

**Fourth ERUA Annual Summit 2024**

# Social Innovations for Transformative Society

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# Abstracts

**Day 2 – 26 June 2024**

# Contents

<i>Room: L-101</i>	09:00–10:30	<b>ERUA WP6 Workshop on relevant social challenges and business opportunities (I)</b> .....	4
<i>Room: L-102</i>	09:00–10:30	<b>Innovative Strategies and Tools for Social and Socio-Economic Economic Transformation (I)</b> .....	11
<i>Room: I-407</i>	9:00–10:30	<b>Artistic Innovations in Cultural and Social Integration (I)</b> .....	14
<i>Room: I-414</i>	9:00–10:30	<b>Transformative Support for Vulnerable groups</b> .....	17
<i>Room: II-230</i>	9:00–10:30	<b>ERUA students' voice (I)</b> .....	22
<i>Room: I-201</i>	11:00–12:30	<b>The Power of Migration Narratives: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives</b> .....	25
<i>Room: L-102</i>	11:00–12:30	<b>Innovative Strategies and tools for Social and Socio-Economic Transformation (II)</b> .....	29
<i>Room: I-407</i>	11:00–12:30	<b>Artistic Innovations in Cultural and Social Integration (II)</b> .....	33
<i>Room: I-414</i>	11:00–12:30	<b>Promoting Gender Equality and Diversity in Education and Society</b> .....	37
<i>Room: II-230</i>	11:00–12:30	<b>ERUA students' voice (II)</b> .....	40
<i>Room: L-101</i>	14:00–15:30	<b>Decoding public trust and science communication in the digital age (I)</b> .....	44
<i>Room: I-201</i>	14:00–15:30	<b>Solutions for Countering Migration Mis(dis)information and Enhancing Public Discourse</b> .....	49
<i>Room: L-102</i>	14:00–15:30	<b>Transformative Legal Approaches to Family and Property Protection</b> .....	52
<i>Room: I-407</i>	14:00–15:30	<b>Advancing Environmental Sustainability (I)</b> .....	57

<i>Room: I-414</i>	14:00–15:30	<b>Intercultural Competence and Educational Transformation .....</b>	<b>60</b>
<i>Room: L-101</i>	15:45–17:30	<b>Decoding public trust and science communication in the digital age (II) .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<i>Room: I-201</i>	15:45–17:30	<b>MIGRATION: Integrating Refugees: Strategies, Challenges, and Support Systems .....</b>	<b>69</b>
<i>Room: L-102</i>	15:45–17:30	<b>Evolving Democracies: Challenges and Opportunities .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<i>Room: I-407</i>	15:45–17:30	<b>Advancing Environmental Sustainability (II) .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<i>Room: I-414</i>	15:45–17:00	<b>Digital technology's Role in Sustainable Well-being .....</b>	<b>81</b>

## Room: L-101

# 09:00 – 10:30 | ERUA WP6 Workshop on relevant social challenges and business opportunities (I)

*Fostering Social Innovations Through Interdisciplinary and Democratized Education: Two Case Studies in Action*

*Keywords: interdisciplinary learning; economics; entrepreneurship; Literanomics; Game of Business*

*Elena Spasova, Eduard Marinov, New Bulgarian University*

In today's rapidly evolving world, the need for innovative approaches to education and skill development has never been more pressing. This abstract presents two compelling case studies – “Literanomics” and “Game of Business” that exemplify how interdisciplinary education and pedagogical innovation could contribute to nurturing ecosystems for social innovations thus creating a pathway to transform both education and society.

Drawing from the intersection of literature, economics, and entrepreneurship, these initiatives exemplify the transformative potential of inclusive cross-disciplinary collaboration and democratized student-centred skill development.

The first case study – “Literanomics”, delves into an interdisciplinary seminar bringing together economics and literature students and representatives of the academia from Paris 8, NBU and the University of the Aegean to discuss, stimulate and generate ideas on the intersection between economics and literature and explore their common ground. The idea for this initiative was generated within the first Early career researchers' workshop in WP2 “Re-imagining higher education and research” of ERUA, and was developed and carried out as a traveling seminar under ERUA WP3 in April 2023. By engaging students from diverse academic backgrounds, Literanomics aimed to dissect human nature, behaviour, and motivations through a cross-disciplinary lens. This initiative underscores the importance of understanding societal complexities and fostering critical thinking skills essential for social innovation. Through interactive lectures, discussions, and collaborative projects, Literanomics provided a platform for students to explore the interplay between economic principles and literary narratives, fostering a deeper understanding of the human experience and its implications for social change.

The second case study introduces a gamified entrepreneurship platform designed to democratize entrepreneurship education and catalyze social change. Unlike traditional approaches that cater primarily to economics and entrepreneurship majors, this platform presents entrepreneurship as a universal skill accessible to all. Developed within the framework of the “Game of Business: Simulation Environment for Entrepreneurial Education” project (under Erasmus+), this platform integrates interactive modules and real-world simulations to provide students with essential entrepreneurial skills and foster a mindset of innovation and resilience. By gamifying the learning process, the platform breaks down barriers to entry and empowers individuals from non-professional backgrounds to develop entrepreneurial mindsets and skills. Through customizable modules and adaptive learning pathways, students are equipped with the knowledge and confidence to pursue entrepreneurial ventures, regardless of their academic background or prior experience.

Both initiatives embody principles of openness, transferability, interdisciplinary collaboration, multiculturalism and multilingualism making knowledge and skills accessible to a broader audience. By fostering inclusive learning environments and promoting active engagement,

these initiatives serve as microcosms within the university ecosystem, nurturing creativity, collaboration, and innovation essential for fostering social innovations. Through a critical examination of these case studies, we aim to contribute to the ongoing dialogue on the role of universities in shaping a resilient and adaptive society driven by social innovations. We argue that, by leveraging innovative pedagogical approaches and embracing diverse perspectives, universities can play a pivotal role in shaping a future where social innovation thrives and addresses the pressing challenges of our time.

## Social business transformation: a partnership model between business, society and university

*Keywords: social business, social challenges, Lithuanian NGOs*

*Miglė Černikováitė and Žaneta Karazijienė, Mykolas Romeris University*

In recent years, as the need for economic prosperity and social security has grown in countries, social business has become an increasingly important tool for bridging the gap between government, business and society, providing opportunities to efficiently meet social needs and address societal challenges (Gineitienė & Žiogelytė, 2010, Simanavičius et al., 2021). The greatest potential for social business is in the case of economic entities engaged in economic-commercial activities that are involved in charity, aid or social responsibility initiatives, as they invest part of their profits in social causes, but in a different form (Jakubavičius, Leichteris & Stumbrytė, 2016).

According to Bartkutė & Skeriuviene (2022), Lithuania is currently facing several social challenges. One of the main problems is related to migration and refugees. The influx of refugees and migrants has strained the country's resources and infrastructure, creating a need for innovative solutions to integrate these people into society. Democracy, human rights and gender equality are also concerns. As the country works towards a more inclusive and equal society, partnerships between social enterprises, universities and the public sector are needed to ensure equal opportunities for all members of society. Another pressing issue is environmental change and environmental, social and economic sustainability. Lithuania faces challenges related to pollution, deforestation and climate change, and business needs to develop sustainable environments and technologies to address these issues (Bartkutė & Skeriuviene, 2022).

Each of these challenges requires a combination of business opportunities, societal needs and the knowledge of members of the university community. This requires the development of a collaborative model that responds to the needs of social service users. For example, in the case of migrants and refugees, businesses could focus on providing language training, skills training and cultural integration programmes developed by university communities. In addressing issues of environmental

sustainability, there are opportunities for businesses to develop renewable energy sources, green products and waste management solutions in consultation with scientists from different disciplines. Finally, in the pursuit of democracy, human rights and gender equality, businesses could focus on diversity and inclusion in the workplace, promoting human rights and supporting marginalised communities (Pušinaityė, Pučėtaityė & Novelskaitė, 2019). Social business could ensure diversity by providing internships for students of different nationalities, which would bring about a change in the internal culture of the company.

Social entrepreneurship requires entrepreneurial, economic and financial competences, which allow not only to effectively manage the finances of a social enterprise, but also to choose an appropriate organisational structure, sources of funding, etc. (Borzaga et al., 2021, Bartkutė & Skeriuviene, 2022). This ambition requires social entrepreneurs not only to have competences in the provision of social services, but also relevant knowledge in marketing, product or service design and economics. This knowledge is often lacking, as social enterprises are often founded by individuals who have gained experience in the NGO sector rather than in the business sector. The impact of Lithuanian NGOs in addressing social problems is currently minimal due to lack of funding and volatility, and they only get involved when the problem has escalated. In addition, Lithuanian NGOs do not show a willingness to cooperate and centralise the provision of social services. The potential of this sector to become social entrepreneurs would be enhanced by strengthening the entrepreneurial skills of NGOs through the involvement of members of university communities. social needs and addressing societal problems (Simanavičius et al., 2021).

Therefore, addressing these challenges through social business and this model of partnership between business, society and the university would have the potential to have a positive impact on Lithuanian society and economy.

## 09:00 – 10:30 | Migration Governance and Legal Standards in Modern Europe

This panel session addresses contemporary challenges in migration governance, focusing on innovative governance strategies, the reconciliation of migration and asylum laws with human rights standards, the impact of migration on public security.

### Nurturing innovations in migration governance: Critique Guided Designing

*Norbert Cyrus (European University Viadrina)*

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As the current debates on and practices of migration governance indicate, nativist sentiments challenge established human rights and humanitarian standards of refugee protection and migration governance. Framing migration as threat and disorder, the erection of walls and fences and the policing of mobility appears for many voters as the only realistic and feasible policy response.

However, the idea to coerce “safe, orderly and regular migration” is as unreliable as the idea to realize at once and without prior institutional changes “migration without borders”. In terms of political decision making, the governance of migration is a wicked problem causing policy dilemmas (Bauböck et al.). One factor that contributes to the appeal of coercive and restrictionist agendas is the lack of convincing alternative policy options. This is the starting point for the presentation of Critique Guided Designing (CGD) as a mission-oriented research approach addressing migration policy dilemmas and breeding innovative policy options for envisioned changes (Watzlawick).

CGD resonates with current trends in political sciences to analyse and improve policy making with a design perspective. At the heart of policy design is the formulation of policy alternatives that can achieve government objectives and the idea that a formulation process that is capable of doing this is the most effective approach (Howle & Mukherjee). CGD emphasizes that the process of formulating and designing alternative possibilities for migration governance should combine an utopia as a method (Levinas) approach aiming to breed desirable socio-technical futures (Jasanoff) with systematically and iteratively collecting and grappling with reservations that cast doubts on the practical feasibility, political acceptability and ethical preferability of ideas about preferred futures (Weber). CGD starts from the premise that the ability to construct and challenge utopian visions is paramount to democratic debates. Even when the vision of idealized social futures may never come to be, their utopian lineage must nevertheless be made clear to comprehend fully their potential implications (Couton & Lopez).

Within this line, CGD implies five steps: (1) As first step, CGD turns to a concrete and researchable migration policy issue, analyses its features in a future-oriented manner with the aim to point out the range of possible policy options, and subsequently formulates the blue-print of a preferable future.

