acts; recognizing the procedure in practice and legal science

Professional Development of Managerial Personnel in the Civil Service as a Component of the National Security of Ukraine

Oral

*Dr. Alona Lukashenko*¹

1. National Academy of Internal Affairs

Objectives*

Аналіз сучасного стану підвищення кваліфікації керівних кадрів державної служби України в умовах правового режиму воєнного стану, взятих зобов'язань на шляху євроінтеграції та реалізації Цілей сталого розвитку до 2030 року.

Висвітлення ролі освіти в умовах правового режиму воєнного стану як найважливішого чинника національної безпеки України.

Проаналізувати правову природу професійної компетентності керівних кадрів державної служби.

Materials and Methods

The Constitution of Ukraine declares the right of any citizen to education (Article 53, Section 2), and establishes other rights and freedoms of citizens. A safe educational environment today is one of the main factors of training specialists in the conditions of military threats and risks or other dangers.

The Government of Ukraine has launched a classification of positions that are combined in a family with the main functionality of typical positions, the purpose of the position, with a distinction of professional skills and abilities.

Structural and functional analysis became the basis for determining the components of professional development.

The methods of formal logic made it possible to find out the requirements for managerial personnel in the public service.

Results

The professional development of managerial personnel in the civil service is considered through the development of professional qualification and professional position competencies and as the main result of training.

Conclusions

The result of the training of civil service managers is defined as a system-organized process of continuous professional training of personnel, professional and qualification promotion, formation of a reserve of managers, improvement of the personnel structure, improvement of skills and abilities, expansion of the scope of knowledge, increase of competence.

Civil servants exercise the right to professional training through training, advanced training, internships, and self-education.

Security in Risk Society: Bridging the Ideal and the Real

Oral

Dr. Kristīne Kuzņecova¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University; Daugavpils University

Objectives*

The concept of the *risk society*, which characterises modern society, has been recognised since the second half of the 20th century and extensively analysed by scholars such as U. Beck, E. Giddens, N. Luhmann, and M. Douglas. It describes a society threatened by human activity, modernisation, and emerging forms of threats. In the Middle Ages, the world was seen as a divine creation, where evil and misfortunes were regarded as divine retribution, and humans were powerless to alter events. The Enlightenment introduced a more rational worldview, where threats were no longer seen as external or random, but linked to human actions, transforming them into risks. As society modernises, it generates more threats. Risks and security are interdependent; maintaining demand for security requires society to retain a certain level of risk. Since ancient times, the state's fundamental role has been to guarantee societal security. The absence of risk is utopian; security can never be fully achieved. The pursuit of security involves both those who provide it, seeking meaning in their actions, and efforts at risk prevention.

This article examines the essence and existence of security through the lens of *risk society*, aiming to understand why many national security policies neglect values and how current events may influence society's development and sustainability.

Materials and Methods

The theoretical basis of the article is rooted in an extensive analysis of sources of previous studies and scientific literature related to risk society, security concepts and risk prevention strategies.

Results

Security, once primarily political or military, has expanded to encompass a broader range of concerns, including social, ethical, and environmental. Security is primarily a value, its existence dependent on other social values. Today, risk and security together provoke strong emotions, creating artificial patterns of fear, legitimising unconventional uses of power, and enabling states to exert hegemonism. Security has become commodified, with countries competing to position themselves in global rankings of safe places, while side-lining discussions of peace, justice, and fairness.

Subjects Entitled to Exercise Moral Rights in Copyright Law after the Author's Death

Oral

Mrs. Sintija Zalāne¹

1. University of Latvia

Objectives*

To analyze the subjects eligible to exercise personal (moral) rights in copyright law and the extent of these rights posthumously. This research will clarify the legal grounds for inheriting and exercising moral rights and explore the limitations and possibilities for successors and other rights holders.

Materials and Methods

The study employs a comparative analysis of Latvian Copyright Law, particularly focusing on the legislation concerning moral rights, including authorship and the right to integrity. Secondary sources include legal commentaries, case law, and relevant international agreements, such as the Berne Convention. The methodology involves examining legal provisions to determine the extent to which personal rights are transferable and protected after an author's death. An analytical method, involving the study of legal insights, legislative acts, and legal practice, will provide a substantial contribution toward achieving the objectives set forth in this research.

Results

Findings highlight the delineation between inheritable rights and those limited to protection rather than active exercise by successors. The results suggest that while moral rights, such as authorship recognition, can be safeguarded posthumously, their active use is often restricted.

Conclusions

The study concludes that Latvian Copyright Law effectively differentiates between the protection of moral rights and their exercisable scope. This has implications for the safeguarding of an author's legacy, emphasizing the need for clear legal guidelines on moral rights' transferability and long-term protection.

Legal Regulation of Mineral Extraction in Roman Law

Poster

Mr. Allars Apsītis¹, Ms. Dace Tarasova¹, Ms. Jolanta Dinsberga¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

Article 1042 of the Civil Law of the Republic of Latvia, which is taken over from the older Article 877 of the Collection of Local Civil Laws and provides for the rights of the land owner to the layers of land below it and all the minerals that are in them. Thus, the question arises about possible actions in situations where, due to some socially, economically, strategically or otherwise important considerations, it might be useful to allow the exploration and use of minerals to a person who is not the owner of the relevant plot of land. Since the origin of the above-mentioned norms can be found in Roman law - the 1864 German edition of the Collection of Local Civil Laws contains a reference to the L.13§1D.communia praedior.(VIII,4) / D 8.4.13.1, the authors became interested in further researching of the primary sources of Roman law regarding the legal regulation of mineral extraction. The authors have conducted the research and analysis of the information contained in the so called Justinian's codifications, also known as 'Corpus Iuris Civilis', specifically the 'Codex Iustinianus' (Code of Justinian, 529 AD) and 'Digesta seu Pandectae' (Digest or Pandects, 529 AD), as well as in the 'Gaius Institutiones' (Institutes of Gaius, c. 161 AD) using the inductive, deductive and comparative method.

Right to Parent-Child Contact as a Form of Social Security

Poster

Mr. Artūrs Kurbatovs¹, Prof. Inga Kudeikina¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The right to parent-child contact is a fundamental aspect of social security, essential for a child's emotional development and stability. Despite its importance, regulatory issues, including inadequate protection and enforcement challenges, hinder effective realization, particularly in family conflicts. This article analyzes parent-child contact rights within the social security framework, examining regulatory developments in Latvia and EU member states. It aims to highlight the significance of contact rights, identify key challenges, and propose recommendations for improving legal policies to safeguard a child's right to a supportive family environment.

Materials and Methods

The article employs legal research methods, including regulatory, comparative, and case law analyses, to examine parent-child contact rights in Latvia and EU member states, identifying regulatory disparities and best practices.

Results

1. The right to contact between a child and a parent is an integral part of the child's emotional well-being, and failure to ensure such contact can significantly harm the child's development.
2. The analysis revealed considerable differences in the regulatory frameworks of different countries regarding the protection and enforcement of contact rights, which can cause complications in international cases.
3. The role of state institutions is crucial in guaranteeing the protection of contact rights; however, the analysis indicates a need to improve institutional coordination and the effectiveness of rights protection.

Conclusions

1. The right to contact between a child and a parent is an indispensable part of the child's well-being and emotional stability, and the state is responsible for the protection and enforcement of these rights.
2. State institutions must strengthen their role in protecting contact rights by providing support services to parents and children, as well as educational programs on the importance of maintaining contact.
3. Harmonization of legal regulations at the international level is necessary to overcome obstacles to the enforcement of contact rights in cross-border situations and ensure equal opportunities for children regardless of family circumstances and residence location.

Smuggling of Goods Committed on a Large Scale: Prospects for Improving Criminal Liability

Poster

Prof. Viktorija Babanina¹, Prof. Serhii Cherniavskiy¹

1. National Academy of Internal Affairs

Objectives*

to identify and substantiate the methodological foundations for studying the issues of improving criminal liability for smuggling of goods committed on a large scale; to substantiate the need to optimize the criminalization of such socially dangerous acts, taking into account the positive foreign experience of criminal law protection of the procedure for moving goods across the customs border.

Materials and Methods

The methods used are dialectic, comparative analysis, dogmatic, systematic, induction, deduction, analysis, synthesis, modeling, etc.

Results

The author establishes that the real scale of the threat to the economic security of the State is caused by the spread of the shadow economy, theft of strategically important raw materials, imbalance of the customs revenue collection system, deterioration of the investment climate, etc. This necessitates the search for effective measures to combat economic crime, of which smuggling is one component. The growth of large-scale smuggling of goods necessitates the restoration of criminal liability for such acts. With a view to preventing overburdening of criminal liability legislation with new special provisions, the author substantiates the expediency of such criminalization by making proposals for improvement of Article 201 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine.

Conclusions

The proposals are aimed at unifying certain provisions of national legislation in the part relating to the procedure for moving goods across the customs border in accordance with the legal regulation of ratified international treaties and legal requirements set out in the directives of the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament. The proposed amendments will resolve certain problems that have arisen in the course of cooperation with the EU countries and, if effectively regulated, will contribute to the economic development of Ukraine, increase state budget revenues and improve the investment climate.

Social-Psychological Factors Contributing to the Development of the Criminal Personality in Postmodern Society

Poster

*Mrs. Jelena Djubina*¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The aim of this study is to explore how social-psychological factors, such as social isolation, stress, and impulsivity, contribute to the development of a criminal personality in postmodern society. The study analyzes the relationship between these factors and criminal behavior and examines potential preventive measures.

Materials and Methods

The study employs scientific literature analysis and a descriptive method to gain a deeper understanding of the processes involved in the development of a criminal personality and the factors influencing it. The innovative approach of this study allows for a detailed examination of the social and legal environment's macro-level influences and the social-psychological factors that contribute to the criminalization of individuals and mechanisms of criminal behavior.

Results

Through an analysis of psychological and sociological theories on criminal personality, the study confirms that social factors play a crucial role in the formation of a criminal personality. The study highlights that individuals prone to criminal behavior, particularly those affected by social isolation, high stress, and impulsivity, may require medical and psychological intervention. Early access to educational, healthcare, and psychological support programs is essential to effectively prevent criminal behavior. It is important to develop local and national policy support to make these programs accessible in schools, workplaces, and communities.

Conclusions

Postmodern society, with its dynamic social and technological conditions, significantly impacts the mental health and behavioral patterns of individuals with criminal tendencies. The study may reveal new psychological, social, and cultural factors that increase the risk of criminal behavior in contemporary settings. The findings will help design more effective crime prevention strategies and support the reintegration and rehabilitation of criminal personalities in society. Additionally, it will offer recommendations for promoting mental health and improving psychological support systems as part of crime prevention efforts.

Tax Savings as Criminal Proceeds in Latvian Case Law

Poster

Ms. Liene Eglaja¹

1. Southern Kurzeme Prosecution Office

Objectives*

Tax revenues are essential for the state to ensure individual freedom and maintain security. The crimes of tax evasion and subsequent money laundering undermines these interests of both the state and society. In Latvian case law, tax evasion is one of the most common predicate offenses for money laundering. In the case SKK-1/2023 of 1 February 2023, the Supreme Court explicitly recognized that tax savings resulting from evasion qualify as proceeds of crime. The approach of treating tax savings, as opposed to tax refunds, as criminal proceeds has been criticized in legal literature, primarily due to challenges in identifying such savings within a perpetrator's assets. The article provides an in-depth analysis of Latvian case law to examine the material conditions under which tax savings can be classified as proceeds of crime and considered the subject of a money laundering offense. It is concluded that the amount of tax savings, the perpetrator's actions concerning the property, and the factual connection between tax evasion and money laundering make it possible to distinguish the criminal proceeds from other property, thus allowing their classification as the subject of money laundering.

With the Naked Eye – Shortcomings of the Latvian Civil Procedure Law in the Regulation of Procedural Sanctions

Poster

Mr. Martins Osis¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The regulation of procedural sanctions is a very important mechanism for ensuring the right to a fair trial, which disciplines the litigants, deters them from undesirable behavior and punishes them when necessary. Like other provisions of the law, procedural sanctions should also be regulated accurately, uniformly and in such a way that the purpose underlying their existence is achieved as much as possible.

Materials and Methods

The materials and methods for this article involve a critical analysis of the Latvian Civil Procedure Law (CPL), focusing on the regulation of procedural sanctions and its inconsistencies.

Results

There is an inconsistency in determining the amount of the fine. Namely, the CPL in general provides for the possibility for the court to set a fine up to a certain maximum amount and provides the court with the right to assess whether the fine is applicable at all. Such a consistent approach is not observed in the case of the second part of Article 620.¹² of the CPL, because the court imposes a fine automatically and only in one amount - without the possibility of individualization. Such an approach may create an unfair situation that would be totally unacceptable. The CPL is inconsistent regarding the application of a harsher fine for repeated violations by a party to the case. For the submission of a knowingly false application etc., the procedural sanction can be applied only to the parties, although claims can be submitted, for example, by third parties. Such a regulation is inconsistent with the principle of equality of parties in civil proceedings established in Article 9 of the CPL, which is applicable not only to the parties.

Conclusions

The CPL provides significant gaps in the regulation of procedural sanctions, which undermine its ability to ensure fairness and consistency in civil proceedings.

Media Freedom and the Protection of Journalists and Quality Journalism

Compromised Authenticity? Advertiser Influence on Influencer Editorial Content

Oral

Mr. Deniss Aleksandrs Sevelovs¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

This study explores how advertisers influence social media influencers' editorial independence and authenticity. It focuses on how influencers navigate pressure to align content with brand expectations, especially during societal crises, and the broader implications for media freedom and public trust.

Materials and Methods

The research uses a mixed-methods approach:

- Focus groups with influencers to understand their experiences.
- Semi-structured interviews with advertisers and agencies to explore their expectations and influence tactics.
- Content analysis of influencer posts during societal crises like COVID-19 and the Ukraine war.

Statements (Theoretical Support):

1. **Authenticity:** Luhmann's systems theory suggests that influencers, by aligning with advertiser expectations, simplify complex social narratives, reducing the diversity of authentic public discourse.
2. **Public Discourse:** According to Habermas, commercial interests' dominance in public communication diminishes the potential for genuine discourse. Influencers, while playing a key role in shaping public opinion, may be hindered in fostering authentic dialogue due to strategic pressures from advertisers.

Results

Results: Preliminary findings indicate:

1. Significant advertiser pressures on influencers, both implicit and explicit.
2. A compromise in editorial independence during societal crises.
3. Influencers' strategies to balance authenticity with brand demands.

Conclusions

Conclusions: This study highlights the tension between commercial partnerships and media freedom in the digital age. It offers valuable insights for policymakers, advertisers, and influencers, suggesting strategies to preserve editorial authenticity while maintaining effective advertising relationships.

Ensuring Safety of Journalists and Media Freedom in Latvia: Current Challenges and Possible Solutions

Oral

Prof. Anda Rožukalne¹, Prof. Ilva Skulte², Mr. Alnis Stakle¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University, 2. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

As society becomes increasingly polarized, discussions in public and social media are becoming more intense and emotionally charged. Various social actors and groups are attempting to influence editorial decisions by humiliating, discrediting, and threatening journalists, editors, and other media professionals, using SLAPP to keep them from work and diminish the credibility of journalism. In the paper, we analyze the risks and protection of Latvian journalists to find gaps in the existing situation and discuss needed solutions.

Materials and Methods

Delphi qualitative research method was used (web survey in 2 consecutive stages asking questions regarding experience, risk and threat perception, protection of editorial independence; existing and necessary solutions of protection) as well as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The selection of the study represents journalists, editors, and producers of national media, local and regional media in all segments, lawyers, and representatives of professional NGOs of Latvia and the State Police.

Results

Journalists in Latvia are not often in direct danger in terms of conflict or war, but their work is increasingly influenced by attacks online and offline including cyber mobbing, harassment, humiliation, direct and indirect threats, availability and protection in work with information sources, etc. Women and those from small or local media especially feel unprotected. The action of the police is insufficient. The understanding of the role of journalists must be developed in society in general and involved institutions (like police and courts). Other solutions include the elaboration of legislation (especially, about SLAPP) and a model of coordination and collaboration between the actors involved.

Conclusions

The complexity of the modern media ecosystem requires a close and precise cooperation of all actors to ensure both independent professional journalism created without fear and freedom of speech for all.

Research project “Assessment of the security situation of journalists and other media professionals” was funded by Ministry of Culture, Republic of Latvia

Navigating Media Freedom in the Age of PR and Digital Transformation: Kristīne Misāne's Case

Oral

Mrs. Lasma Skestere¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

This study aims to explore the interplay between public relations (PR) activities and news media, with a focus on understanding the balance between PR interests and journalistic independence in the contemporary media landscape. The objective is to examine how PR efforts influence news agendas and the extent to which they shape media content, potentially compromising editorial independence.

Materials and Methods

The research utilizes automated content analysis techniques, including Cosine similarity and Levenshtein distance, to examine news articles related to the Kristīne Misāne case—a high-profile extradition story. A combination of press releases, news agency content, and online news articles is analyzed to determine the influence of PR materials on media narratives. Additionally, qualitative data is gathered through an interview with a PR agency representative responsible for promoting the Misāne case, providing insights into PR strategies.

Results

The findings reveal that approximately 26% of news articles are directly influenced by press releases, with 60% of online news content driven by Latvia's national news agency, LETA. Of these, 37% of articles are verbatim reproductions. The study also highlights the role of personal relationships between PR professionals and journalists, which play a significant role in shaping media coverage and political agendas.

Conclusions

The study concludes that PR activities significantly impact news media content, often compromising journalistic independence. The findings raise concerns about media homogeneity and the ethical implications of relying on PR materials. In light of the growing pressures on journalists, this research underscores the need for greater transparency and safeguards to protect journalistic integrity in an increasingly PR-driven media landscape.

Pluralism in Latvian Language Media

Oral

*Dr. Sergei Kruk*¹, *Dr. Janis Chakars*²

1. Rīga Stradiņš University, 2. Neumann University

Objectives*

This paper investigates the state of content pluralism in Latvian online news media and television in 2024. Content pluralism is operationalised as diversity of topics, genre and information sources in the news.

Materials and Methods

Quantitative content analysis methodology is used in this research. The media sample includes the on-line news portals Delfi.lv, TVnet.lv, NRA.lv, LSM.lv and rus.LSM.lv, as well as the evening newscasts of the public television LTV-1 and commercial TV3. Systematic sample procedure was applied to select working days for the analysis. The analysed content includes all stories included in TV newscasts and ten articles published in news portals in the sampled days. Coders analysed the topic, genre, information sources and their party affiliation.

Results

Latvian language media depend highly on official information sources, the one-source stories dominate. Civil society sources (actors, NGOs) are underrepresented in the news about politics and economics, but they are overrepresented in the stories about culture and consumer interest. Official information sources are overrepresented in most of the sampled news items. The opinion of parliamentary opposition and extra parliamentary political parties is rather underrepresented in the news. The voice of the prime-minister's political party, Jaunā Vienotība, dominates in the political news. There is no significant difference between public and commercial media. The only exception is Russian language news portal rus.LSM.lv which represents the civil society opinion significantly more often than its Latvian language counterparts.

Conclusions

Latvian media tend to reflect agenda of the government coalition. Minor share of political opposition, actors, and NGOs among information sources suggests that the journalists neglect pluralism of opinions.

Towards Responsible Media: Understanding Traits of the Baltic Countries through the Lens of Transparency and Accountability Analysis

Oral

*Prof. Anda Rožukalne*¹, *Prof. Aukse Balcytiene*², *Prof. Halliki Harro-Loit*³

1. Rīga Stradiņš University, 2. Vytautas Magnus University, 3. University of Tartu

Objectives*

This paper explores the idea of a “responsible media environment” through the lens of media organizations’ ownership characteristics. It highlights the significance of “transparency in media ownership” (TMO) and connects it to the concept of “media market accountability” (MMA). It looks at the three Baltic countries by assessing how responsible and open relationships with the audience are fostered in markets defined by specific traditions and structural features, such as their small size.

Materials and Methods

This paper combines key features of the conceptual frameworks from two recent initiatives: Mediadelcom and EurOMo. The Mediadelcom project’s methodology involves assessing media risks and opportunities using the “agent-actor approach” (Archer, 2003). In the EuroOMo project methodology, the transparency of media owners is also at the centre of attention. We analysed secondary sources from previous comparative research studies, enhancing them with publicly available current data (EurOMo, 2023; Mediadelcom, 2022).

Results

The example of the Baltic countries shows that the small size of the media market leads to a greater reliance on “informal” aspects in relationships regarding media ownership transparency. However, the same element of “informality” contributes to the apparent deficiency and risk identified in the media accountability perspective, which affects expressions of media ownership power, for example, via editorial interventions.

Conclusions

Liberal media regulation has not contributed to developing a responsible media environment and media culture in the Baltic countries. As the geopolitical situation and market factors create a risk that the role of professional journalists and editorial agents may diminish, the only solution is to develop a culture of transparency.

To implement MMA in small media markets, specific regulations should be developed that require media owners’ obligations to inform about the appointment of the editor-in-chief and to disclose guarantees for the chief editor’s autonomy, which characterise his/her accountability to serve the public.