For this purpose, CGD systematically borrows inspiration and continue from a collection of already developed, more or less utopian ideas. Taking the example of international refugee protection, ideas range from a preference to provide care for refugees in close vicinity to their place of origin (UNHCR) to responsibility sharing in international refugee protection (Schuck), Charter Cities (Romer), Refugia (Castles/Van Hear), the World Parliament of Mayors (Barber) or scenarios of Migration without Borders (Pecoud/Guchtheneire), to mention a few. At this stage, the formulation of a not-yet realized policy option as preferred future serves the main purpose to evoke critique and reservations and initiate a process of iterative deliberation (Benhabib). (2) In a second design step, reservations are systematically collected through imply literature review, interviews, group discussions or focus groups. This stage serves the purpose to identify and map all kinds of possible and impossible arguments raised against the stage-first imagination of a preferred future. The leading question is: What prevents the realization of the imagined preferred future? (3) In a third step, the reservations are classified and ordered with respect to the epistemic status of evidence base and plausability. It is sufficient to distinguish reservations that express affective pleas and mobilise emotions without evidence base; fact-claiming statements subject to evidence-based falsification test; and concerns regarding possible future impacts which can be subject to complexity-sensitive plausibility checks. (4) As fourth step, CGD deals seriously with critique and utilizes the critical spirit and energy for an improvement and re-design of the first-stage proposal. As a consequence, the initially addressed issue will be probably divided in a bundle of inter-related smaller-scale issues each requiring a tailor-made design. The finally proposed alternatives consists of nuanced and concrete formulations of possible policy options that can be incrementally implemented. (5) In a last step, designers engage in the translation of possibilities into incremental politics. The realization of envisioned changes is a political decision and depends on the support of stakeholders and uptake of political core actors (Hadj Abdou & Pe rachin). Social scientists critically engaged in migration issues face serious problems to make their voice heard and to sell their ideas to

politicians (Scholten). One reason for the mismatch is that policy decision making demand knowledge in the special form of expertise complying with an contextually expected level of epistemic and social robustness (Nowotny). CGD aims to provide expertise on preferable futures as well for political core actors as for other stakeholder.

In a nutshell, the idea of Critique Guided Designing is an innovative idea that provides an methodological approach (not only) for a knowledge ecosystem nurturing alternative policy options in migration governance. So what would be the outcome of a Critique Guided Designing of a network establishing an ERUA Innovation Lab?

## Reconciling new concepts of migration and asylum law with human rights standards in contemporary Europe

*Keywords: EU Asylum and Migration Pact; migration; asylum; instrumentalization of migrants; fiction of non-entry; EU pre-screening; external processing of asylum applications*

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*Evelina Staikova-Mileva*

*Deyana Marcheva (New Bulgarian University)*

Migration and asylum law have faced constant developments in the past decade in the European Union (EU), both at the Union and the Member States' (MSs) national legislation, frequently influenced by migration crises and populist political preferences. The challenges that the European states faced during the 2015 migration crisis prompted revision of the existing and emergence of new legal instruments. The new EU Asylum and Migration Pact (Pact) adopted in April 2024 envisages a major reform that aims to prevent migrants from reaching and crossing the EU external borders. The new EU policy relies on pre-entry screening, introducing registration, security and health checks, as well as fingerprinting, as well as legal concepts, such as 'non-entry fiction', 'instrumentalization of migrants' and others, that will have a significant impact on the status of protection seekers and migrants in Europe and beyond. Some of these have already received extensive criticism by academia, international organisations and NGOs as concerns upholding adequate human rights standards at European borders. These concepts need to be addressed, explained and unpacked for the Member States to embark on their proper implementation to reach the objectives of the new Pact without violating human rights standards and the rule of law. Besides the Pact and the national legal developments in several countries (e.g. Denmark, UK) demonstrate the emergence of new mechanisms (e.g. 'external processing of asylum cases') that could pave its way to European level.

The contribution aims to present a planned research idea, which focuses on the clarification of selected concepts and instruments from the new Pact that have not been established at doctrinal level, including 'non-entry fiction', 'instrumentalization of migrants' and 'external processing of asylum cases'. It will discuss and reveal their content, mutual correlations and place in the international law system, as well as the extent to which such legal concepts could be reconciled with human rights standards. Their analysis so far has been limited or fragmented, as the adoption of the Pact took place only in 2024.

Migration is increasingly being instrumentalized at the European Union's external borders. In February 2020, the Turkish government sent over 13 000 people to its border with Greece. In May 2021, Morocco permitted the irregular entry of 10 000 people into Ceuta over two days. Instrumentalization practices also became relevant for Lithuania in 2021 with the

escalation of emergency at the Lithuanian-Belarus border and other states (e.g., in Finland in 2023). Those examples from recent years have triggered the EU to search for special instruments to address future situations that could threaten its external borders. The new Pact lays down the derogations from the EU asylum law that Member States can apply when confronted with the instrumentalization of migration.

The current proposal aims to enhance the academic debate on the content of the new concepts and the effect of actual norms on the MSs (a few academic contributions based on 2020 version of the Pact are: Omnia blog (2020) and collective monograph by Daniel Thym (eds.) 2022). The proposed input will thus contribute to the scientific discourse on the new concepts of EU migration and asylum law related to the recent policy reform. It will further provide an academic input into the preparation for implementation of the new legislative developments at EU and Member States's level. In June 2024, the European Commission will propose the implementation plan for the new Pact through Communication to serve as a guide for the MSs on their national implementation plans. Scientific proposals on the risks and solutions of the Pact's implementation at MSs level, and on clarification of the content of the new notions is therefore very relevant. Furthermore, the MSs will also need to elaborate national strategies as a basis for a 5-year European Asylum and Migration Management Strategy, to be drawn up by the EC within 18 months from entry into force of the new rules (Commission Communication, 2024). In this context, bringing an academic view point to the debate could be useful in the process of preparation for implementation of the Pact and/or the upcoming strategic policy framework.

The proposed analysis takes an innovative approach that contextualizes the legal position beyond legislation and jurisprudence and places it in a broader interdisciplinary dimension. This methodological choice is driven by a profound understanding of the intricate interplay between policy making and implementation and their profound impact on the concept and implementation of asylum, migration dynamics, and public sentiment. The significance of this approach lies in its potential to enrich the academic debate and inform policy decisions.

The topic of the presentation falls within two of the ERUA thematic areas: (a) Navigating the Complexities of Migration, Exile, and Refugees; and (b) Democracy, Human Rights, Inclusion and Gender Equality.

Keywords: EU Asylum and Migration Pact; migration; asylum; instrumentalization of migrants; fiction of non-entry; EU pre-screening; external processing of asylum applications.

## Migration as a Challenge for contemporary public security: Lithuanian case

*Danguolė Seniutiene (Mykolas Romeris University).*

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Migration and security (human security) is not a new idea but it has remarkable revival in last decade and especially in last few years. In the policy world, human rights and human security are the two frameworks that most reinforce each other. The human security approach shares with human rights concerns for protecting freedom, enhancing opportunities, but additionally puts focus on protection from critical and pervasive threats.

## Irregular migrants in Lithuania in the context of the readmission agreements

*Anzelika Baneviciene (Mykolas Romeris University)*

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Due to the Lithuanian “push back” policy, the number of persons illegally crossing the Lithuanian-Belarusian border is decreasing. However, irregular migration remains significant in Lithuania. Migrants who illegally cross the EU border in Latvia use Lithuania as a transit country to reach other EU countries. Such migrants found in Lithuania are returned to Latvia following the readmission agreement. Under the readmission agreement with Latvia, Latvia has to accept an irregular migrant without formalities when it can be proven or there is a reason to believe that the person entered Lithuania from Latvia. In the same way, irregular migrants who crossed the Lithuanian-Belarusian border and fled to other EU countries are returned to Lithuania.

Readmission processes are carried out in accordance with agreements between states and EU law, particularly the Dublin III Regulation and Directive 2008/115/EC, which regulates which state is most suitable for requests for asylum and other related issues.

Dublin III Regulation establishes criteria and mechanisms for EU Member States to examine asylum applications. A migrant may be returned to the country where they previously applied for asylum. Before that, the migrant must be interviewed, and a decision must be made on return. The interview must be in a language that the migrant understands. An interpreter should be ensured for those who do not understand the language. Interviews should be in conditions that ensure appropriate confidentiality. Migrant and legal advisors must have time to familiarise themselves with the document. When a child is involved, his best interest should be ensured. The child must have a qualified representative in the procedures. The procedure must ensure the fulfilment of the right to appeal against a transfer decision before a court within a reasonable period of time. The courts could have the right to apply interim measures to suspend the transfer until the decision is taken. The authorities involved in organising the transfer of migrants should obey court decisions.

A member state cannot hold an irregular migrant in detention only because he/she is subject to the return/transfer procedure. The migrant should be detained only when, based on an individual assessment, there is a significant risk of absconding, and only in so far as detention is proportional and other less coercive alternative measures cannot be applied effectively. Detention should be for as short a period.

Directive 2008/115/EC define common standards and procedures in member states for returning illegally staying third-country nationals. It specifies that in bilateral or multilateral

agreements, more favourable provisions regarding the return of irregular migrants could be established.

When assessing the situation, questions arise as to how the rights of irregular migrants are ensured during readmission proceedings. What legal status do these migrants have in Lithuania? Do Lithuanian authority's actions comply with international obligations and EU law?

While analysing the situation in Lithuania, it should be noted that reception conditions for irregular migrants who were returned from other EU member states to Lithuania are more favourable than those who were intercepted in Lithuania when crossing Lithuania as a transit country. Those who have been returned to Lithuania can enjoy proper accommodation

in the Foreigners registration centre in Pabrade and have ensured most of the rights foreseen in international and EU laws. Whereas those irregular migrants who were intercepted in Lithuania have completely different conditions. They are not given the opportunity to apply for asylum. Legal acts allow not to register the asylum requests of such persons. Even information about the number of such migrants publicly is not available. Information on whether these people apply for asylum and whether their requests are responded to is not collected. It is not known whether the obligation to explain the asylum application procedure is followed in cases where there are indications that a migrant may wish to apply for asylum. The access to a lawyer is not guaranteed to them. No one has access to such irregular migrants (or to information about them). They are often detained incommunicado based on administrative decisions until handed over to Latvian border guards. Volunteers of NGOs such as the Lithuanian Red Cross are not allowed to contact these migrants; they can monitor living conditions and communicate with asylum seekers only. Migrants are accommodated at border checkpoints of the State Border Guard Service and usually cannot communicate with border guards in languages they understand. Their vulnerability is not assessed. The best interest of the child is not ensured, and other.

Such a situation clearly shows that the fundamental rights of these persons are not ensured. Urgent implementation of new measures should be at national and EU levels.

At the conference, the analysis of the situation and ideas for improvement will be presented and discussed.

## Room: L-102

### **09:00 – 10:30** | Innovative Strategies and Tools for Social and Socio-Economic Economic Transformation (I)

This session examines innovative approaches to driving social and socio-economic change, including the role of legal design, the influence of philosophical ideas on social inclusion, the transformation of social business through different partnerships, sustainable innovations in business management.

## Legal design as an indicator of social change (through design)

*Keywords: Legal design, social change, communication, Legal tech*

*Mariusz Wszolek (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities)*

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In the literature on the subject, legal design is primarily perceived as a graphic tool for obtaining more readable and accessible legal documents. In this article, I take up a polemic with this approach, pointing out that legal design can be an important indicator of social change. Through the use of inclusive, participatory and social design methods, legal design - as well as other examples of incorporating non-design areas of the market into the area of design thinking - allows for the decentralization and democratization of design techniques on the way to social and environmental sustainability.

## How reflecting on the ideas of ancient philosophers can be a new way to increase social inclusion and make social change?