**Military and Diplomatic
Instruments in Sustainable
Protection against
Hard and Soft Security
Crises and NATO and
the European Union**

Addressing Climate and Geopolitical Crises in EU Energy Policy: Securitisation Dilemma

Oral

*Ms. Vineta Kleinberga*¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

In 2019, the European Union (EU) set an ambitious goal to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050 in response to intensifying global warming. However, the 2022 full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine brought a more immediate geopolitical crisis to the forefront. Despite this, the EU developed an energy policy response aimed at reconciling measures addressing both crises. The REPowerEU plan, adopted in May 2022, seeks to rapidly reduce EU's dependency on Russian fossil fuels by diversifying energy supplies and accelerating the green transformation of the EU's energy system through energy savings and renewable energy production. This marks a significant shift in EU energy policy, signalling that energy security and environmental sustainability are inherently interconnected. Nevertheless, this dual approach is not without challenges. This paper examines how the securitization of Russia can undermine environmental sustainability, using Latvia as a case study. The conceptual framework of strategic narratives, with a particular emphasis on the notion of discursive traps, underpins the analysis. Strategic narratives are critical instruments of soft power that allow policy actors to shape the perceptions and actions of others to achieve specific objectives. To identify Latvia's strategic narrative and its implications, the study draws on a dataset of government press releases issued between the onset of Russia's aggression on February 24, 2022, and the Latvian parliamentary elections on October 1, 2022. Narrative analysis reveals significant tensions between energy security and environmental sustainability in practice. The findings highlight that when Russia, rather than climate change, is securitized, reconciling these two objectives becomes problematic. The study contributes to understanding the complexities of aligning geopolitical and environmental goals in EU energy policy amidst crisis contexts.

Civic Education as a Countermeasure to Hybrid Threats: Case of Latvia

Oral

*Dr. Ieva Berzina*¹

1. Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences; National Defence Academy of Latvia

Objectives*

Hybrid threats encompass the combined use of non-military and military techniques to achieve political and military objectives. Russia employs these techniques not only to cultivate the perception of invincibility in its military power as part of psychological warfare but also to discredit Latvia's statehood and democratic institutions and destabilize the domestic political situation. Civic education stands out as a key tool to enhance society's resilience against hybrid threats. Its role includes promoting knowledge, skills, and civic virtues, enabling citizens to defend their democratic states both cognitively and militarily. This paper aims to address the research question: To what extent does Latvia's civic education contribute to strengthening society's resilience to hybrid threats?

Materials and Methods

The paper answers the research question based on 80 in-depth interviews with Latvian youth and civic education teachers from November 2023 to June 2024. The focus of data gathering and analysis is to comprehend how the youth forms an understanding of Latvia's nation-building and democratic foundations, as well as their civic duty to defend the country in the context of national security.

Results

The qualitative data are analyzed and structured in the following thematic categories: willingness to defend a country, understanding of security context, media literacy and cyber security skills, and crisis readiness skills.

Conclusions

Civic education can play a vibrant role in countering hybrid threats by educating citizens about the enemy's tools and tactics, developing self-organizing skills, media literacy, and cyber security skills, and strengthening the will to defend a country by explaining the broader political context, among other things. The study results reveal that civic education in Latvia deals with these issues related to national security in a minimal way.

This research is funded by the Latvian Council of Sciences, project "Patriots and nationalists: cognition, attitudes, and their impact on the development of democratic civil society" project No. lzp-2022/1-0456.

Co-developing Post-Westphalian Statecraft of the European Union

Oral

*Ms. Zane Šime*¹

1. *United Nations University Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies (UNU-CRIS); Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)*

Objectives*

The European Union's (EU) policies covering higher education, research, and innovation are resourceful tools for the post-Westphalian statecraft. Various EU policies enable scholarly encounters and collaborative engagements to translate the EU's lofty aspirations into reality through temporarily or more sustainably upheld routines. These activities are characterised by a mutual ownership of solutions as well as a joint commitment to deliver co-developed and tangible results. Many of these meetings are ornated with an overall sense of affinity towards some elements of 'European' transculturality. Recently finalised and published findings on projects funded by the EU Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation and some outstanding higher education and advanced learning sites offer plenty of examples that the EU's sui generis supranational governance is a co-created and constantly revitalised phenomenon. Individual scientists, advanced research centres, and higher education establishments have a considerable degree of agency in shaping the future EU directions and steering modalities. The theoretical standpoint of contemporary Bourdieu-inspired practice theory elucidates that the learner should never underestimate the profound individual intellectual agency enabled by the 'European' project. Integration through an incremental process offers a variety of pathways for scholars and analysts to shape the future post-Westphalian model of the EU. Those who have mastered the specificities of each intellectual site afforded by the EU, meaning the distinct habituses, prevailing doxas, and transversal capitals offered by each of those spaces, can virtuously immerse themselves in the ongoing process of the EU post-Westphalian statecraft. It takes a collective effort to get the EU to transcend its glorious past into an even more promising and inspiring future model. The existing set-up of the European Research Area and a myriad of domain-specific policy frameworks are fit to channel the individual and pooled agency to future-proof the EU and serve the collective 'European' good.

Consciousness Raising Paralysed: Consequences of Sexual Violence at War

Oral

***Ms. Anete Biķe**¹*

1. Ph.D. student, Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The short term psychological effects on individual survivors of conflict related sexual violence (CRSV) has been studied in the field of medicine yet the consequent long-term effect of consciousness raising of communities of CRSV as a collective trauma has been scarcely explored within conflict studies. Drawing on scholarship within conflict and gender studies, conducting qualitative media analysis and interviews with peace-builders, this paper comparatively explores the use of CRSV in Ukraine, Columbia and Bosnia to reveal how wide spread CRSV in conflict leaves long-term negative health and social impacts that stall national consciousness raising and peace processes. This research adopts a survivor-cantered approach to conclude on consequences of CRSV in social organizing and transition to peacetime and aims to suggest necessary steps for national recovery and justice.

Consolidation of Security Research in the Baltic States through Synergies and Collaborations

Oral

*Mrs. Sandra Vasilevska*¹

1. Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies

Objectives*

The geopolitical tension at the crossroads of Europe underscores the need for robust security measures in the Baltic States—Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. This study proposes a security research study leveraging regional Baltic States research collaborations. Our objectives were to map the current security research landscape, identify collaborative opportunities, and develop a framework to enhance regional security research capabilities.

Materials and Methods

The study utilised a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative analyses. Data were sourced from extensive reviews of legislation, academic literature, and recent scientific outputs supplemented by empirical data from the SciVal research tool. This approach enabled a detailed understanding of security challenges and collaborative efforts across governmental and academic sectors.

Results

Our findings reveal that the Baltic States have progressively updated security research, especially their cybersecurity strategies, to respond to evolving threats and technological advancements. There is a notable increase in cybersecurity research publications and policy developments, emphasising the region's dynamic approach to cybersecurity. Integrating regional strategies with EU policies highlights a harmonised approach to cybersecurity challenges.

The analysis indicated a vibrant network of collaborations among universities and governmental agencies in the Baltic States, particularly in cyber threat intelligence. These collaborations have led to significant advancements in cybersecurity protocols and measures, markedly enhancing regional resilience against cyber-attacks. Additionally, the critical nature of energy security, emphasised by the increasing cyber-attacks on energy infrastructure, highlights the indispensable link between energy resilience and cybersecurity.

Conclusions

The study concludes that strengthening synergies and collaborations in security research within the Baltic States is crucial for developing a proactive security infrastructure capable of addressing current and future challenges. The proposed research collaboration network provides a strategic guideline for enhancing these collaborations, essential for safeguarding national and regional interests against the complex landscape of global cybersecurity threats.

Exogenous and Endogenous Crises in European Integration: Case Study of Climate Change

Oral

Ms. Aleksandra Palkova¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

How does the interplay between exogenous and endogenous crises, particularly in the context of climate change, shape the process and trajectory of European integration?

Materials and Methods

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to examine the impact of climate change as both an exogenous and endogenous crisis on European integration. By integrating qualitative analysis of EU policy documents with quantitative assessments of climate-related data and member state positions, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding climate policy within the EU.

Results

The analysis reveals a complex landscape of policy convergence and divergence among EU member states. While there is a trend towards aligning climate policies with the European Green Deal, significant discrepancies remain. Economically stronger nations advocate for more aggressive climate actions and green technology investments, while economically challenged states are more cautious, prioritizing immediate stability over long-term goals.

The EU's institutional framework is evolving to address climate challenges. In response to external pressures, the EU is adapting its governance structures, enhancing cooperation among institutions, streamlining decision-making, and fostering partnerships with external stakeholders. These pressures, such as the Paris Agreement, can catalyze cooperation but also exacerbate internal tensions.

The findings also indicate the emergence of differentiated integration in climate policy among member states. Some countries are willing to adopt ambitious commitments, while others choose less stringent obligations, resulting in a fragmented approach to climate action within the EU.

Conclusions

The examination of climate change as both an exogenous and endogenous crisis reveals the complex interplay of external pressures and internal dynamics in European integration. While the European Union has made notable progress in advancing global climate action, internal divisions and institutional constraints pose significant challenges to its collective response. As an exogenous crisis, climate change amplifies existing tensions among member states, highlighting disparities in economic capabilities and political priorities.

Hybrid Activities as an Instrument of Foreign Policy in the Context of Russia's Strategic Culture

Oral

*Mr. Māris Cepurītis*¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

This research aims to analyze how Russia's strategic culture informs the design and deployment of hybrid activities as tools of foreign policy to achieve geopolitical objectives, with a focus on their application in the Europe.

Materials and Methods

The study utilizes qualitative content analysis and comparative case studies methods. Policy documents, speeches, and official statements by Russian policymakers are analyzed alongside open-source intelligence (OSINT) reports, media narratives. A comparative analysis is conducted on case studies of hybrid activities in European democracies to identify recurring patterns and strategies. Discourse analysis is employed to explore how Russian narratives align with its strategic culture.

Results

The findings demonstrate that Russia's strategic culture, characterized by its historical experiences of perceived encirclement, emphasis on asymmetrical power projection, and preference for ambiguity, underpins its reliance on hybrid tactics. Case studies highlight consistent use of disinformation campaigns, cyberattacks, economic manipulation, and covert operations to destabilize adversaries and exploit systemic vulnerabilities. These actions reveal a coordinated strategy designed to achieve political and strategic objectives while avoiding direct confrontation.

Conclusions

Hybrid activities, shaped by Russia's strategic culture, serve as a highly adaptable and cost-effective foreign policy instrument. Understanding the interplay between historical-cultural factors and operational tactics is crucial for anticipating and countering such activities effectively. This research provides actionable insights for policymakers in developing resilience against hybrid threats and fostering international cooperation.

International and Regional Response on the Crime of Aggression Against Ukraine

Oral

Ms. Lela Totadze¹, Ms. Mari Tsulukidze¹

1. Faculty of Law, Vilnius University

Objectives*

Russia's ongoing full-scale invasion against Ukraine question the adequacy and effectivity of International and regional response: statements, sanctions and expressed will to prosecute Russian military or political leaders for the crime of aggression in the absence of The ICC Jurisdiction. The increased threads and humanitarian calamities caused by the impunity gaps imply the need for the stronger security system – The purpose of the paper is to analyze the possibilities for more relevant response on current situation. Firstly, regarding, international criminal justice, the paper reviews the present means and obstructions to prosecute the crime of aggression by the international court of justice, while also considering the nature of the interconnection of the ICC and UN Security Council, possibility to expand its jurisdiction. Furthermore, it analyses necessity and plausibility to establish the special tribunal for Ukraine and the importance of clearly stated political will of the international Community. Secondly, the paper analyses the efficiency of political response and sanctions against Russia.

Materials and Methods

The paper is based on the systematic analysis as well as comparative historical research methods, while reviewing the previous precedent, especially Nuremberg trials, and present legal or political obstacles for .

Results

The paper outlines why several options regarding expanding ICC jurisdiction will be inefficient for the immediate response, in particular, the paper sheds light to why the options of shifting the referral power from UN Security Council to the General Assembly, limiting the Self- serving veto powers of UN Security members and expanding ICC jurisdiction in general will be inefficient. The paper also suggests why establishing the special tribunal would be more adequate response. Besides the paper overviews the efficiency of economic sanctions against Russia, whether they manage to restrict Russia's abilities to wage war.

Conclusions

Amending the statute once again or shifting the powers among UN bodies will take uncertain amount of time, the endeavor will most likely be futile and even in case of its success, it might have no impact on the current situation. The establishment of special tribunal despite the legal challenges it might face regarding authority, immunity or political selectivity is the legally grounded option and the only possible solution to avoid future wars.

Main Drivers and Impediments for Defense Synchronisation for the Baltic States 2004–2023

Oral

*Mr. Olevs Nikers*¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The objective of this inquiry is to assess the most important factors, that facilitate or make it difficult for the three Baltic countries - Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania to synchronize their defense and security. Taking into account current geopolitical situation and Russia's aggression towards Ukraine, regional cooperation becomes one of the most important issues along with the need to develop individual national capabilities and the reinforce the collective arrangements.

The historical approach in the new institutionalism explains different factors, that affect institutions in their working and decision-making process, however, the two main theoretical premises lie on the robust nature of the organizational activity, which is explained through the (1) path dependence approach and (2) change in that behavior and decision making that are determined by the arrival at the critical junctures.

Materials and Methods

In order to accomplish above mentioned objective, qualitative research methods are utilized, conducting the case study - showcasing the Baltic defense cooperation and analysis of the open-source documents and interviews.

Results

The main theoretical premises are successfully tested against empirical evidence and case study analysis used for the inquiry.

Conclusions

Testing above mentioned theoretical premises against the case of the Baltic states and assessing the grounds for sustainment and change within the Baltic States' defense cooperation, it is possible to conclude, that the institutionalization of the (1) path dependence for institutional continuity and (2) critical junctures for the change are serving as the main theoretical explanatory factors of the Baltic States' defense cooperation, that are supported by the case study analysis and empirical evidence.

New Players in Psychological Resilience Arena: Research Framework for Evaluating the Potential of Private Sector

Oral

*Ms. Lita Juberte Krūmiņa*¹

1. Ph.D. student, Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The ongoing Russia's war in Ukraine, increasing hybrid threats and polarization has made many European countries to change the thinking around trust and psychological resilience of societies, realizing that it's not possible to reach goals alone. As trust in traditional institutions wanes, this research addresses a new, little-studied direction and evaluates whether the private sector (businesses) can possess institutionalization capabilities to strengthen psychological resilience. Employing a sociological institutionalism lens, the author develops a research framework for evaluating private sector institutionalization potential.

Materials and Methods

The research is based on a cross-evaluation of the key sociological institutionalism theoretical approaches and a thorough analysis of the theoretical literature on the private sector's relation to psychological resilience.

Results

The study outlines that a) businesses can be viewed as institutions that implement institutionalization practices and affect patterns of society over time b) to evaluate institutionalization potential author identified six core criteria within two dimensions. Motivational dimension ties with James G. March and Johan P. Olsen's contribution highlighting that institutional practices are determined by "logic of appropriateness" and internal values. Contributional dimension is built on views of M. Finnemore, Peter A. Hall, and Rosemary C. R. Taylor focusing on aspects of carrying identities and ensuring cognitive patterns persist over time.

Conclusions

The study concludes that institutionalization criteria are applicable to the private sector in the same way as to classical state-level institutions. Businesses can establish norms, create values, and provide bonds that unite people - aspects that are especially crucial in psychological resilience building. Thus, the analysis opens the discussion on the need of a more strategic shift regarding how national countries engage diverse stakeholders to address gaps in psychological resilience building.

Political Security and the Role of Political Stability and Parties' Sustainability in Latvia amid Geopolitical Tensions

Oral

Mr. Romāns Gagunovs¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

This research investigates the sustainability of political parties and party associations in Latvia amidst increasing geopolitical tensions in Europe and the Baltic region. In contemporary conditions, classical conventional threats are compounded by emerging global challenges, making the analysis of political parties and party associations particularly significant. The role of political parties as pillars of political stability and security is critical, especially in countering internal fragmentation and hybrid threats. A stable political environment, characterized by sustainable parties and party associations, is fundamental to the functioning of democracy.

Materials and Methods

A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining quantitative data on membership and electoral performance with qualitative analyses of party programs, leadership dynamics, and voter behavior. Data sources include Central Election Commission records, party manifestos, publications, and expert interviews.

Results

According to research, in Latvia: 1) party associations are more sustainable than individual parties; 2) parties lacking long-term goals and reliant on populist rhetoric exhibit short lifespans; 3) populist parties exacerbate societal divisions, posing risks of exploitation by pro-Kremlin forces; 4) leadership-centered parties fail to retain long-term voter support; 5) personality-driven success outweighs ideological adherence. Despite over 50 registered political entities in early 2024, only one active party had more than 2,000 members, reflecting systemic fragility.

Conclusions

Sustainable party development is essential for mitigating internal divisions, strengthening democratic institutions, and resisting hybrid threats. Aligning party sustainability with Latvia's security priorities enhances its resilience as a robust EU and NATO partner. Promoting cohesive political structures not only secures domestic stability but also fortifies Europe's eastern flank against geopolitical pressures.

Portuguese Defense Policy Post-February 2022: Navigating Strategic Autonomy

Oral

Ms. Sandra Fernandes¹

1. Department of Political Science, University of Minho

Objectives*

This study examines Portugal's defense policy evolution following Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, focusing on its strategic positioning within the European Union. Leveraging Portugal's geographical and historical detachment from Russian disputes, the analysis explores how these factors facilitated a unique role as a neutral mediator in EU-Russia relations. The research aims to assess the impact of the geopolitical shift - provoked by the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 - on Portugal's defense policy, particularly in terms of strategic autonomy, military spending, and industrial base development. By evaluating Portugal's initiatives under the Military Programming Law and the idD-Portugal Defence framework, this paper highlights the country's efforts to integrate into European defense structures while reducing reliance on non-European defense partnerships. The findings underscore the strategic recalibration of Portuguese defense policy towards greater alignment with EU objectives, offering insights into the broader implications for European security and transatlantic relations.

Role of ESA in Small Nations' Space Efforts

Oral

*Ms. Elina Greine*¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

Participation of small countries in space exploration has historically been constrained by limited resources, expertise, and infrastructure. However, organizations like the European Space Agency offer an avenue for these nations to overcome such barriers. This study examines the impact of ESA membership on the involvement of small countries in space exploration. It deals with the hypothesis that the only way how small states are involved in international space questions is through international organizations.

Main objective - analyze the role of ESA in space engagement of small countries. Using qualitative research methods. First, content and discourse analysis - analyzing language, terms, themes. Second, case study analysis - specific cases of cooperation in space exploration. Third, comparative analysis - examining cases of small states having impact regarding international space questions by using ESA. This work used social constructivism as a theory and focuses on the issue of identity. The author focuses on how small states lose their identity, because the only way of involvement in the international arena regarding space issues is through international organizations. In this case the author has chosen ESA and small European states as focus for the research.

The study concludes that ESA is a vital enabler for democratizing access to space exploration, allowing small countries to contribute meaningfully despite limited individual resources. It further highlights that social constructivism effectively explains how shared norms and collaborative frameworks within ESA empower smaller nations to become integral players in the global space community.

Russia-China Ideological Alignment? Beijing's three Initiatives

Oral

Dr. Una Bērziņa-Čerenkova¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

[* Submitted for publication in: Forum on Future British Strategy/Current and Future Alignment among Adversaries, King's College London]

To map the growing proximity between the Russian and Chinese discourse on global security, development and civilisation.

To devise implications for the security of the Euro-Atlantic space.

Materials and Methods

Strategic and political documents (doctrines, initiatives, speeches) of the PRC and the RF.

Secondary sources, e.g. produced by the respective “discourse coalitions” (government, media, epistemological communities) within the PRC and RF.

Methods: qualitative, incl. multilingual text analysis.

Results

The shared, Beijing-produced, yet mutually amplifying outlook has moved away from 20th Century style dogma. Instead, the ideological alignment of China and Russia is a set of talking points, which include:

- Encouragements for alternative, non-liberal democratic paths towards development (e.g. the Global Development Initiative)
- Advocacy of exclusion of Western actors from regional conflict management calling upon self-sufficiency (e.g. the Global Security Initiative)
- Calls for multi-polarity and democratization of international relations, which would grant a bigger say for non-democratic powers (e.g. the Global Security Initiative)
- Promotion of relativism of human rights and values (e.g., the Global Civilization Initiative), support for domestic cohesion-building via promotion of state and ethnic nationalism/selective traditionalism.

Conclusions

This ideological alignment connects Russian legacy alliances of 20th century anti-Capitalist solidarity to the growing 21st Century PRC networks of economic cooperation and development. Furthermore, Russia has cultivated fringe forces on both the far-Left and far-Right of the Western democratic political spectrum. If those forces were to be socialized into PRC ideology via Russian influence operations, this would provide Chinese narratives on an alternative global order with political backing and a platform in the West that otherwise it would take China decades, if ever, to achieve on its own. The implications spread beyond an uneven bilateral partnership of two Authoritarian anti-American mega-states and into a multilateral anti-Western coalition.

Security Challenge of EU, NATO Cooperation, and Turkey's Role

Oral

*Mrs. Dilge Özcoşkun*¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The main objective of this article is to study the evolving security dynamics within the EU's challenges on geopolitical tensions and security. The aim is to value the EU's responses to the challenges, its strategic alignment with NATO, and the integration of member states into the EU framework, as well as, Turkey's role in European security and the evolving nature of EU foreign policy.