*Rasa Rudaitiene, Mykolas Romeris University*

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The reflections of ancient philosophers on existential questions can be a valuable tool for better social inclusion and fostering community. By reviewing what was relevant thousands of years ago, we can gain insights into questions about beauty, love, inspiration, the meaning of life, pain, and fear. These insights can inform our understanding of how to address these issues in the modern context. A number of scientific sources study the attitude of different social groups, different ages, different genders, and different professions to the functioning of society, mutual aid, cooperation, structures and self-organisation. This qualitative research adds to existing knowledge with new insights into possible new ways to promote social inclusion and community. Using scientific methods to organise the research, we focus on practical application – the turn of the society and the scientific community from the search for differences towards commonalities. The research sample consisted of 20 individuals, with no control for gender, age, place of residence or education. For example, a teenager who is severely disabled, a pensioner born in exile, a middle-aged circus therapist, a nature guide exploring Lapland, etc. All informants were asked the same questions about current problems and were encouraged to reflect on their personal experiences. The aim of the research was to provide a comprehensive overview of the modern world as a place and time. By analysing the interview data, we strived to identify the connections between the different approaches to existential and everyday matters presented by the research participants. The study revealed that despite the demographic differences, the study participants had more in common than might have been assumed before the study began. There were similarities in the approach to the meaning of life, love and inspiration. There were also similarities in the field of perception of beauty. Meanwhile, coping options differed due to real-world experience. This research represents a new and innovative approach based on a scientific methodology to facilitate communication and understanding between different social groups, to create a common language and to gain a deeper, more constructive mutual knowledge and community building.

## Social business transformation: a partnership model between business, society and university

*Keywords: social business, social challenges, Lithuanian NGOs*

*Miglė Eleonora Cernikovaite and Zaneta Karazijiene, Mykolas Romeris University*

In recent years, as the need for economic prosperity and social security has grown in countries, social business has become an increasingly important tool for bridging the gap between government, business and society, providing opportunities to efficiently meet social needs and address societal challenges (Gineitienė & Žiogelytė, 2010, Simanavičius et al., 2021). The greatest potential for social business is in the case of economic entities engaged in economic-commercial activities that are involved in charity, aid or social responsibility initiatives, as they invest part of their profits in social causes, but in a different form (Jakubavičius, Leichteris & Stumbrytė, 2016).

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Each of these challenges requires a combination of business opportunities, societal needs and the knowledge of members of the university community. This requires the development of a collaborative model that responds to the needs of social service users. For example, in the case of migrants and refugees, businesses could focus on providing language training, skills training and cultural integration programmes developed by university communities. In addressing issues of environmental sustainability, there are opportunities for businesses to develop renewable energy sources, green products and waste management solutions in consultation with scientists from different disciplines. Finally, in the pursuit of democracy, human rights and gender equality, businesses could focus on diversity and inclusion in the workplace, promoting human rights and supporting marginalised communities (Pušinitė, Pučėtaitė & Novelskaitė, 2019). Social business could ensure diversity by providing internships for students of different nationalities, which would bring about a change in the internal culture of the company.

Social entrepreneurship requires entrepreneurial, economic and financial competences, which allow not only to effectively manage the finances of a social enterprise, but also to choose an appropriate organisational structure, sources of funding, etc. (Borzaga et al., 2021, Bartkutė & Skeriuviene, 2022). This ambition requires social entrepreneurs not only to have competences in the provision of social services, but also relevant knowledge in marketing, product or service design and economics. This knowledge is often lacking, as social enterprises are often founded by individuals who have gained experience in the NGO sector rather than in the business sector. The impact of Lithuanian NGOs in addressing social problems is currently minimal due to lack of funding and volatility, and they only get involved when the problem has escalated. In addition, Lithuanian NGOs do not show a willingness to cooperate and centralise the provision of social services. The

potential of this sector to become social entrepreneurs would be enhanced by strengthening the entrepreneurial skills of NGOs through the involvement of members of university communities. social needs and addressing societal problems (Simanavičius et al., 2021).

Therefore, addressing these challenges through social business and this model of partnership between business, society and the university would have the potential to have a positive impact on Lithuanian society and economy.

## Room: I-407

### 09:00 – 10:30 | Artistic Innovations in Cultural and Social Integration (I)

This session explores the role of art in cultural and social integration, focusing on film festivals, virtual reality meditation, traditional crafts, and the use of museums and land art to foster social cohesion and sustainability.

#### **Imagining creative research: the function of art in the creation of intercultural participatory spaces and times**

*Keywords: Creativity, Intercultural Dialogue, Transcultural Knowledge, Languages, Community Ties*  
*Rosita Deluigi (University of Macerata)*

The close link between artistic-relational languages and the promotion of inter-transcultural dialogue and participatory communities requires a positioning of research in active, collective and interdisciplinary paradigms.

The role of art will be placed at the centre of the reflection and methodologies presented, with reference to practices implemented in European project, will be oriented to discover, value e promote the importance of plural narratives. The proposal will explore the function of art as an intercultural language, full of nuances and focused on the creation of participatory spaces and times and on the promotion of inclusive environments.

The use of art as a way of soliciting community participation is a dimension to be explored for its educational-pedagogical value and for its implications in the promotion of supportive communities, open to dialogue, inclusion and the redefinition of

collective paradigms. The intervention thematises the use of creative processes in: (a) designing qualitative participatory pedagogical research; (b) developing creative interventions and practices in formal and non-formal educational contexts; (c) collecting feedback from all the actors involved in the creative processes; (d) valorising the outcomes of what has been learnt in

the creative and participatory processes put in place (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008; Knowles & Cole, 2008; Leavy, 2017; McNiff, 1998).

Structuring the same research in a creative key requires the use of several languages, starting with those of the subject-interlocutors in the socio-educational field. This makes it possible not to overlook the different peculiarities and communicative modes of the contexts. This necessitates the deconstruction and decentralisation of knowledge, in favour of a renewed vision of science and knowledge that questions and gives voice to subjects, even and especially those considered and/or labelled as marginalised, excluded, oppressed and deviant.

Utilizing a range of imaginative and varied linguistic expressions carries profound implications for enhancing the educational journey. In the process of thinking and imagination, it is not possible to distinguish where the role of the image ends and that of the word begins (Ciarcià, Dallari, 2020). Consequently, the integration of creative and diverse languages in educational contexts fosters the collaborative construction of shared knowledge. Here, artistic practices emerge as vehicles to encounter otherness, as highlighted by Bourriaud (2010).

The fusion of visual and verbal languages not only facilitates the collective construction of knowledge but also unveils a plethora of representations and perspectives. Dallari (2018) underscores that the interplay between words and images entails interpretative processes, shedding light on the absence of a singular 'correct' way to portray something and emphasizing the existence of an expansive realm of limitless possibilities.

In this way, artistic and creative languages can amplify the value of complex societies capable of reconstituting social ties and solidarity, increasing the desire to co-construct knowledge based on plural canons and interpretations. In this sense, horizons of interest are opened up that interconnect differences, highlighting common transversalities, without reducing them to homogeneity, but opening up to creative productions and community ties (Deluigi, Cuccu & Mondin, 2023; Machová & Deluigi, 2022).

## **Does the meditation in virtual reality with artistic work could reduce fear and anxiety?**

*Monika Pudło (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities)*

*Anna Wójcik-Tepper (Maria Grzegorzewska University)*

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The Melius virtual reality experience (VR) is the result of the artistic work of Dr. Anna Wójcik, who aims to immerse herself in a personal inner world using aesthetic sensation and breathing techniques. The VR technology allows for strong and fast immersion, whereby the viewer of the artwork cuts himself off from external stimuli which facilitates entering a state of relaxation. Looking becomes a process that leads to change. The application of scientific research methodology will show , if the Melius application enables relaxation and whether it can reduce anxiety and stress level. The research is also an

invitation to the audience to participate in the development of the work. During the presentation, I will present the process of creating a project that combines new media art with psychological research methodology developed by Dr. Monika Pudło. We will present primary results of the study participants of the study (n=30).

Participants were asked to fill Generalised Anxiety Disorder Assessment(GAD-7) and State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) questionnaire, and Formal Characteristics of Behaviour-Temperament Questionnaire revised version a few days ahead of meditation in Melius application In VR. The meditation in Melius VR were scheduled for 40 minutes as an appointment at SWPS University or Maria Grzegorzewska University. After the meditation during the meeting participants were asked to fill the questionnaire of immersive and virtual experiences in meditation, in which we asked participants how they perceived they experience and the emotions accompanying these experiences created by Monika Pudło and STAI (the part regarding anxiety as a trait). The aim of the study was to answer on the following research questions:

1. Does abstract immersive images could be perceived as relaxing and supporting breathing meditation?
2. Does the level of relaxation in the condition with voice guided meditation vs. No guided voice meditation with VR
3. Does meditation in Melius application could decrease fear level?
4. Does the level of satisfaction with Melius experience and the level of anxiety after the Melius experience is related to temperament traits , such as sensory sensitivity and emotional reactivity according to the Regulative Theory of Temperament.

## Museums and Land art: Innovative approaches for a sustainable future

*Yoanna Nencheva, Teodora Nancheva, Metodi Metodiev and Desislava Dankova, New Bulgarian University*

We would like to present two joint initiatives of NBU and Paris 8 that include professors and students from the field of Arts and Humanities - The first is traveling seminar in Paris: "The social role of the museum" (13-18 May) and the second is a climate preservation summer school in Lozenets on the Black Sea (26-31 May) aimed to raise awareness on the preservation of wildlife "Save Koral". We would like to present the two initiatives and then to propose a systematic approach that can be developed in the future in our Alliance.

The seminar in Paris focuses on the institution of the Museum as a harbinger of social awareness and sustainable future. It explores both the role of the exhibitions, the type of the public and the complexity of the museum space. On the other hand the project in Koral is a more practically oriented event of the making of a land art exhibition that takes place on the beach and this year goes under the title "Vacuum and what we have left" ? Later this is to turn into a traveling exhibition.

We will film the two initiatives and will make a short documentary which we would like to present during the Summit in Vilnius 25-28 June. It will feature parts of the lectures, interviews with the local community, discussions between students and detailed images from the final exhibition in Koral.

On the basis of our experience we would like to promote:

- a new form of interdisciplinary work that aims to turn educational practice into critical thinking to gain social impact.
- combination of theory and practice that can foster the creativity of the students
- more visibility of social engagements of the students within the Alliance
- the dissemination of the local causes in the different partners of ERUA into a global awareness with traveling exhibitions and the presentation of video materials

## Room: I-414

### 9:00–10:30 | Transformative Support for Vulnerable groups

This session covers transformative initiatives for vulnerable persons, including combating addiction and homelessness, supporting GBV survivors in Greece, fostering resilience in older women, advocating for the rights of disabled people in Lithuania.

#### **Building Bridges of Compassion: Transformative Initiatives in Wrocław's Fight Against Addiction and Homelessness**

*Kamil Stawiany, Kornelia Miętkiewicz and Mateusz Lewalski*

##### **General data**

In the city of Wrocław, according to official statistics, there are 921 individuals experiencing homelessness. The entire institutional support system, which provides permanent or temporary accommodation, is capable of accommodating 650 individuals during the spring and summer months, and 750 during the autumn and winter seasons (Kocur, 2019; Kocur, 2022). However, these figures may be significantly underestimated. This is due to the fact that the counting of individuals in crisis conducted by the Social Welfare Center (MOPS) took place within a limited timeframe of one day. Additionally, many individuals may have been missed in this census due to the specific area where data was collected, which only included a predetermined list of locations. Those experiencing crisis often change their living areas, reflecting the nature of street life based on seeking necessary survival resources.

Also omitted in the MOPS study is the phenomenon of migration among homeless individuals between different

administrative centers, often related to unregistered employment, such as temporary construction workers. It means that you can have a job and even live in hostel and still be in homelessness crisis, so not every homeless person is a “hobo”.

The issue of lack of psychological assistance for individuals in homelessness crisis primarily concerns its accessibility. As known, the public psychological prevention system is heavily burdened, with appointments often requiring months-long waits, rendering public aid practically inaccessible, especially in situations of street homelessness (Świat Przychodni, 2023). Another significant factor is the absence of health insurance, which is a widespread problem among those experiencing homelessness. Regarding private psychological assistance, the barrier lies in its cost, as market rates for sessions far exceed the financial means of the majority of homeless individuals (Kalkulatory Budowlane, 2022). Economically and socially excluding is the mismatch of both public and private psychological aid to the specific needs of the homeless population. Homeless individuals often display high levels of distrust towards strangers and are closed off to support attempts from those outside their community (Jabłońska, 2015; Cendrowicz, 2017). Another factor is the prevalent negative experiences with institutional aid workers and healthcare services. Many individuals experiencing homelessness have encountered ostracism and objectification while in hospital emergency departments.

### **Gap with psychological help with homeless people and how to deal with it.**

Homelessness experiences can be categorized according to the European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS) (Wygańska, 2005). Each type of homelessness carries different consequences, hindering the exit from crisis and reintegration into society. For instance, individuals in the first category, living in public spaces, often lack long-term planning beyond immediate needs due to the demands of street life (Basińska, 2014). This problem also affects the second category of homelessness, referring to those accommodated in emergency shelters for short periods. Even individuals from these categories who have been provided with housing through “Housing First” programs may struggle to overcome the psychological crisis, risking a return to street homelessness due to the lack of planning skills and effective goal pursuit (Kostrzyńska, 2014). Despite having a roof over their heads and basic needs met, many of these individuals remain mentally entrenched in street life, as years of survival strategies inhibit adaptation to new conditions—a phenomenon termed “homelessness dependence.”

Another consequence hindering effective crisis resolution is the loss of agency and responsibility for one’s life. This issue is characteristic of the third category of homelessness, concerning individuals residing in institutional shelters for indefinite periods. These shelters provide basic necessities on a regimented schedule, but the highly structured nature of institutional assistance often prevents residents from taking actions to exit the crisis (Kostrzyńska, 2014). It’s worth noting that none of the shelters in Wrocław offer any form of consistent psychological support, such as support groups or therapy sessions.

There are indications that individuals from all mentioned categories of homelessness could avoid crisis-blocking consequences if provided with appropriate psychological support (Kowalska, 2020). The absence of this support constitutes a significant gap in the homeless assistance system and closes the doors leading back to societal structures. Many of these individuals remain in institutional or street homelessness, though there’s a real chance they could exit the crisis if given the opportunity (Cendrowicz, 2017). Programs like “Housing First” that are revolutionary in Poland aim to sustain the dignity of humans and give direct answers to the problem that homeless people have. Having a place to live that we can call home is the first step to teach routine, social interactions and calm down an entrepreneur who is afraid that his worker does not have a place to live so all the letters and contact can be cut off at any moment.

## Other MiserArts projects.

**The Street Clinic** - The primary focus of the Street Clinic is to provide systematic support to individuals experiencing homelessness through educational and informational activities regarding the negative effects of alcohol and other psychoactive substances. Additionally, street workers conduct activities aimed at reducing health and mental harm among this population. The Street Clinic operates in conjunction with the MiserArt Street Ambulance, which provides medical assistance. MiserArt and the locations frequented by street workers and medical responders (through outreach methods) offer assistance to individuals with limited access to medical services (MiserArt, 2024).

**EcoBauhaus** - Combines upcycling, ecology, relationality, and life experiences into a single art object, giving everyday life an extraordinary dimension. The creation of the upcycling design studio stemmed from the need to provide team members with homelessness experience with engaging and creative activities that provide a sense of purpose and fulfillment. The studios draw from the potential of personal experiences, often traumatic or peculiar, focused on the art of survival. These experiences carry an extremely negative aspect disrupting normalcy on one hand, and an exceptionally valuable asset on the other. The success of our experiment depends on the ability to transform this extraordinary experience into a creative dimension of self-realization. The furniture created in MiserArt is exceptional. Not only because they are made from forgotten, discarded materials, and each one is created as a unique piece of art, but because the process of creating a garden-table is an integral part of the transformation of its creators. The transformation, occurring from the moment when old, unwanted wood meets the hands of equally rejected individuals. The creative act then becomes an aesthetically uplifting experience. The garden-table becomes part of a living history, a place of self-discovery. However, each piece of furniture is primarily a functional item, with visible characteristics of its past and present, giving it a kind of personality. The composition made of steel, wood, and vegetation subtly encourages reflection and mindfulness. The gardens in tables installed in portable steel pots are a representation of the surrounding nature, which we should particularly care for today to preserve its beauty. We aim to promote the idea of sensitive business, and by purchasing our product, you support others and invest wisely (MiserArt, 2024).

**StreetBus** - The StreetBus, a municipal bus operating in Wrocław during the autumn-winter period, runs seven days a week. It stops at several locations where passengers (mainly individuals experiencing street homelessness crisis) can enjoy a warm meal in the form of hot soup and a beverage. The vehicle's route is planned in such a way that it can provide those in need with safe and convenient access to the bus during evening and night hours to the best extent possible (MiserArt, 2024).

## Open Door Program (Salida Foundation)

The "Open Door" program was created to provide comprehensive care for individuals struggling with addiction and their families. Various tasks were implemented as part of its activities, including individual therapeutic support, family counseling, crisis interventions, social consultations, workshops for developing social skills, personal development workshops, and art therapy sessions. Over the past year, the program has supported many individuals seeking not only continued detox therapy but also assistance in their daily lives with addicted individuals. It provided training focused on specific deficits or expanding skills in emotional regulation. The program helped participants overcome fears of seeking employment, believe in their abilities, and find ways to utilize their competencies. Furthermore, it effectively reduced feelings of being lost among beneficiaries, which often posed a risk of relapse into substance abuse.

The Foundation's actions contributed to increased motivation among participants, strengthened their determination to fight for themselves, and enabled their reintegration into social life. Through this program, many individuals who previously felt excluded or incapable of independent change gained a new perspective and tools for building a better future. Understanding the patient as a social entity, where recovery involves not only treatment but also reintegration into society and adaptation to its norms and interpersonal relationships, was crucial.

Individual therapeutic support, utilizing motivational dialogue techniques, proved to be a key element in working with patients. Therapists focused on understanding addiction triggers, coping strategies, improving interpersonal communication, and strengthening relationships. This approach benefited even those with previous therapeutic experiences but still struggled with addiction education gaps.

Family counseling sessions, held every Thursday from 4-6 pm, were based on the belief that addiction functions within the family system and correlates with the attitudes of other family members. It provided a space for relatives to learn about addiction, assess their own needs, and learn how to constructively support their loved ones in recovery. Using a systemic approach, families identified and modified unproductive patterns, such as excessive control or ineffective communication, resulting in healthier and more integrated family systems. The program also conducted a series of crisis interventions, providing swift and decisive responses to sudden crises, aimed at preventing further harm. These interventions focused on stabilizing situations, ensuring safety for all family members, and managing often intense and overwhelming emotions.

Social consultations were an integral part of the program, where social workers provided information, listened, and understood the individual stories of each person. This support strengthened the dignity and autonomy of beneficiaries. Furthermore, the program successfully conducted a series of psychosocial skills workshops aimed at individuals in various stages of addiction therapy. These workshops aimed to develop key social, emotional, and psychological skills, helping participants discover their resources and strengths and increase self-awareness.

The "Personal Development" workshops, which began on July 22, were a crucial step towards self-realization for individuals addicted to psychoactive substances. These workshops focused on self-awareness, responsibility, and goal-setting, providing participants with tools for effective and satisfying life.

Art therapy sessions provided a space for participants to express themselves in ways that often exceeded verbal capabilities. Art therapy not only helped individuals cope with difficult emotions, traumas, and daily stress but also fostered a sense of community and understanding among participants.

Supervision sessions allowed employees to share their experiences, challenges, and successes, and receive expert feedback, contributing to increased effectiveness of interventions and maintaining high ethical standards in client work. The program was utilized by 128 individuals. These were adult individuals struggling with addiction, as well as their families and loved ones. Some recipients engaged in multiple activities.

## **Navigating Life's Storms: A Qualitative Case Study of Resilience in an Older Woman**

*Joana Butenaite-Switkiewicz (Mykolas Romeris University)*

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### **Insights from Life's Storms: Resilience of an Older Woman**

Over the past two decades, the topic of resilience has become increasingly pertinent to modern society and the process of aging. There is growing evidence that resilience is a significant prerequisite for successful aging and well-being. Studies have demonstrated associations between resilience and positive functioning, longevity, and a reduced risk of depression and mortality. Despite international studies indicating comparable or even higher levels of resilience among older individuals, our representative study with Lithuanian adults revealed lower psychological resilience among the older population. Given the cultural, contextual, and ethnic determinants of resilience, it is imperative to delve deeply into the psychological resilience of older adults within the Lithuanian context to offer targeted psychological support. This qualitative study focuses on understanding the experiences and perspectives of an older woman (aged 65), illuminating how she confronts and surmounts various challenges. Through semi-structured interviews and classical grounded theory analysis, main themes are identified illuminating psychological resilience in an older woman: Identity, Vulnerability, Existential Reflection, Spirituality and Faith, Moral Values, Family and Relationships, and Mental Well-being. These findings serve to illustrate the multifaceted nature of resilience, emphasising the pivotal role of identity, spirituality, and relationships in maintaining equilibrium and forming the personal and familial histories of resilience. Understanding these aspects not only enriches our understanding of resilience but also informs strategies for promoting well-being and development in later life stages. By identifying and exploring these new themes, this study contributes to the ongoing discourse on psychological resilience in aging populations. One limitation of this study is the small sample size, which limits the generalizability of the findings. The findings of this study highlight the importance of further research involving a larger and more diverse cohort of older adults. Future research should delve deeper into the specific individual and cultural nuances that shape resilience among older Lithuanians. This will allow for the development of culturally sensitive interventions aimed at bolstering psychological resilience and promoting overall well-being in this population.

## **Do people with disabilities in institutions in Lithuania have a voice? Legal perspective**

*Violeta Vasiliauskiene (Mykolas Romeris University)*

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The situation of persons with disabilities in Lithuanian social care institutions depends very much on the culture and situation in a particular institution. The regulation of social care institutions foresees the requirements on institutions willing to provide social care, however, the only mechanism of ensuring those provisions are the visits taking place once every one to three years by the Department of Supervision of Social Services of the Republic of Lithuania. Is this mechanism a sufficient guarantee of the rights of persons with disabilities in the institutions, especially in the field of protection from violence? The presentation will address the rights of persons with disabilities established in international legal acts. It will

further dwell on the legal mechanisms of supervision of the institutions of social care. Furthermore, the practice of the Seimas Ombudspersons' while implementing the functions of the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) according to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities will be presented.

## Room: II-230

### 9:00–10:30 | ERUA students' voice (I)

This student session examines key issues in law, democracy, and social dynamics.

Topics include the role of referendums in direct democracy, the implications of residence permits as border mechanisms, the development and impact of the digital euro, and the phenomenon of social loafing as a conflict trigger in group learning environments. These student-led presentations provide insights into contemporary challenges and innovations in governance, finance, and education.

#### **Referendum as an institution of direct democracy: some aspects**

*Keywords: direct democracy, plebiscite, referendum, national sovereignty, elements of representative democracy*  
*Valerijus Jaunius (Mykolas Romeris University)*

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This article provides an analysis on the concept of referendum, its historical development, and problematic issues based on relevant legislation, scientific, and legal doctrine. To delve deeper into the chosen topic, the article first presents the concept of referendum, highlighting the differences between referendum and elections, and the classification of referendums based on both Lithuanian and foreign scientific doctrines. The article also reviews the historical development of the institution of the referendum during the interwar period of the Lithuanian state (1918–1940) and the changes in the concept of the referendum from the first permanent constitution of 1922 to the Soviet occupation in 1940. Furthermore, it examines the evolution of the institution after the adoption of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, the principles of the referendum, and the significance of the institution of the referendum for modern democracy. The article also discusses the main problematic aspects of the referendum and its legal regulation and analyzes the reasons for the activity of Lithuanian citizens in participating in referendums in critical situations of the state situation and their passivity in dealing with important state issues during the period of independence. Lastly, the article highlights some of the specific features of the institution of referendums in Australia and Switzerland.