Materials and Methods

A qualitative analysis of existing literature and policy documents is used, including historical EU security strategies and the EU's strategic compass, to value the trajectory of European security policy and EU-NATO military collaborations, forming conclusions about the EU's future global security role.

Results

The EU's security strategy has shifted from economic integration to a focus on geopolitics, due to the Ukraine crisis and global threats. Key developments include:

Strategic Autonomy and NATO: The EU seeks autonomy but acknowledges NATO's irreplaceable role, with both organizations complementing each other in defense and crisis management.

Turkey's Role: Turkey's strategic importance has grown, especially in Black Sea security, balancing NATO and EU interests.

Internal EU Tensions: EU divisions persist over defense spending, Turkey's role in handling relations with Russia, reflecting the challenge of balancing the values with geopolitical realities.

Conclusions

European security is shifting as the EU struggles to balance its normative values with global geopolitics. The EU must adapt to a world where strategic autonomy and military capabilities are essential, while NATO remains a key partner. The EU's success will depend on overcoming internal divisions, integrating new members, and strengthening defense and crisis management. Turkey's role is important, as its geopolitical position improves EU security. The EU must mediate its ideals with the realities of global power dynamics to maintain influence in the future security architecture.

Status Seeking of Small States in the European Union: Case of Latvia and Its Role in the EU Policy Towards Belarus Following the 2020 Unrest

Oral

*Mrs. Beate Livdanska*¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

Status in the international system is a very significant element in trying to explain why states act in one way or another. In the international system, status is most often analysed in relation to great powers, positing the assumption that the actions of great powers in the international system can be explained by efforts to gain greater or more significant status. However, considering the dynamics of the international system, one should not limit oneself to only the role of great powers in shaping and influencing international politics. This assumption also applies to state interactions in various institutional frameworks, such as the European Union. Small states, especially when examining their activity in specific policy sectors, play a significant role while simultaneously striving to achieve a specific status. In certain theoretical frameworks, it is indicated that gaining status is the main driving force for small states' involvement in shaping the agenda of international politics. The aim of this study is to analyse status as an important element of small states' activity in the international system, examining it from a theoretical perspective specifically within the context of small states and their interactions in the EU. To better understand the importance of status in the context of small states, the scope of the study is limited to the specific case study of Latvia as a small EU member state and its activity in the common policy of the EU toward Belarus following the 2020 unrest in the country. Here, activity refers to the efforts to gain a specific status as a state that not only can successfully influence EU policy towards Belarus but also creates a particular image, thus acquiring status as a state of considerable importance in shaping this policy, especially in the sphere of security.

Story of Democratic Resilience

Oral

Mr. Gustavs Briuks¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The aim of this research is to make attributions to the investigation of the concept of “democratic resiliency” which has gained traction in various contexts during the latter years, yet add to the discussion a narrative approach, which sees the concept of democratic resiliency as a strategic story that is not just constative, but constitutes the actors involved, their identities, practices, instrumental goals and the political settings within which actors supposedly act. The task is to investigate and display the narrative structure of resiliency and the implications of that structure to the actors involved, their respective identities, the actions and practices assigned to those actors and political environment. Empirically, through qualitative content analysis and in-depth semi-structured interviews this research proposes to analyze the public speeches and policy documents of legislators from EU and NATO member countries to identify the possible storylines that emerge when the concept of democratic resiliency is operated with. The outcome of this research proposes to provide greater clarity on the term “democratic resiliency”, its uses and constitutive power that it entails.

Unpacking China’s ‘Community of Shared Future for Mankind’: Discourse-Historical Perspective on PRC’s Global Governance Narratives

Oral

*Mrs. Dana Dūda*¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The security of democratic states relies on the stability of the post-war liberal international order. Yet, this order is being actively challenged by the People’s Republic of China (PRC), which has been promoting a vision for a multipolar world order internationally since 2013, with the Community of Shared Future for Mankind (CSFM) concept serving as its ideological blueprint. However, limited clarity surrounds the specific discursive mechanisms through which the PRC seeks to legitimize and propagate this vision, as the CSFM concept remains broad and adaptable to shifting geopolitical contexts.

Materials and Methods

Guided by the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), this study examines the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) discursive construction of a multipolar world order by analyzing Xi Jinping’s 2015 address at the United Nations General Assembly—where the CSFM concept was first introduced to an international audience—within its socio-historical and political context to understand what discursive strategies are employed to promote and legitimize the CCP’s alternative vision for global governance.

Results

The analysis uncovers deeper, context-dependent meanings embedded in the Chinese language. It examines the discursive strategies employed by the CCP to construct narratives promoting the CCP’s vision of global governance. The study argues that the CCP employs ideologically saturated persuasive and argumentation strategies to create a China-centric multipolar world order with “Chinese characteristics.”

Conclusions

Concluding that these strategies are used systematically to propagate a vision for a global system less dependent on the United States. This study demonstrates the value of examining Chinese language political texts to understand emerging challenges to the established international order. It contributes to the academic understanding of how the PRC’s political discourse operates at the international level to reshape and promote an alternative vision of global governance.

Urban Preparedness for Emerging Risks in the Baltic Sea Region: Comparative Insights from Riga, Helsinki, and Hamburg

Oral

Dr. Didzis Klavins¹, Dr. Ieva Birka¹

1. University of Latvia

Objectives*

This paper examines urban preparedness for emerging risks in the Baltic Sea Region, with a specific focus on three key cities: Riga, Helsinki, and Hamburg. The study aims to understand the concerns of residents and the role they are ready to play in preparedness initiatives, how political institutions in these urban centres are readying to tackle emerging risks, and the overall readiness of both institutions and the public to respond to growing security challenges.

Materials and Methods

Drawing on survey data from 1,000 respondents in each city, the paper will first present what are the new and emerging risks that urban residents are concerned about through risk perception analysis of natural and man-made disasters. Then we will compare their self-described level of preparedness in relation to common preparedness measures and national civil security recommendations. We will aim to establish how values impact various perceptions and motivations. Finally, we will look at the public opinion of homeland and civil security policies in the survey data of the three urban centres, to understand the expectations of the public and their expressed needs and wants from the authorities.

In addition, interviews with high-ranking officials from the city councils of Riga, Helsinki, and Hamburg will further uncover institutional approaches to mitigating emerging risks, enhancing resilience, and maintaining security. This research contributes to the growing discourse on homeland security by highlighting the importance of collaborative initiatives between governments and citizens in building resilient urban communities.

Why Ukraine Must Win

Oral

***Mr. Thomas Cromwell*¹, *Ms. Tatjana Zakutajeva*²**

1. New America Initiative, 2. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The current invasion of Ukraine by Russia and its implications and potential long-term repercussions are best understood through the lens of the failed containment policies of the West during the Cold War, and the lessons we should apply in addressing this conflict today.

Western timidity towards Russia in the name of avoiding escalation of the conflict is largely ill-founded and preventing the free world from acting with the resolve and coordinated effort necessary to put a decisive end to Putin's empire-building. The Russian invasion is a world-threatening challenge to the peaceful coexistence of nation-states under the rules-based international order.

This timidity is erroneously justified as 'saving lives' by avoiding the widening of the conflict, whereas in fact George F. Kennan's policy of containment (and its offshoot détente), which was followed by the United States and much of the rest of the Western world, proved that equivocation and weakness in the face of outright evil can only lead to more suffering and greater harm to the world community.

Materials and Methods

Based on my own book: *Why Ukraine Must Win*

<https://a.co/d/eokuGbm>

Results

The people of Ukraine have already suffered immensely from a decade of war resisting Putin's military campaign to seize their nation. Meanwhile, Putin's Russia is fast becoming a fascist version of the former Soviet Union, with the Russian people increasingly oppressed by their own government and foolishly acceding to a leadership that is dooming their country to pariah status in the world. Much of Europe is now under threat from Moscow and the whole global system is being destabilized.

Conclusions

The solution is not to compromise with the evil perpetrator of this invasion, but to do everything in our power as free nations to see that Ukraine wins this war and Russia is prevented from further aggressions.

Other Topics

Consequences of Ecocide for Public Health (on the Example of Ukraine)

Oral

Dr. Sabriie Shramko¹

1. National Academy of Internal Affairs

Objectives*

To draw attention to the problems arising from ecocide, to assess the consequences of environmental pollution on a national scale, to propose solutions to the problem and to highlight areas for minimising the consequences.

Materials and Methods

The empirical basis of the study was the Ukrainian reports on the assessment of environmental damage from the war, WHO statistics, and reports from The State of Global Air. Analysed scientific publications in the systematic review databases of the NCBI using dialectical, statistical, and systematic analysis methods.

Results

Air quality is an important component of a safe environment, and the correlation between air pollution and public health has been scientifically proven. The consequences of the war in Ukraine for the population include lung diseases and various types of cancer due to the inhalation of heavy metals and carcinogens contained in explosives and in the debris of shelled buildings. Massive artillery and rocket attacks on oil depots, refineries and other industrial facilities in Ukraine result in toxic emissions into the air and pollution of ground and surface water.

Conclusions

Ecocide is not only a crime against the environment, but also a challenge for all of humanity. It will take decades to restore the ecosystem. In such a global crisis, international support is needed to bring those responsible to justice and to make reparations. This requires proper accounting, analysis and assessment of the damage caused to the environment by military actions. Harmonisation of Ukrainian and EU environmental legislation is essential for the development of international cooperation. In the context of Ukraine, the following measures can be taken to minimise the consequences: establishing a system for monitoring the state of water, air and soil; promptly cleaning up contaminated areas; ensuring access to medical services and preventing epidemics; and informing citizens about how to protect themselves in the face of environmental danger.

Interdependence between the State of Crime and the Normative Issues of the Status of Victims of Armed Conflict (on the Example of Ukraine)

Oral

Mrs. Alina Kalinina¹

1. Academician Stashis Scientific Research Institute for the Study of Crime Problems, National Academy of the Law Sciences of Ukraine

Objectives*

of the study is to outline the principles of regulatory framework for determining the status of a victim of international armed conflict in Ukraine and to identify the interdependence between the state of crime and the status of victims of armed conflict.

Materials and Methods

The theoretical basis of the research is the international and Ukrainian normative acts, specialized juridical literature. The methodological basis for the research is content analysis of news, media, results of the empirical study (surveys of the public, internally displaced persons, law enforcement officers, military personnel, etc.)

Results

Ukrainian legislation doesn't contain a definition of "victim of armed conflict" in the scope that would comply with international law. The definition of the status of a victim or a victim of the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, even after ten years of the conflict, remains an open question in national legislation.

The recognition of a person as a victim in the criminal justice system is currently the only way to officially grant a person the status of a victim of Russian aggression.