## The Residence Permit – A Border?!

*Elena Schmid (European University Viadrina)*

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The Residence Permit – A Border?! In (critical) migration and border studies, the focus is predominantly put on the analysis of geo-political borders and the situation and experiences of people on the move or irregularized migrants at the EU's external borders. Less focus, however, is put on internalized borders plus differently categorized migrants, such as international students from third-country states for example. But what do internalized borders look like? What happens to migrants after their arrival within one of the countries of the EU? And what kind of challenges do they face? In my paper, I focus on the experiences of international students coming from third-country states in obtaining their residence permit in Germany to live there in a legalized way. To receive such a residence permit and thus profit from access and rights in Germany, various bureaucratic requirements must be fulfilled by the students. By adopting a border-theoretical perspective, the residence permit is conceptualised as a border materialised in the form of paper. My paper aims to demonstrate the residence permits' ambivalent functioning as an empowering object as well as a controlling b/ordering device for students from third-country states based on the lived experiences of five international master students at European University Viadrina. Next to the presentation of the discriminative functioning of the residence permit, hands-on practices to change the bureaucratic process in favour of the situation of inter-national students from third-country states are introduced. The paper could be presented within the theme "Navigating the Complexities of Migration, Exile, and Refugees" or "Democracy, Human Rights, Inclusion and Gender Equality". It will both grasp upon the complexities of borders and the multifacets or rather diversities of migration movements and will give at the same time insights into social innovations to make our societies more just, equal and inclusive spaces.

## Digital euro project

*Arnas Lipnickas (Mykolas Romeris University)*

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The article delves into the implications of the digital euro project within the European Union's legislative framework and insights from the European Central Bank (hereinafter - ECB). It underscores the importance of privacy alongside monetary considerations in an increasingly digitized world and examines how evolving digital habits redefine user experiences. The digital euro, envisioned as universally accessible electronic cash issued by the central bank, promises streamlined transactions and reduced cash dependency. However, its realization necessitates robust technology and infrastructure to ensure reliability, security, and alignment with consumer and merchant standards. Collaboration with partners is sought to facilitate project implementation and infrastructure readiness. Crucially, the digital euro's introduction mandates adherence to stringent EU legislation and regulations, particularly regarding data protection and consumer rights, to uphold fairness and legality. Endorsed as a secure instrument by the ECB, the digital euro represents a significant milestone in the evolution of the single currency, poised to reshape financial landscapes amid society's rapid digitization. Ensuring proper implementation of processes for consumer identification and data security, in line with EU regulations and data protection

standards, remains paramount to safeguarding the privacy and security of consumer data. Privacy is a fundamental value for Europeans, including as a personal right. Peer-to-peer (hereinafter - P2P) performs a public interest task when processing personal data. PSPs shall implement appropriate technical and organizational measures, including state-of-the-art security and privacy preservation measures, to ensure that individual users of the digital euro are not directly identifiable in data transmitted to the ECB and to the national central banks or support service providers. To prevent money laundering and terrorist financing. It is implied that in order to achieve the above objective, regulations such as (AML/CFT) may restrict the use of money. It should be noted that, while digital payment instruments are becoming increasingly popular, the old-fashioned methods of payment remain popular. As the oldest currency on the market, cash, favored by a large number of people, has a very important added value in terms of privacy. Cash is private by nature, it guarantees the anonymity of a third party and leaves no trace. It should be stressed that no public digital currency will guarantee the privacy that cash does. In countries such as Germany, Austria and the Netherlands, cash is by far the most popular means of payment. Cash, as mentioned before, as a physical means of payment, is expensive in terms of security concerns, risks, and handling costs for each stakeholder in the value chain that handles cash. Increasing the use of cash does not reduce costs or frictions in the economy.

Inter alia, this article explores the legal framework necessary for the establishment and regulation of the digital euro, a new form of publicly accessible central bank money, alongside traditional euro banknotes and coins. Rooted in Article 133 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (hereinafter - TFEU), the article underscores the pivotal role of consistent legal regulation in ensuring the digital euro's widespread adoption throughout the eurozone. It emphasizes the need for administrative changes to facilitate the effectiveness and enforceability of the digital euro, including special marking, reporting, and registration. Moreover, it examines the project's alignment with fundamental rights enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, ensuring respect for freedoms, property rights, and high-level consumer protection. Supervision is deemed essential for the digital euro's functionality, particularly concerning privacy and personal data protection. The article delves into the intricacies of EU Directives governing the digital euro's establishment and operation, as well as the responsibilities of relevant authorities in supervising and enforcing compliance with regulatory provisions. Lastly, it highlights the possibility of distributing the digital euro to Member States outside the euro currency area through established payment service providers, adding a legislative proposal to the regulatory process based on Article 114 of the TFEU.

## The phenomenon of social loafing as conflict trigger in challenge-based learning group work

*Judith Franke (European University Viadrina)*

This presentation based on qualitative literature research aims to sum up the results of my bachelor thesis, in which I investigated social loafing as a conflict trigger in-group work within a challenge based learning approach. In teaching, group work directed to solving or at least approaching real world challenges, the so-called challenge based learning is used more and more frequently to prepare students for the challenges in professional life and society. It is no secret that where people work together, conflicts can arise. Especially the deliberate reduction of performance when working in a

group, the social loafing, brings complications. How this phenomenon causes conflicts in group work and how they can be solved or even prevented is examined in this work. It was found that conflicts caused by social loafing in challenge based learning group work cannot be considered in a standardized way. Factors that influence challenge based learning group work were identified in order to propose preventive measures for conflict resolution.

Society, change and innovation are unavoidable linked with people working collaboratively. Inevitably, conflicts arise when individuals come together. However, conflicts can be a valuable indicator of change, provided they are handled effectively. In contrast, when conflicts are handled poorly, they can impede the very innovation that they are designed to facilitate. It is therefore of paramount importance to emphasise the importance of dealing with conflict and preventing it, of focusing on communication and building awareness of the topic. Social loafing is particularly prevalent when individuals attempt to work together. Dealing with the causes and effective management of this phenomenon is crucial to address the importance of it and take effective action. Social loafing and conflicts can't be avoided but it's possible to handle them well.

As ERUA is dedicated to promoting a challenge based learning approach, particularly for students but also for early stage researchers and all of its members, it is my contention that the presentation could offer a contribution to the work approach in the project and to the conference topic "Nurturing ecosystems for social innovations".

## Room: I-201

### **11:00 - 12:30 | The Power of Migration Narratives: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives**

This panel session delves into migration narratives, media representations, and ethical frameworks. These presentations provide insights into the complex interplay of migration, media, and ethics in today's society.

#### **Exile and humanitarianism at the crossroads of 1939 and its current repercussions: the CAREXIL-FR and REFEHUMAN projects**

*Mercedes Yusta Rodrigo (University of Macerata) and Marta Lopez Izquierdo (University of Macerata)*

The CAREXIL-FR and REFEHUMAN projects, which are being developed at the Laboratoire d'Etudes Romanes of the Université Paris 8, aim to investigate the exile following the Spanish Civil War, which displaced almost half a million people, from both a transdisciplinary and digital humanities perspective. The purpose of both projects is twofold. In one hand, to produce new knowledge about this episode in European history, understood as a founding moment in the history of forced migrations

in Europe, and in the other hand to propose tools that allow the dissemination of this knowledge to a wide public. The aims of this research are raising public awareness of the need to understand current migrations from a historical perspective, to publicise the solidarity that the civil society of the time put in place to welcome the refugee population, and to carry people understand that the migratory and exile experiences of the past resonate and continue to produce effects in the present.

We start from the hypothesis that 1939 is a foundational moment in European consciousness with regard to the problem of refugees and forced migration, given the volume of the population displaced across the Franco-Spanish border in just two weeks, the dramatic conditions of their arrival in France, the impact on the host society and the humanitarian deployment required to receive this vulnerable population. Our second hypothesis is that this founding moment is also a founding moment for the making and professionalisation of modern humanitarianism. The CAREXIL-FR project (Letters from Spanish Exile in France, 1939-1940), which works with an archive of letters sent by refugees to a humanitarian organisation, explores the experience of forced displacement from a sociolinguistic perspective. For its part, the REFEHUMAN project (Female European Networks, Humanitarianism and Antifascism, 1936-1945) studies the other side of this experience of exile: the activity of the humanitarian organisation, the Commission d'Aide aux Enfants Espagnols Réfugiés en France (CAEERF), which was the recipient of the letters studied in CAREXIL-FR. Both projects, therefore, aim to explore the two sides of the experience of forced migrations through the foundational example of 1939: the experience of refugees and the development of a humanitarian activity to provide them with relief, in this case mostly carried out by women.

From a methodological and transdisciplinary point of view, both projects, which are closely articulated, use digital humanities to produce and disseminate knowledge. The CAREXIL-FR project has developed a digital interface to access the letters of Spanish exiles in France in 1939 and to visualise, by means of an interactive atlas, the internment camps, scattered throughout France, where they were held. The project offers the academic and school public, as well as the general public, direct access to first-hand historical sources, unpublished until now, which transmit to today's reader the experience of the 1939 exile in letters with a strong emotional charge. A bridge is thus built between the exile of yesterday and the descendants of exiles or, more generally, the citizens of today, who can interact on the interface and communicate with the researchers responsible for the project to share information and other documents in their possession. The collaboration with the filmmaker Carolina Astudillo has led us to locate some of the authors of the letters, still alive, or their descendants, who reconstitute from the present the trajectory of their exiled families and their own memory, through the constitution of an audiovisual archive under construction within the project.

As for the REFEHUMAN project, its aim is to publicise and visualise the transnational, transideological and multi-confessional female network that was set up to provide humanitarian aid to Spanish refugees in France in 1939 and which continued to operate during the Second World War, extending its aid to other vulnerable populations, such as Jewish children. Through an interactive atlas, a documentary platform and a biographical database we hope to understand the ties that bind these women in the long term and the motivations for their involvement in humanitarian aid from a gender perspective. In this way we hope to contribute to a better understanding of how transnational women's networks involved in refugee aid were constituted, as well as the solidarity actions in which European women were involved in dealing with the major crises of the 1930s and 1940s, in particular the population displacements.

In conclusion, with the presentation of both projects, which are closely related and involve a wide network of researchers - mostly historians, sociolinguists and specialists in the digital humanities -, we hope to contribute to the debate on the usefulness of the human sciences and of the knowledge of the past to a better understanding of the challenges of migration today, as well as to propose tools to feed political reflection, public debate and pedagogical actions on these issues.

## Narrative weaponization of migration in the frame of Populism 2.0

*Kristian Bankov (New Bulgarian University)*

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In this paper first I will examine the premises, which made the topic of the migration flows so popular within the political narrative. Until the very beginning of the 90s of the last century migration was a marginal topic and mostly a positive issue in the logic of the Cold war. After the possibility of big number of East Europeans to migrate in Western countries was open the narratives started to change and gradually the salience of migration as a topic raised. Then came the real weaponization of migration flows by political actors as Gaddafi, Erdogan, and Putin, who used it to obtain influence in international politics. The destabilizing power of the “migration menace” proved to be very efficient and it gave raise to counternarratives of resistance against it from within a big number of newborn populist political actors. In the paper’s second part I examine the role of social networks to transform the migration narrative in one of the strongest weapons of Populism 2.0.