The crime rate in Ukraine directly depends on the number of people who receive the status of victims not only of the international armed conflict, but also of victims at the national level of general criminal offenses committed as a result of the aggression of the RF.

The population of Ukraine is more ready to establish ties with people who were under occupation than not.

Conclusions

The concept of "victim of armed conflict" is not defined in national legislation to the extent that it complies with international law, but certain compensation mechanisms are being introduced at the legislative level for persons whose real estate was damaged or destroyed as a result of hostilities, terrorist acts, or sabotage caused by the armed aggression of the RF against Ukraine.

Stalinism and Popular Culture. The Case of Jazz Music in the Soviet Republics of Eastern Europe

Oral

*Mr. Riccardo De Cristofano*¹

1. Università degli Studi "Roma Tre"

Objectives*

This study examines the control and repressiveness of Stalinist cultural policies, focusing on jazz music in the Baltic republics and Moldova. The Baltic republics, which experienced a period of independence in the 1920s and 1930s, offer a unique opportunity for a comparative analysis of the social and cultural context before and after their Sovietization. Moldova, previously part of Romania, adds another dimension to the study.

Jazz, a cultural phenomenon born in the United States from Afro-American experiences, reached the USSR in the 1920s, during the NEP period. Initially, jazz was seen as both a symbol of proletarian struggle and a dangerous, individualistic form of music, criticized for its dissonance and chaotic nature. Soviet authorities' attitudes toward jazz were thus shaped by ideological tensions: while some viewed it as a valuable artistic product of the Afro-American working class, others saw it as a threat to socialist values.

Preliminary archival research in Latvia suggests a neutral, if not positive, attitude towards jazz during the early years of World War II. However, the shift towards repression and censorship in the late 1940s, following the worsening of relations with the U.S. and the anti-cosmopolitan campaign, marks a significant contrast to the earlier years of relative openness.

This research aims to explore the differences cultural policies before and after Soviet annexation, with a focus on jazz as a symbol of individual expression and ideological struggle. By comparing the Baltic republics and Moldova before and after their Sovietization, this study aspires to deepen the understanding of the extent of control and repression in the USSR and offers insights into the cultural repression in the Soviet peripheries.

Application for Temporary Protection – Legal and Practical Aspects of Examination and Decision-Making

Poster

Ms. Jolanta Dinsberga¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

There are many real estates in Latvia that do not have direct access from a public road. Therefore, many owners are forced to go to court to establish this access. If the owner wants to establish a temporary settlement of disputed relations until the ruling comes into force, a request for its determination must be submitted to the court. According to Article 140.1 of the Law on Civil Procedure, the court decides on the request without holding a court hearing and without prior notification to the participants. Except for cases where it is recognized that it is necessary to clarify additional circumstances.

Descriptive, analytical, inductive and deductive general scientific research methods were used to conduct the research. As well as methods of interpretation of legal norms: historical, systemic, teleological and grammatical. As a result of the research, the author came to the conclusion that making a decision without holding a court hearing harms the interests of the defendant, because he is not given the opportunity to provide explanations, and there is also a possibility that the plaintiff does not include all legal and factual circumstances in the application, which can significantly affect the court or judge's decision for the plaintiff in an unwanted direction.

In the opinion of the author, in cases where a court session is not held, the parties to the case should be notified of the day and time of the decision, and the defendant should be required to provide explanations on the plaintiff's application by a certain deadline. Only in cases where the claimant justifies the urgency of making a decision, the court or judge would be entitled to decide on the application without holding a court hearing and without prior notification to the parties involved.

Differences in Value Orientations Between Men and Women: Insights From the European Social Survey Round 10

Poster

Dr. Rasa Indriliunaite¹, Mr. Tadas Vadvilavičius²

1. Department of Sociology, Vytautas Magnus University, 2. Vytautas Kavolis Interdisciplinary Research Institute, Vytautas Magnus University

Objectives*

National culture is usually characterized by the common values between people living in the same region and/or country (Hofstede 1980). Values are typically defined as desirable goals, that serve as guiding principles in people's lives and shape their behavior (Ball-Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992). The comparisons of the value priorities of groups and individuals can help to understand the impact of major social changes (in economics or politics) and some distinctions of individual experience (Schwartz, 2003). There have been applied several scales for measuring values in recent decades (Hofstede 1980; Rokeach 1967; Inglehart, 1971), but different researchers agree that Schwartz's (1992) Value Survey is considered one of mostly used for studying individual differences in value orientations. It is based on the measurement of how individuals feel the importance of certain values to them personally as the main „guiding principles of their lives“.

This brief research aims to explore the values profiles of Lithuanian citizens among men and women separately. Latent profile analysis will be performed to find the best solution to describe how many different value profiles exist among men and women (Spurk et al., 2020). All find profiles among men and women will be described and compared between each other.

Materials and Methods

The European Social Survey (ESS) Round 10 data (European Social Survey, 2022) was used. Lithuanian sample consisted of 1464 participants. In total, 567 women and 897 men participated, from age 15 to 90.

Results

Results revealed that there are at least six different value sub-groups in women and men samples. On one hand, the patterns are similar suggesting the similarities between men and women as well as a cultural profile of Lithuanians. However, there were small differences where profiles had no similarities in the samples of men and women. It suggests that there are some small gender differences, but further analysis is required.

Enhancing Academic Writing and Data Literacy: Challenges Faced by First-Year Social Sciences Students

Poster

*Mrs. Sniedze Vilde*¹, *Mrs. Anna Jurčenko*¹

1. Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

Academic writing is an essential yet challenging skill for university students, serving both academic and professional purposes. This paper aims to identify the challenges faced by first-year Social Sciences faculty students during the process of writing a research paper and developing a scientific poster.

Materials and Methods

The study achieved this objective through instructors' observations and analysis of student surveys.

Results

The results revealed that students faced challenges in selecting suitable and credible sources, as well as in choosing appropriate data visualizations. In contrast, the production of textual content for academic writing posed significantly fewer challenges, largely due to the assistance provided by digital tools. However, some students found the process of preparing and delivering academic presentations to be particularly demanding.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the findings suggest that syllabus development should place greater emphasis on data literacy, including source selection and prompt engineering, as well as providing additional practical training in visualizing, describing and presenting research findings.

RAPEX system: Role in Albanian Consumer Protection

Poster

Dr. Belinda Halilaj¹, Dr. Oljana Hoxhaj¹

1. Department of Law, University "Ismail Qemali" Vlora

Objectives*

In some cases consumers attracted by appearance of product. This proved to be dangerous for consumer health, because the appearance not affect in quality of products. Over the years, various products have been offered in Albanian market without control for safety and quality for consumer. This practice was dangerous for consumer's health. Assessing their security was difficult to do because there was no competent institution. For the control of products the market surveillance institution was established. For evaluation of risk associated with product, Albania should develop a database, which would collect the information on unsafe products in the market and accidents related to them. System would be in assistance of market surveillance structure when it takes decisions in case of an emergency situation. In consumer protection, decided relation with Rapid Exchange of Information System (RAPEX).

From the cooperation of the market surveillance structure with RAPEX the domestic market was reorganized: in measure protective, control structure, informed consumer. National measures for market control were adopted. These measures directly affected the safety and health of the consumer. The purpose of this paper is to discover the positive impact of RAPEX on consumer protection in Albania.

Materials and Methods

The qualitative method is used in this paper. This method is used to explain the role of RAPEX system on consumer protection in our country. Safety of non food product is a problem in Albanian market. From the exchange of information, measures have been taken to remove dangerous product from market. Measures on consumer protection affected the protection on consumer health.

Results

Creating a data system for exchange of information, increased level of protection of consumer. Products placed in the market would be safe for consumer. Each product must fill harmonizes standards to be safe.

Conclusions

The exchange of information with RAPEX system affects in reorganization of protective structure of the market. For the first time, a data system was created on non-food products. The products that were placed on the market were safe. If they present a risk, they are removed from the market and destroyed. The impact was also felt on the consumer's health because.

Right to Participate in Public Governance and Its Impact on Decisions Made at the EU Level

Poster

Mr. Viktorija Soņeca¹

1. University of Latvia

Objectives*

The right to participate in public governance and its impact on decisions taken at the EU level is illustrated by Articles 11(1), (2), and (3) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), which concretize Article 10(1) TEU. It is important to emphasize Article 10 TEU because the right to participate in public administration is essential not only due to the synergy between national and EU legal systems, but also because citizens of each EU Member State make choices based on their own interests when selecting their representatives for the European Parliament (EP) or at the EU level. This means that EU citizens exercise one of the tools of representative democracy—namely, elections. Additionally, EU citizens thereby engage in the democratic life of the EU under Article 10(3) TEU.

Furthermore, the right to participate in governance extends beyond the national level to the EU level, allowing EU citizens to influence political decisions and legislation adopted at the EU level, which directly affects their national legal systems.

Results

This article will thus examine the importance of understanding the synergies between the two legal systems to prevent future scenarios where individuals unable to serve as national Members of Parliament can represent their countries as Members of the European Parliament at the EU level. It will also address how the public is consulted and informed regarding European Commission proposals for new legislation, specifically the ex ante phase of the EU law adoption procedure.

Shaping European Sports Law: Integrating Governance Standards with Lex Sportiva Principles

Poster

*Dr. Marina Kamenecka-Usova*¹, *Prof. Janis Zidens*², *Dr. Signe Luika*², *Dr. Olena Agapova*¹,
*Ms. Laine Donane*¹, *Ms. Ieva Stecenko*², *Mr. Ricards Grikis*²

1. Rīga Stradiņš University, 2. RSU Latvian Academy of Sport Education

Objectives*

This research investigates the dynamic interaction between European sports governance and Lex Sportiva to understand how their convergence shapes European sports' legal framework. By examining this relationship, the study aims to outline key principles, challenges, and opportunities for enhancing governance standards and developing guidelines to evaluate national sports legislation. The study also explores Latvia's legal framework to offer insights applicable to European contexts.

Materials and Methods

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating comprehensive literature reviews, case studies, and stakeholder interviews. Primary sources include policy analysis and data from the Latvian sports regulatory landscape, compared against European standards.

Results

Preliminary findings reveal that Latvia's sports governance aligns with many European standards, though key improvements could enhance harmonization with Lex Sportiva principles. Comparative analysis shows significant variation in governance practices among European nations, highlighting the need for adaptable guidelines.

Conclusions

The study emphasizes the potential for Lex Sportiva to foster more coherent governance frameworks across Europe. Findings contribute to the academic discourse on sports law and provide actionable policy recommendations for policymakers and legal practitioners to enhance sports governance in alignment with European standards.

**Populist Encounters:
Tracing Populist Effects
in Non-Traditional
Political Spaces**

Culture Industry, Right-Wing Populism and Conspiratorial Discourse: Case Study of Russell Brand

Oral

*Prof. Rico Isaacs*¹

1. University of Lincoln

Objectives*

The research addresses the question: what role does the culture industry play in fermenting right-wing populist and conspiratorial discourse?