## Migration and its representation on social media in Bulgaria

*Keywords: Migration, Social Media, Bulgaria, Perception, Polarization, Propaganda, Misinformation, Democracy*  
*Justine Toms (New Bulgarian University)*

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This paper investigates the portrayal of migration on social media platforms within the context of Bulgaria, with a focus on the perceptions and polarization it generates in society. Conducted as part of the EUMEPLAT Projects, data collection occurred during October-November 2022.

Bulgaria’s geographical location on the border renders migration a pertinent issue, yet its articulation within online spaces is marred by propaganda and the proliferation of misinformation. This study delves into the multifaceted narratives surrounding migration, examining how they are disseminated through various online groups and pages.

The primary outcome of this research is an understanding of the diverse perspectives held within Bulgarian society regarding the migration process. Furthermore, the study sheds light on the polarization fostered by the dissemination of biased information and propaganda through social media channels. By analyzing the content circulated online, this research illuminates the complex interplay between media representations, public perception, and societal attitudes toward migration in Bulgaria.

# Ethical Frameworks and Advertising: An Exploration of Symbolism and Language in the Context of Social Innovation and Conflict

*Keywords: Social Innovation, Advertising Ethics, Consumer Behavior, Grounded Theory, Symbolic Communication*  
*Gintarė Kriauciunaite-Lazauskiene (Mykolas Romeris University)*

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## **Purpose:**

This investigation explores the societal implications of research that not only comprehends but actively influences the development of social innovation, with a focus on how symbolic and linguistic elements within advertising impact ethical consumer decisions in Lithuania amidst the Ukrainian Russian conflict. It delves into the role of these elements in shaping the ethical frameworks guiding consumer choices, especially among individuals with pronounced religious convictions.

## **Methodology:**

The study adopts a constructivist Grounded Theory approach, providing an in depth case study analysis of print advertisements in Lithuania, coupled with semi structured interviews with religious participants. This method facilitates a progressive understanding of the intricate relationships between advertising content, consumer ethics, and the broader political landscape, underlining the transformative power of research in social innovation.

## **Findings:**

Initial results indicate a strong resonance of symbolic and linguistic advertising elements with the moral values of consumers, particularly within the context of political tensions. This research uncovers the subtle ways in which advertising strategies interact with consumer ethical considerations, demonstrating how external political events can indirectly mold consumer behavior via advertising.

## **Research Limitations:**

The investigation's focus on religious consumers within Lithuania might not capture the full spectrum of advertising's impact across different demographics. Moreover, by concentrating on print media, the study does not account for the effects of digital and other forms of advertising.

## **Practical Implications:**

This research offers crucial insights for marketers and advertisers operating in politically and morally sensitive environments. By elucidating how symbolic and linguistic cues in advertisements influence consumer interpretation and response, the findings support the development of marketing strategies that are both ethically conscious and effective.

## **Originality:**

This work stands out by bridging the domains of advertising, consumer ethics, and political circumstances in an unparalleled context. Through its application of Grounded Theory to assess the ethical ramifications of advertising amid a geopolitical crisis, the study presents a fresh viewpoint on consumer behavior within politically turbulent settings.

## Room: L-102

### 11:00 - 12:30 | Innovative Strategies and tools for Social and Socio-Economic Transformation (II)

This session explores innovative economic and social development strategies and tools. Presentations cover topics such as price assessment using machine learning, universal basic income, anti-crisis tools for critical infrastructure, and social innovation in the logistics industry.

#### **The conceptual framework of integrated early price assessment system: coupling machine learning with social input of employee participation**

*Birute Mockeviciene, Mykolas Romeris University*

Industry 4.0 presents immense potential for creating customised products with more flexibility and personalisation options. However, implementing changes in production requires a significant transformational capacity, which can be perceived as a challenge in the furniture sector. Furniture companies that specialize in customized production are changing the traditional principles of manufacturing. This shift also leads to a greater focus on customer needs and additional investment in IT tools. However, the furniture industry struggles to catch up with new technologies and compete in the market. Typically, these companies rely on detailed cost models and a time-consuming early price evaluation process that can take up to a month. However, this process can be prone to errors in price evaluation, production technology, process planning, and quality management. To overcome these issues, custom furniture businesses require an innovative solution that can shorten the process of early price evaluation.

**Methodology.** The conceptional model of digital platform was created using triangulationbased methodology, which is built on three empirical studies: 1.) qualitative study (18 interviews in two Lithuanian companies with a wide range of specialists, including CEOs, managers, product developers, constructors) regarding price methodology, organizational support, data available for machine learning; 2.) quantitative study survey of furniture companies in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia checking for acceptancy of machine learning; 3.) business analytics of historical manufacturing data.

**Findings.** Research came up with the concept of Integrated early price assessment system, which is based on the main findings using our own created methodology which strengths lies in its interdisciplinary approach, which links seemingly distant fields of science, such as social science through employee involvement, mathematics and computer science through machine learning algorithms and mathematical formalization of expert opinions, and engineering through the compatibility of furniture manufacturing processes.

The integrated early price assessment system explored findings that the price estimation problem can be solved as a prediction problem using machine learning methods and interactive expert evaluation. The study has shown that the price of customised furniture can be estimated quite accurately when only data on material quantities are used. The use of machine learning techniques can reduce the time needed to estimate costs in the early design phase and speed up the time to market.

The integrated early price assessment system replaces the traditional accounting and engineering cost model with a parametric one based on machine learning and expert involvement.

The integrated early price assessment system is equipped with expert input. By using expert decision-making methodologies, it has been proven that employee input on pricing decisions can complement machine learning-based price predictions, resulting in better overall pricing and decision-making outcomes.

## Universal basic income is an innovative model of sustainable and competitive socio-economic development

*Birute Teodora Visokaviciene, Ona Grazina Rakauskiene and Laurynas Naskauskas (Mykolas Romeris University)*

A Universal Basic Income (UBI) is an income of sufficient amount to guarantee decent living conditions, paid unconditionally in cash to all citizens and legal residents of a political community without considering the financial situation of the recipients. A UBI is characterized by being unconditional, meaning obligations-free, individual (contrary to other benefits which are given to households), universal (ensuring everyone in a given political community the same guaranteed minimum income), and ideally of a sufficiently high amount to guarantee a dignified existence and civic participation. The radical nature of a UBI resides in its unconditional nature: it secures for everyone the same universal minimum income, independent of whether they meet requirements such as having assets or being unemployed. The idea has been theorized since the eighteenth century, namely by Thomas Paine in 'Agrarian Justice', where he proposed a UBI in the form of a land dividend. Today, when we present UBI as a public ubiquitous income within the economic management structure of the state, it is presented as a financial instrument with great potential impact. A financial instrument that guarantees the necessary standard of living for a person and thus solves not only social problems, but also public finance management and economic policy problems; a method and tool for shaping changes in social structure that benefits human well-being and the environment, promotes public finance and public sector reforms, and creates new effective models; public management mechanism that promotes the creation of a competitive, sustainable economy in the age of digital technologies and Industry 4.0 revolution. More over, modeling the impact of UBI for ubiquitous socio economic transformations we create new paradigm, that UBI is not mechanically integrated system but an evidence based phenomenon, a paradigm arising the new logic.

This is not an utopia, it is a methodology based on economic laws and phenomena occurring in reality. Logic says that the growth of society's needs promotes economic growth, the balance of demand and supply always means the sustainable development of society, economy, security as well as environmental protection. Monetary policy is also based on the law of the quantity of money, the equality of the balance between money supply and demand.

UBI is one of the possible response alternatives to the social and economic problems of the globalized world changes:

UBI is focused on a) creation of social capital and social innovation, promoting it both an idea and a highly effective integrated financial, social and economic instrument, used in the management and value added chains of all sectors of the economy.

b) Social necessity of the modern world, taking into account the digital industry (4.0 industrial revolution) challenges, needs and society in general for the transformation, preparing for the

situation of the already beginning digital society, where approx we will lose 70% of jobs in ten years due to artificial intelligence and robotics of use.

In order to solve this socio-economic problem, UBI is proposed as 1) social security guarantee; 2) as an opportunity for people and communities to seek new ones business niches, innovations, technological and creative solutions, creating jobs; 3) how increasing the scale and effectiveness of social inclusion, social capital and social innovation

This scientific research will extend the boundaries of the social sciences, management and economics, encourage the mobilization of researches in all sectors of the real economy to find new societal benefits that guarantee social sustainability of people's living standards, promote scientific and technological progress based on new decisions for the public and nature but not at their expense. In this way, the research will lead to the development of new funding technologies and management techniques as well as business models.

For the first time, a new generation socio-economic model will be modeled in Lithuania, addressing social exclusion, inequality and poverty, developing new funding and value-added paradigms, developing effective innovation and competitiveness enhancement mechanisms to ensure social sustainability and social capital development and digital technologies, receptivity in all sectors of the economy. A systematic approach to the consequences of globalization, social development and the latest challenges to economic science requires new solutions that benefit society and reflect the changing structure, connectivity and quality of social coexistence. The new approach encourages the search for the most appropriate solutions, tools and methods, therefore the first time in Lithuania the possibility and prospect of utilization of universal basic income will be investigated.

The main goal of the study is to develop a model of universal basic income in Lithuania based on real financial possibilities. During this study researchers will:

1. Assess the potential impact of UBI on Lithuanian socio-economic indicators related to the latest technological changes. Will analyse the indicators of the financing of Lithuanian social benefits for population, justify the need for the application of the UBI model as the main instrument for Lithuania in the perspective of modern society and innovation development. The impact on the economy will be studied with the help of selective forecasting methods (expert knowledge network and Delphi methods). Assess the possibilities of implementation and financing of the UBI in Lithuania, analyse potential sources of financing, the possibilities of using monetary and fiscal instruments and create a mechanism for financing the UBI.

2. Determine the need for UBI financing resources for the year and the amount of UBI in euros per capita, based on the developed UBI financing mechanism, using the microsimulation model EUROMOD. While developing the UBI implementation model, will evaluate the obtained results using the method of knowledge networks of elite experts. Will analyse the impact of UBI on public finances, quality of services and volume of added value created by the private sector. Methods of labour supply and labour demand research and selective forecasting, based on expert knowledge network will be used.

UBI is expected to create new conditions for a social, economic public and private sector system that responds to new societal needs, demands and opportunities.

## Anti-crisis tools: Ensuring Critical Infrastructure Business Continuity

*Keywords: EU Taxonomy, SDG9, CISA, Critical Infrastructure, Business Continuity, ISO 22301:2019, Interdisciplinary Cohesion, ESG, Digital resilience, NIS 2, ENISA, CSF, Academia, University*  
**Mykhailo Prazian, Mykolas Romeris University**

The study considers short-, medium-- and long-term perspectives of critical infrastructure (CI) and highlights two anti-crisis tools. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) categorises sixteenth CI sectors for the US. The European Union (EU) taxonomy has a slightly different scope for the same entities. Relying on the system analysis methodology, public domain, and expertise, the author searches the pertinent approach across sectors. The literature contains data about objectives aligned with the seventeenth United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), particularly, SDG9 “Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation”. As a result, an unbiased observer could see ongoing disruptions in energy, climate, inflation, supply chain, demography, global order, and protracted wars, leading to the understanding that the EU’s focus on Green and Digital Transitions is not enough to ensure that CI maintenance and development meet modern challenges.

The author argues that ensuring CI sustainability and resilience is possible by following and implementing (i) the Business Continuity (BC) standards and (ii) the interdisciplinary cohesion within the BC working group or expert platform. Both ways complement the Green and Digital transition, decarbonisation, adoption and mitigation plans, environmental, social, and governance (ESG) regulations and reporting. The BC standards typically include a hierarchy of plans: 1. BC Management Plan Overview 2. Emergency Response Plan 4. Crisis Management Plan. 4. Recovery/ Restoration Plans. BC standards have become necessary and may have priority over other measures in specific situations. The BC standards may include: ISO 22300, Security and Resilience—Vocabulary. ISO 22301:2019, Business Continuity Management Systems—Requirements. ISO 22313, Business Continuity Management Systems—Guidance. Two Guidelines for Business Impact Analysis (BIA) regarding business (ISO 22317), supply chain continuity, ISO 22318, Business Continuity Management Systems: Guidelines for Business Impact Analysis (BIA). It is about supply chain continuity. The applicable standards for Digital Resilience are the National Institute of Standards and Technology NIS 2 Cybersecurity Framework (CSF) (2023), (NIST) SP 800-34, Contingency Planning Guide for Federal Information Systems. The European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA) issued a document about IT Business Continuity Management.

The lessons learned from the Ukrainian experience demonstrate that before or simultaneously with events about the post-war recovery and ambition net zero plans, the government, local communities, enterprises, and other stakeholders must establish the CI business continuity policies, goals, and processes to enhance urgent state, business, and human needs. Cross-disciplinary cooperation, academia, and universities can significantly help in these ways.

## Nurturing Ecosystems for Social Innovation in Logistics Industry (ECR)

*Olga Snarske, Mykolas Romeris University*

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The logistics industry plays a crucial role in promoting environmental sustainability and facilitating a green future. Nurturing ecosystems for social innovations within logistics encompasses various environmental, social, and economic factors that shape operations<sup>1</sup>, ensuring services are delivered responsibly and sustainably. Key aspects of nurturing ecosystems in logistics include promoting the responsible use of resources, reducing waste, and incorporating renewable energy sources<sup>2</sup>. These measures not only contribute to sustainable practices but also enhance service quality and efficiency. Social innovations are supported by quality management systems, which help logistics companies set targets, evaluate outcomes, and manage inconsistencies effectively. Quality management systems act as catalysts for social innovations in the logistics sector<sup>3</sup>, allowing companies to navigate complex ecosystems by balancing environmental and social priorities. Nonconformity management plays a pivotal role in this process by monitoring, assessing, and improving logistics processes to minimize inconsistencies and boost productivity<sup>4</sup>. Adopting an integrated approach to quality management, nonconformity management, and environmental stewardship empowers logistics companies to drive sustainable development and achieve smoother, more efficient operations. This holistic approach leads to superior service quality and heightened customer satisfaction. By using resources judiciously, involving the community, and integrating renewable energy sources, logistics companies can contribute significantly to sustainable development<sup>5</sup>. Such practices not only support environmental goals but also foster social and economic advancements within the industry. As a result, nurturing ecosystems for social innovations becomes a cornerstone of achieving excellence and sustainability in logistics.

## Room: I-407

### **11:00 - 12:30** | Artistic Innovations in Cultural and Social Integration (II)

This session explores the role of art in cultural and social integration, focusing on film festivals, virtual reality meditation, traditional crafts, and the use of museums and land art to foster social cohesion and sustainability.

## Social Innovation and Latin American film festivals on migrations

*Keywords : social innovation, migration, Latin American film festival*

*Paola Garcia (Paris 8 University)*

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Within the framework of a research work on migration and cinema, we are interested in Latin American film festivals that focus exclusively on migration. These festivals appear from the 2010s in different Latin American countries due to the multiplication of audiovisual productions around the theme of migration that represents for several years, one of the main topics of the political agendas of Latin America. In this paper, we will see how some of the Latin American film festivals on migrations arise, how they work, what is the objective they pursue and we will ask ourselves what role do they play within the national and international social contexts? Can they be considered structures of social change? And more precisely, what would be their impact in terms of social innovation?

## How to write fieldwork: not for academics but for people in the field

*Elen Riot (Paris 8 University)*

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Today, I'm taking note of a gap I've been aware of.

I've been aware of all along: there's no room for the form of writing and images I'd like to present in my own way, without prejudging their quality.. In any case, this is what I'd like to share with those people who invite me to share their daily lives with them, or who act as my guide, by teaching me what they know, even though I don't answer their questions.

Ever since I have done research, especially under the influence of the "art of the media" developed in Paris 8, I have been wondering about the field of academia, the field of art and the field of news chronicles and critiques. They have different statuses yet they intertwine: a page is a page is a page.

All I have to do now is take the time to build another chronicle that would remain, rather than spending most of my time and effort and effort on the academic demands of my profession.

I myself respect academic research and scholarly journals.

I get a lot out of being able to work within this framework. But at the stage I've reached in my work, I can no longer neglect the more immediate, more sensitive aesthetic aspect of field experience, which also explains my choice of subjects. A number of researchers have described the research they do (and I do) as engaged or critical, which doesn't suit me. I prefer to describe the work I'm going to do in the context of Lemmes, which I am formalizing through you, for your support, as an experimental device, which allows me to choose the form of exhibition, of representation, rather than the predefined framework of research articles. This is why I don't a priori choose a receptacle like a site or a page. I've just recovered all 360 pages of text from my online site La Fileuse. I think there's a new way of working with these themes, all the more so as

I'm still working on central subjects that I was already tackling like public and shared space, sewing and fishermen.

For me, in principle, the work in progress at the moment consists of a census of all the texts written or to be written, the forms (images, sounds) that accompany or could accompany them, and ideas for ideas for sharing them in one form or another, a podcast about a cooperative. Thereafter, I always propose to keep a part of the work time during the data collection and up to the moment of for this new writing, for the experimental device of a form. experimental device of a form.

I have a number of questions, still to be resolved: how do I get back to the people on the ground and get them to share their stories through the prism of this writing? What format to share it more easily? Samizdats, original editions original editions, photocopies, magazines or books, as Cause Commune, for example, or exhibitions, meetings, debates and performances? How can we keep track of them, and where can deposit them?

Is there a way to invent the way you write, or is inventing the way you write is already reinventing, departing from the way you would write if you were not thinking of the Academia and the other readers who have different expectations, supposedly ? What do I know about these questions as this is the object of my work? It is time to ask who and what I want to address.

## Peculiarities of overcoming socio-cultural barriers through migration

*Halyna Sienohonova (KROK University)*

The topic of analysis and reflection on one of the most relevant topics of our time - overcoming the difficulties of migration is acute and requires constant research. This situation in science is obvious, since migration studies are conducted in various humanitarian directions, which have significantly expanded both the object and the research methodology and terminology. Therefore, one cannot expect to create a single theory of migration or to have a unique terminological system. However, an integrative or interdisciplinary approach to the study of different aspects of migration is important, as it allows a flexible response to modern migration challenges, which can be caused by various factors. Against the background of globalization, political and economic instabilities in many parts of the world, understanding and effective strategies to respond to these problems are of utmost importance.

A recent event in Sweden caused a wave of excitement. Swedish journalist Elaf Ali joked about Ukrainian refugee women in the show. This joke caused a wave of indignation in the Ukrainian community, thereby causing a wave of indignation, which led to a negative reaction: journalists began to write harsh comments on social networks. But in order to understand this case, I conducted an interview with anthropologist Svitlana Odinets, who studies the issue of migration. According to Svitlana, Ukraine was a distant country for Sweden, just as Sweden was a distant country for Ukraine in many ways. The feeling of such a concept as freedom of speech in Sweden has its own nuance and the journalist jokingly did not cross the permissible boundaries of protecting the dignity of human rights for Sweden. But Ukrainians think differently: at the time of the joke about Ukrainian refugees, there

was no representative of the Ukrainian community in the studio of the show who would have been able to take part in this show, in other words, a Ukrainian could have joked as well. After this situation, a challenge began in Sweden: Ukrainian

women living in Sweden started posting on social networks, talking about their professional achievements in various areas - from science and culture to business projects. I believe that such a challenge is a good opportunity to get to know all of us better and break some stereotypes. This case shows us a life situation where the people of a country at war are excited and take most information very acutely. It is worth adding the fact that Ukraine and Ukrainians, after the start of the full-scale invasion, opened up to the world from various interesting angles: the world learned about Mykola Leontovych, who is the author of the famous Shchedryk. Many of us have heard this piece of music in the movies Home Alone. The world also saw a number of films, one of which won an Oscar. Many people learned about outstanding artists, writers and scientists, such as Marina Pryimachenko (artist), Maksymilian Levychn - an American entrepreneur of Ukrainian origin, co-founder of the electronic payment company RayPal, or, for example, Ivanna Sakhno - a Ukrainian-American actress who played in such films as "The Spy Who Dumped Me," "Pacific Rim." Or a Ukrainian headwear and accessories designer. The founder of the brand is Ruslan Baginskiy. Ruslan's headdresses were worn by well-known representatives of the fields of cinema, fashion and entertainment, such as Madonna, Vanessa Paradis and others. By the way, an exhibition of literary works of modern Ukrainian writers was held in Sweden.

According to the participants, this event was interesting and useful. And it gave an even greater idea of Ukraine. But Along with a number of cultural and historical differences, we can also observe similarities. For example, the well-known Ukrainian embroidered shirt carries a graphic historical code in the form of embroidery. This semantic type of clothing decoration was also used in Japan. Japanese embroidery is unique in its diversity and originality. The main Japanese stitching techniques are sashiko, temari, and satin stitch. Japanese embroidery is a classic Japanese embroidery that appeared at the beginning of the 17th century as a decorative stitch. There are also many embroidery traditions in Hungary, the most famous of which are Matyo and Kalocsa. Mateo is an ethnic group living in the northern part of Hungary. The folk costume of this group is one of the most colorful in Hungary. In the center of matio embroidery is a large rose or peony flower, around which small floral patterns are embroidered. The tradition of embroidery developed only in the second half of the 19th century. Other well-known motifs include tulips, hearts and birds. Indian embroidery is mentioned in the literature of the 5th century. India has always been famous for traditional embroidery.

The most popular embroidery of the Swiss St. Gallen, sometimes known as "Swiss embroidery", is the embroidery of the St. Gallen region. This region was once the largest and most important embroidery export region. Since 1889, girls in the region have had access to state-sponsored embroidery training. This is a detailed and fine embroidery with white cotton threads, made with several stitches on a thin white batiste. Swiss white handkerchiefs were a must-have for sophisticated Victorian women, as they were hand-embroidered. Another type of appenzell Swiss embroidery. I suggest you look at the photo of the embroideries and determine which country these embroideries are from





This is just part of our common history. This also includes national jewelry, national household items, and so on.

This whole story is about the fact that we have the opportunity to get to know each other - all of us, representatives of different cultures, citizens of different countries. And to be useful and interesting to each other.

## Room: I-414

### **11:00 - 12:30** | Promoting Gender Equality and Diversity in Education and Society

This session examines critical aspects of gender differences and equality, as well as the importance of supporting diversity in various social contexts. Topics include promoting gender equality in the language classroom, addressing the sexual objectification and childhood experiences of Hijra people. The presentations emphasize creating equitable and inclusive environments across educational and social settings.