Materials and Methods

This paper addresses this question through a case study of the comedian/actor/content creator Russell Brand and his drift from agitating for a progressive left-wing populism to a more right-wing populist conspiratorial discourse. Adopting a theoretical frame that integrates Adorno and Horkheimer's notion of the culture industry with that of three different conceptualisations of populism (as a political style, mass response and form of thin-centred ideology), the paper argues that Brand's shift to a right-wing populist conspiratorial discourse is driven by economic logic. The paper undertakes a thematic analysis of one-month's content of Brand's YouTube channel.

Results

The paper finds that while Brand claims to reside on the margins fighting the mainstream media as a 'free thinker' resisting censorship and seeking the truth, his populist style remains part of the *varieties of the culture industry*. Brand's conspiratorial populist ideology which focuses on conspiracies associated with the covid vaccine, climate change, the 'great reset' and 15-minute cities, among others, is evidently a response to a willing and receptive audience that presents him with a rational economic opportunity. Thus, Brand exists in a dialogical relationship with his audience, discursively aligning himself with their shared concerns and conspiratorial views, all the while offering access to exclusive content at a price.

Conclusions

The significance of the findings is twofold. Firstly, the analysis demonstrates the important role of the culture industry in establishing and pushing values and norms which underpin contemporary forms of right-wing populist and conspiratorial discourse. If we are to understand the contemporary crisis of liberal democracy and the threat posed by right-wing conspiratorial discourse, we must understand the culture which undergirds it. Secondly, the economic logic of Brand's content illustrates that while content creators such as Brand and others on the populist right may claim to be on the periphery of the mainstream culture industry, they still present a similar 'sameness' in their content and do not represent a genuine critical approach outside of the mainstream. Rather it is the mainstream culture industry's effort to capture the periphery via an easy consumable package which then only serves to feed the growth of right-wing populist discourse.

Economic Analysis of Populism: Causes and Consequences

Oral

Dr. Ilze Vilka¹

1. Populist Encounters Research Group, Social Sciences Research Centre, Faculty of Social Sciences, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

The economics perspective adds both for understanding the causes of populism and consequences of populist governance. The author's aim is to develop theoretical and conceptual frameworks that illustrate how populism is examined within the field of economics, and to establish connections between economic theory and populism studies. Literature distinguishes three key groups of factors: economic, social and cultural, whose interplay and scope varies across research. The established economic inquiry is at least two-fold: to examine economic factors as causes to support populism and to assess economic consequences of populist governance. Exposure to globalisation and certain business cycle stages (recession and through) have also adverse impacts on society and are the reasons for protectionist, redistribution or austerity policies. Economic insecurity in terms of income and employment affects how people perceive the circumstantial events including political processes and creates preconditions that make populism appealing. The second part of the research is about the impact of the populist governance on output, trade, taxes, productivity, investment and inflation. It is suggested that populism may weaken institutions and negatively alter cultural norms, which would leave long-term negative impact on development and growth.

Materials and Methods

Author uses systematic approach to analyse how economic theory is used in research to understand the phenomenon of populism and examines existing theoretical approaches that would structure and guide further populism case studies. Author identifies main groups of factors and related variables, their relationship for developing research methodology.

Results

Conceptual and theoretic frameworks.

Conclusions

Populism is multifaceted phenomenon mainly studied by the political science, but the research has truly expanding multidisciplinary nature across various fields of social sciences. Generally, populism research includes economic factors among social, cultural, psychological and historical. There are theoretical assumptions how culture and economics interact in a way populism gains momentum and support. Research though has also quantified that economic factors explain only small portion of populism related attitudes and beliefs, but these may be instrumental to identity issues that lead to the rise of the populism. The future discussions would be valuable about the factors preventing the rise of populism, including the role of social capital, about the regional social and economic differences, including generational differences.

From the “White House” to “Khan Sarai”: Populist Myth-making in the Contemporary Kyrgyzstan

Oral

Dr. Aijan Sharshenova¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

In 2020, the Kyrgyz Republic has experienced third coup d'état in less than three decades of its independence from the Soviet Union. In the course of mass protests against electoral fraud at the parliamentary elections in October, Sadyr Japarov, a conservative traditionalist politician, was released from prison, where was serving prison sentence for hostage taking and went straight into the White House in Bishkek. Through series of murky political decisions at the Parliament he was able to position himself at the acting Prime Minister and call for a presidential election in January 2021. His electoral campaign was full of populist anti-elitist discourses and set the stage for the current populist myth-making in the Kyrgyz Republic.

As a new generation politician, Japarov differs from his Soviet-educated, Russian-speaking Presidents. He employs a network of informal connections, actively uses social media platforms, and carefully creates an image of a “people’s person”. President Japarov also invested a considerable amount of effort and public funds into build-ing a new presidential palace (dubbed Khan-Saray or Khan’s Palace by public), changing the Constitution, the flag and now the hymn of the Kyrgyz Republic. These changes reflect on deeper, more fundamental change of political generations and new directions of political myth-making. They show the shift from post-Soviet bureau-cracies and liberal democratic aspirations towards more ethno-nationalist populist environment in the Kyrgyz Republic. In this paper, I aim to track and analyse these important shifts and explore its connections to the global wave of right-wing populists coming into power across the world.

Materials and Methods

Materials/Data: Speeches by the Kyrgyz President Japarov; visual representations of populism, academic literatures, mass media reports

Methods: Qualitative analysis; discourse analysis

Results

An analysis of the contemporary populist myth-making in the Kyrgyz Republic

Conclusions

President Japarov is part of the global wave of right-wing populist politicians in power.

How do Populist States Engage with the UNFCCC and CBD Negotiations? Qualitative Findings

Oral

Mr. Adam Barnett¹

1. University of Lincoln

Objectives*

In this I will be presenting the main findings of my PhD thesis, which are drawn from interviews with negotiators, UN staff, civil society, journalists and more. Topics include the transition to and away from populist and non-populist governments and leaders, the behaviours of delegations and Heads of State, tangible impacts on the progress of and dynamics in the negotiations themselves, and long-term impacts on the trust and cooperation required in multilateral negotiations. My focus is on several case studies: USA, Brazil, India, Turkey, Philippines, Mexico, Venezuela and Bolivia.

Illiberal Democracy and Populism

Oral

Mr. Peteris Plakans¹

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives*

Explaining the scholarly debate on populism as illiberal democracy.

Analyse political communication on examples of illiberal democracy in contemporary Europe.

Materials and Methods

The presentation will be based on the analysis of the scientific literature used in the development of the thesis. On the topic of illiberal democracy and populism, authors such as Takis Papas, Marcel H. van Harpen are used. The Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and the Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico are discussed as examples from contemporary Europe.

Populism and the Arts: State Funding, Censorship, and Social Movements in the UK, Poland, and Latvia

Oral

Dr. Martin Lang¹

1. University of Lincoln

Objectives*

This presentation examines how arts funding in the UK, specifically through Arts Council England (ACE), influences exhibition programming and impacts artists. The first objective is to investigate the dynamics between funding bodies and the arts, exploring the impact on artistic production and public engagement. The second objective is to contextualise the UK's arts funding model within a broader comparative framework by analysing governmental support and censorship, examining how funding or repression influences the political character of art and its engagement with social movements.

Materials and Methods

This study combines qualitative analysis of UK arts funding structures with case studies, focusing on artist collectives and socially engaged art. The research incorporates policy document analysis, and reviews of exhibition material to trace how funding agendas influence curatorial programming. Comparative analysis will also be conducted on arts funding and censorship models in Poland and Latvia, informed by fieldwork and reports from the art press, art curator testimony.

Results

Preliminary findings indicate that ACE's priorities favour socially engaged art collectives and community-focused projects, emphasising inclusivity and horizontalist methodologies over traditional aesthetic criteria. This model appears to reinforce a progressive image within UK arts institutions while risking a reduction in diversity of artistic expression. In Poland, populist government policies have restricted liberal and progressive art, fostering a politically active underground art scene. Conversely, Latvian artists benefit from relatively stable support, potentially limiting social movements.

Conclusions

The study suggests that arts funding mechanisms significantly impact both the nature and political orientation of publicly funded art. In the UK, funding agendas subtly steer artistic production towards a progressive consensus, while Poland's repressive model has fostered an oppositional arts culture. Meanwhile, the Latvian model raises questions about the relationship between stable arts funding and reduced activism. These findings highlight the need for further interdisciplinary research on the instrumentalisation of art for political ends.

“Ideal mother”, the Intensive Mothering Ideology and the Demographic Crisis: Parenting Attitudes in Latvia

Oral

*Mrs. Elza Lāma*¹

1. University of Latvia

Objectives*

Recent research indicates that there is a strong presence, even dominance and support towards the intensive mothering ideology in Latvia: the notion of exercising concerted cultivation and ensuring the stimulation of a child’s cognitive development with meaningful activities has strong support in Latvia; moreover, safeguarding of a child’s and, hence, the family’s status is of high importance from an early age. (Lāma, Lāma, 2024). Many researchers have raised the alarm regarding the ideology’s destructive effects, primarily affecting the mother’s wellbeing but also the family as a whole by excluding the father from active participation in household and childcare responsibilities (Canetto et al. 2017; Christopher 2012; Cronin-Fisher and Parcell 2019; Cummins and Brannon 2022; Das 2019; Hays 1996; Miller 2005). The internalized mothering discourse also manifests in new mothers’ narratives as feelings of guilt and fear judgement – whether from other mothers or from an abstract entity (manifesting as ‘pressure from society’) – to a level that sometimes forces women to isolate themselves from the outside world (Lāma, Zelče, 2023).

Materials and Methods

Therefore, against the backdrop of a demographic crisis in Latvia, the report analyzes different factors, influencing the intensive parenting attitudes (Liss et al. 2013; Forbes et. al, 2020), and, thus, shaping the mothering discourse in Latvia, by analyzing the results of a representative survey of more than 1000 respondents.

Conclusions

Results indicate that intensive mothering attitudes vary between respondents with different gender, age, family’s income level, family status, language use in family, and education level. Age, family income level and gender are factors that are more connected with intensive mothering attitudes.

Authors Index

A		Grikis, Ricards	111
Agapova, Olena	111	Grīnfelde, Māra	22
Albrecht, Jan	2	Gutorova, Nataliya	58
Appelgren, Staffan	38	H	
Apsītis, Allars	69	Halilaj, Belinda	6, 109
Atstaja, Dzintra	46	Harro-Loit, Halliki	80
B		Hoxhaj, Oljana	6, 109
Babanina, Viktoria	71	I	
Balcytiene, Aukse	80	Ikonomi, Ergysa	8
Balode, Aiga	53	Indriliunaite, Rasa	107
Balodis, Andrejs	19	Isaacs, Rico	113
Barnett, Adam	116	J	
Berzina, Ieva	83	Juan García, Ana	14
Bērziņa-Čerenkova, Una	95	Juberte Krūmiņa, Lita	91
Biķe, Anete	85	Jurčenko, Anna	108
Birka, Ieva	100	K	
Bite, Dina	30	Kale, Maija	14
Blumfelde-Rutka, Kristīne	37	Kalinina, Alina	59, 104
Bohlin, Anna	38	Kamenecka-Usova, Marina	111
Bollettin, Paride	2	Kipāne, Aldona	56
Bormane, Santa	35	Kiščenko, Diāna	24
Briuks, Gustavs	98	Klavins, Didzis	100
Brizga, Jānis	36	Kleinberga, Vineta	82
Broka, Sintija	57	Krivins, Anatolijs	5
Bukovskis, Kārlis	39	Kronkalns, Dāvis	32
C		Kruk, Sergei	79
Cassa, Maria Giovanna	33	Kudeikina, Inga	49, 54, 63, 70
Cepurītis, Māris	88	Kukaine, Jana	21
Chakars, Janis	79	Kurbatovs, Artūrs	54, 63, 70
Cherniavskiyi, Serhii	71	Kuzņecova, Kristīne	67
Ciekurs, Rafaels	23	L	
Cromwell, Thomas	101	Lagzdina, Erika	40
D		Lakševics, Kārlis	36
De Cristofano, Riccardo	105	Lāma, Elza	119
Dinsberga, Jolanta	69, 106	Lang, Martin	118
Djubina, Jelena	72	Livdanska, Beate	97
Donane, Laine	111	Luika, Signe	111
Dūda, Dana	99	Lukashenko, Alona	66
E		Lūse, Agita	44
Eglaja, Liene	73	M	
F		Ma, Huidi	13
Fernandes, Sandra	93	Martinsone-Ozoliņa, Laura	42, 45
G		Matešs, Artūrs	61
Gagunovs, Romāns	92	Mileiko, Ilze	10
Gailume-Zohara, Zanda	44	Misane, Agita	28
Grasis, Janis	62	Morell, Marc	4
Greine, Elina	94	Muraru-Klucica, Julija	64
		Mykhailichenko, Tetiana	48

N		Soņeca, Viktorija	110
Neimanis, Jānis	65	Stakle, Alnis	77
Niehaus, Isak	3	Stecenko, Ieva	111
Nikers, Olevs	90	Strmiska, Michael	31
O		T	
Osis, Martins	74	Tarasova, Dace	52, 69
Özcoşkun, Dilge	96	Tiunčika, Lāsma	35
P		Totadze, Lela	89
Palkova, Aleksandra	87	Tsulukidze, Mari	89
Plakans, Peteris	117	V	
Potetinova, Inguna	27	Vadvilavičius, Tadas	107
R		Valdmanis, Gunars	32
Reine, Agnese	50, 52	Vasilevska, Sandra	86
Rozentāle, Lelde	39	Vēgners, Uldis	26
Rožukalne, Anda	77, 80	Veilande, Olga	41
Rudnyeva, Oleksandra	58	Vēja, Ginta	17
S, Š		Vilde, Sniedze	108
Šabanovs, Jānis	12	Vilka, Ilze	114
Šāberte, Laura	18	Vilks, Andrejs	51
Šarķe, Linda	15	W	
Sauka, Anne	21	Wan, Fangliang	11
Secklehner, Julia	2	Z, Ž	
Sevelovs, Deniss Aleksandrs	76	Žabicka, Anna	25
Sharshenova, Aijan	115	Zabuha, Yuliiia	55
Shramko, Sabriie	103	Zakutajeva, Tatjana	101
Siders, Emīls Georgs	34, 43	Zalāne, Sintija	68
Sileniece, Liga	46	Zalostiba, Diana	32
Šime, Zane	84	Zariņš, Kristaps	34, 43
Simonaitė, Ineta	7	Zemīte, Laila	32
Skestere, Lasma	78	Zidens, Janis	111
Skulte, Ilva	77	Ziemane, Ilze	60
Slavinska, Andreta	15	Zyberaj, Jonada	20

Authors ORCID list

Agapova, Olena	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1024-0238
Albrecht, Jan	https://orcid.org/0009-0001-9124-9308
Appelgren, Staffan	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8945-6757
Apsītis, Allars	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8363-6981
Atstaja, Dzintra	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9411-7212
Babanina, Viktoria	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4173-488X
Balcytiene, Aukse	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3358-7912
Balode, Aiga	https://orcid.org/0009-0001-7949-8002
Berzina, Ieva	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2199-8212
Bērziņa-Čerenkova, Una	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1640-7353
Bīķe, Anete	https://orcid.org/0009-0009-0992-2224
Birka, Ieva	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4453-7825
Bite, Dina	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1589-3676
Blumfelde-Rutka, Kristīne	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4657-3790
Bohlin, Anna	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0396-7252
Bollettin, Paride	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3487-3315
Bormane, Santa	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1205-1599
Briuks, Gustavs	https://orcid.org/0009-0009-1733-3673
Brizga, Jānis	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9022-0354
Broka, Sintija	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8711-1894
Bukovskis, Kārlis	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4565-334X
Cassa, Maria Giovanna	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8619-849X
Cepurītis, Māris	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9225-5152
Cherniavskiy, Serhii	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2711-3828
Ciekurs, Rafaels	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8109-1087
De Cristofano, Riccardo	https://orcid.org/0009-0005-2644-5846
Dinsberga, Jolanta	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3503-9151
Djubina, Jelena	https://orcid.org/0009-0009-1424-9257
Donane, Laine	https://orcid.org/0009-0002-0972-215X
Dūda, Dana	https://orcid.org/0009-0001-2561-6114
Eglaja, Liene	https://orcid.org/0009-0009-5735-3898
Fernandes, Sandra	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3994-6915
Gagunovs, Romāns	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1002-8934
Gailume-Zohara, Zanda	https://orcid.org/0009-0007-7685-4247
Grasis, Janis	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1394-9958
Grikis, Ricards	https://orcid.org/0009-0000-0242-8826
Grīnfelde, Māra	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3172-5560
Gutorova, Nataliya	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2485-0651
Halilaj, Belinda	https://orcid.org/0009-0008-3794-9195
Harro-Loit, Halliki	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7375-5063
Hoxhaj, Oljana	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6864-780X
Ikonomi, Ergysa	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8071-4916
Juan García, Ana	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5988-0490
Juberte Krūmiņa, Lita	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7330-6391
Jurčenko, Anna	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0243-6700
Kale, Maija	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6951-9009

Kalinina, Alina	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8015-0807
Kamenecka-Usova, Marina	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6040-8874
Kipāne, Aldona	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6408-3456
Klavins, Didzis	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9096-6719
Kleinberga, Vineta	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7819-5790
Krivins, Anatolijs	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1764-4091
Kudeikina, Inga	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7895-4264
Kukaine, Jana	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6099-1852
Kurbatovs, Artūrs	https://orcid.org/0009-0002-5016-8453
Kuzņecova, Kristīne	https://orcid.org/0009-0002-0132-4480
Lagzdina, Erika	https://orcid.org/0009-0008-5542-6240
Lakševics, Kārlis	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6674-1931
Lāma, Elza	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9271-3862
Lang, Martin	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7127-3100
Livdanska, Beate	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8243-1434
Luika, Signe	https://orcid.org/0009-0003-3809-2406
Lukashenko, Alona	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3781-7041
Lūse, Agita	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8896-0297
Ma, Huidi	https://orcid.org/0009-0002-6930-1736
Martinsone-Ozoliņa, Laura	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3557-5168
Matešs, Artūrs	https://orcid.org/0009-0005-5400-2081
Misane, Agita	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8350-6386
Morell, Marc	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2190-0107
Muraru-Klucica, Julija	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8278-0642
Mykhailichenko, Tetiana	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4668-3375
Neimanis, Jānis	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2644-6014
Niehaus, Isak	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9573-0238
Nikers, Olevs	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1732-8075
Osis, Martins	https://orcid.org/0009-0009-5034-944X
Özcoşkun, Dilge	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0894-6584
Palkova, Aleksandra	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1144-9674
Plakans, Peteris	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9972-7215
Reine, Agnese	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8222-8281
Rozentāle, Lelde	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7279-4960
Rožukalne, Anda	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5474-4222
Rudnyeva, Oleksandra	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1190-2352
Šabanovs, Jānis	https://orcid.org/0009-0009-7199-2098
Šāberte, Laura	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3712-5419
Šarķe, Linda	https://orcid.org/0009-0005-3240-2893
Sauka, Anne	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3743-0413
Secklehner, Julia	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9239-9519
Sevelovs, Deniss Aleksandrs	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5634-0552
Sharshenova, Aijan	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3008-0091
Shramko, Sabriie	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4453-9118
Siders, Emīls Georgs	https://orcid.org/0009-0004-2084-8145
Sileniece, Liga	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8944-3403
Šīme, Zane	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4690-3243
Skestere, Lasma	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1761-5004

Skulte, Ilva	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4589-6600
Slavinska, Andreta	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9557-6704
Stakle, Alnis	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0962-0076
Stecenko, Ieva	https://orcid.org/0009-0009-2022-1402
Strmiska, Michael	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8698-907X
Tarasova, Dace	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0524-4285
Tiunčika, Lāsma	https://orcid.org/0009-0004-8704-7270
Valdmanis, Gunars	https://orcid.org/0009-0005-0602-3814
Vasilevska, Sandra	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9439-7851
Vēgners, Uldis	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5478-5227
Veilande, Olga	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2688-652X
Vilde, Sniedze	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9372-9591
Vilka, Ilze	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8410-4648
Wan, Fangliang	https://orcid.org/0009-0005-6874-318X
Žabicka, Anna	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0051-7379
Zabuha, Yuliia	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1805-515X
Zalāne, Sintija	https://orcid.org/0009-0004-1574-6101
Zariņš, Kristaps	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0492-1336
Zemīte, Laila	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9672-1969
Zidens, Janis	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8244-4451
Zyberaj, Jonada	https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5762-9422

Rīga Stradiņš University 4th International Interdisciplinary Conference
PLACES, 26–28 March 2025:
Abstracts. Rīga: RSU, i–viii p., 125 p., including Author Index.
<https://doi.org/10.25143/rw2025.places.abstracts-book>

Chair of the Steering Committee
Dr. phil. Agrita Kiopa

Chair of the Scientific Committee
Prof. Aivars Lejnieks

Authors are responsible for the content of their abstracts.

© Rīga Stradiņš University, 2025
16 Dzirciema Street, Rīga, LV 1007

ISBN 978-9934-618-70-3 (electronic)