## Promoting gender equality in the language classroom

*Camelia Andreea Rizea (Constantin Brancoveanu University)*

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Gender equality in education is not only a fundamental human right but also a key component of achieving sustainable development and social progress. When setting clear expectations for behavior, participation, and respect in the classroom, educators make sure that all students understand what is expected of them and the consequences of not adhering to these expectations. This clarity creates a sense of fairness and inclusivity. This paper examines the significance of promoting gender equality in the language classroom and explores effective strategies to foster an inclusive learning environment. The language classroom serves as a microcosm of society, where language use and teaching practices can either reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes and biases. The paper analyses the importance of using gender-neutral language and diversifying learning materials to represent diverse gender identities and experiences. It highlights the role of educators in encouraging equal participation among students and challenging gender stereotypes through critical discussions and reflection. Additionally, the paper emphasizes the importance of providing role models and addressing language bias to promote gender equality in the language classroom. Drawing on existing research and best practices, the paper offers practical strategies for educators to promote gender equality in their teaching practices. These strategies include incorporating inclusive language policies, providing support and resources for students, and creating a safe and inclusive learning environment. The paper also discusses the potential impact of promoting gender equality in the language classroom on students' attitudes, behaviors and academic achievement. By implementing these strategies, educators can contribute to the broader goal of advancing gender equality in education and society. Ultimately, promoting gender equality in the language classroom is not only a moral imperative but also essential for creating a more just, equitable, and inclusive world. With the aid of these strategies, educators can create a learning environment where all students feel valued, respected, and empowered to learn and succeed.

## Gender Differences in Experiencing Insecurity in School and Its Association with Academic Achievement.

*Keywords: insecurity in school, gender differences, academic achievements.*

*Jolita Dudaite (Mykolas Romeris University)*

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This presentation offers an exploration of the multifaceted issue of insecurity prevalent among students in educational environments, with a specific focus on gender dynamics. Drawing upon the rich dataset provided by the esteemed international OECD PISA 2022 study, this research endeavors to dissect the various dimensions of insecurity within schools, encompassing physical violence, psychological aggression, and the pervasive sense of insecurity that permeates the educational landscape. The theme of insecurity in schools is important due to its far-reaching implications for students' well-being and academic success. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the pervasive nature of insecurity within educational settings and its detrimental effects on students' physical and psychological health, as well as

their ability to thrive academically. Delving into the theme of insecurity in schools is not only imperative for safeguarding students' well-being but also for promoting academic success and fostering gender equality in education.

The study aims to illuminate the nuanced ways in which insecurity manifests differently based on gender. Through a meticulous analysis of empirical data, it becomes evident that girls and boys experience and navigate instances of violence and insecurity within school settings in distinct ways. Furthermore, the research underscores the impact that the perception of insecurity exerts on students' academic achievements, thereby emphasizing the urgency of implementing gender-sensitive policies and practices within educational systems. By interrogating data sourced from diverse international contexts, this presentation serves as a significant contribution to the ongoing discourse on gender equality in education. It not only calls attention to the imperative of addressing gender-specific challenges within educational institutions but also advocates for the creation of inclusive environments that foster optimal learning outcomes for all students. Additionally, the findings underscore the necessity of adopting an intersectional approach that recognizes the intricate interplay between gender, insecurity, and academic achievement, thereby advocating for holistic interventions aimed at promoting educational equity and empowerment on a global scale.

## The Sexual Objectification of Hijra People: Reflection upon the childhood experiences

*Keywords: Identity, Objectification, Hijra, Sexual Abuse, Sexual Exploitation, Self*

*Hyder Ali (Supreme Court of Pakistan)*

*Muhammad Ali Awan (Marie Stopes Society Pakistan)*

*Ahsan Bhatti (Pakistan Housing Authority)*

The sexual and gender diversity of hijra people, position them an object of sexual desires i.e. sexual objectification of hijra people. Through this article, I would like to answer the question how hijra people identify themselves in relation to their body, sexual encounter and social position? This article is based on the data, which was gathered during PhD research in 2015 and later in 2022 during further research to understand the phenomena of sexual objectification of hijra people. The data was collected through biographic and expert interviews from members of hijra community and development sector. The constructionist grounded theory was used as a research methodology and acquired data was analyzed in MAX QDA based on grounded theory data coding scheme. The findings presented in this article specifically dealt with the childhood experiences of hijra people which they have reflected during data collection. This research shows that hijra people face sexual abuse and sexual exploitation since their childhood. They grow up with derogatory identification labels like gando, chakka, khusra, hijra. Some of the labels specifically communicate the meaning of passive sexual partner and weaker position in sex and gender order. The people from mainstream society exploit a weak position of hijra people and exercise power upon them. Resultant, hijra people are compelled to participate in sexual activity. The abusive and exploitative sexual encounter force hijra people to identify themselves as an object of sex. The sexuality of the hijra people either ignored or considered deviant due to the socio-cultural, religious and legal positioning of hijra people in Pakistani society. Hence, sexual objectification of hijra people revolves around their experiences of sexual abuse and sexual exploitations, which increase a feeling of marginality and social exclusion among hijra people.

# Room: II-230

## 11:00 - 12:30 | ERUA students' voice (II)

This student session highlights innovative approaches in social innovation, science communication, and sensory learning. The presentations showcase the diverse and creative solutions students are exploring to address contemporary challenges.

### **Coop'en 8, an experience in social innovations for students**

*Elodie Ros, Nahean Binte Badar, Sirine Romdhane, Fabienne Etienne, Loriane Guillou, Oumar Adam Adam, Ibrahima Coulibaly, Xianghui Wang, Iness Boudjema, Nelson Meyzindi, Lémou, Lyna Tighidet, Mahnoor Raja and Amivi Monique Tovikou (Paris 8 University)*

As representatives of Coop'en 8, a group of 13 dynamic and innovative students of University Paris 8, we are honored to present our ideas and projects at the ERUA's Fourth Annual Summit 2024 in Vilnius. Our mission revolves around encouraging social innovations that promote inclusivity, diversity, and community engagement.

Coop'en 8 is not just a collective. It's a community-driven initiative dedicated to driving positive change through social innovations. Our diverse team brings together individuals from various backgrounds, disciplines, and cultures, united by a common passion for making a difference in society. We believe in the power of collaboration, creativity, and inclusivity to address the pressing challenges of our time.

In addition to our focus on social innovations, Coop'en 8 recognizes the importance of entrepreneurship in driving sustainable change. As students, we see participating in such a program as an opportunity not only to engage in social innovation but also to explore the world of entrepreneurship. We believe that entrepreneurship offers unique avenues for addressing societal challenges, promoting innovation, and creating positive impact. Through our participation, we aim to gain knowledge of entrepreneurial practices, learn from experienced professionals and entrepreneurs, and explore how entrepreneurial approaches can complement our efforts in social innovation.

Our current projects exemplify our commitment to social innovations. Among these projects is the organization of a culinary and sports festival, where conviviality and diversity will be honored in our multicultural region, which is Ile de France. This festival serves as a platform for cultural exchange, celebration, and community building. Additionally, we are working on the creation of varied content, ranging from interpreting to media production, according to the skills and passions of our members. Through these projects, we aim to enhance social cohesion, promote cultural understanding, and empower individuals to express themselves creatively.

We are eager to collaborate with fellow participants, thought leaders, and innovators at the summit. We believe that collaboration is key to driving meaningful change and achieving sustainable impact. Whether through sharing best practices, exchanging ideas, or forming partnerships, we are committed to working together towards common goals.

## Increasing trust in science through science communication: options in Lithuanian context

*Saulius Andrukonis and Gintarė Žemaitaitienė, Mykolas Romeris University*

Trust as a phenomenon can be understood as the belief that something is true, reliable, and not harmful (Oxford dictionary, n.d.). It is also suggested to interpret trust not as a specific behavior, but as an expectation that in the future there will be something considered correct, reliable, and non-harmful. Trust as a phenomenon greatly depends on the context (Bauer & Freitag, 2018; Feather, 2021). Trust in science can be explained as public trust in the ability of scientists to prove and confirm their knowledge (National academies press, 2022; Unesco, 2023). The public will trust science if the person, groups of individuals or institutions which represent the science are perceived as competent, trustworthy and working in the public interest. Four main factors have been singled out, due to which people refuse to trust science: mistrust of a specific source of information, loyalty to a particular social group, information contradicting personal beliefs, inappropriate delivery of information (Goldenberg, 2021; Goldenberg, 2022; Koumoundouros, 2022). The problem of trust in science in Lithuania arose during the COVID 19 pandemic. Trust in science in Lithuania was negatively influenced by the decrease in public trust in institutions and the media. Lithuanian science representatives are united by the fact that everyone is encouraged to improve their competences in the field of science communication in order to be able to build reliable relations with the public (Dohle ir kt., 2020; VU, 2022). Thus, it was concluded that increasing trust in science in the Lithuanian context is possible through science communication of competent representatives of science (Valstybės duomenų agentūra, 2020; LŽC, 2023).

Science communication is considered an essential element in strengthening the role and contribution of science in solving social challenges (Kuhn, 2012; Unesco, 2023). The origins of science communication can be considered the 17th-18th centuries - Age of Enlightenment. In the 19th century, published works of Charles Darwin, the beginning of the awarding of the Nobel Prize and the emergence of the genre of science fiction in literature determined the beginning of science communication. In the 20th century, the development of media created favorable conditions for the development of science communication (Simonson ir kt. 2012). Such a phenomenon as educational entertainment (edutainment) has appeared, which conveys science not only as an intellectual but also an emotional value (World bank, n.d.; Cambridge dictionary, 2023; de la Fuente-Anuncibay, 2023). However, due to the educational and income gap, science communication has not been accessible to all people and has led to social alienation and inequality. In the 21st century, there is a need to develop different engagement strategies due to formed different target audiences. The reliability of science communication has started to be ensured through the cooperation of representatives of science, politics and the media, with the goal of increasing trust in science through science communication. Science communication has become a complex phenomena that depends on context as well as trust in science (Pupelienė, 2015; Curtis ir kt., 2023).

In the context of the European Union, it is important to emphasize that from 2020 the discourse of science communication policy in the European Union started under the name „Responsible science and innovation”, which includes: public involvement in science and innovation, improving access to scientific results, gender equality in scientific processes, consideration of ethics and promotion of formal and non-formal education. The European Union emphasizes the role of representatives of different disciplines in the opposition against disinformation, which is perceived as a significant threat to trust in science (Felt, 2013; Trescaproject, 2020; Euopos Komisija, 2023). As for the Lithuanian context, in Lithuania, science policy is formed by the Lithuanian parliament and there are also institutions that are responsible for the development of science in Lithuania: the Research council of Lithuania, the Lithuanian Academy of Science, Science and technology parks. Science communication in Lithuania is mostly applied with the aim of popularizing science, rather than increasing trust in science (Stonkienė ir kt., 2009; Pupelienė, 2015; Valinčiūtė, 2020). Only the Lithuanian Journalism Center provides widely available recommendations and lectures on science communication with science representatives in Lithuania. In the context of Lithuania, science communication is still a developing field (LŽC, 2023; LRT, 2023).

These observations led to the empirical research of opportunities to increase trust in science through science communication in the context of Lithuania. A qualitative study was conducted with individuals who belong to institutions responsible for the development of science in Lithuania and science communication lecturers of the Lithuanian Journalism Center. During the research it was determined that in order to increase trust in science through science communication in Lithuania, based on the Laswell communication model (Laswell, 1948), the sender should be motivated to apply science communication in science the representative and the institution motivating him to apply scientific communication, to which the scientist belongs. It is found that research participants suggest institutions which represent science in Lithuania to develop strategic objectives with the task of building trust in science through science communication, taking into account the workload of scientists, financial support and the development of science communication competences. Regarding the message, it was concluded that the messages on the topic of science should be simplified, should be free of elements of academic language in order to make the messages more comprehensible and to understand the possibilities of applying science in everyday life. The research participants presented two options for dividing the recipients into target audiences: according to the relationship with science, according to belonging to certain, information bubbles”. Despite the abstract proposals regarding the division into target audiences, the research participants presented 4 specific channels of science communication that they consider the most appropriate: social networks, articles, podcasts, events. Social networks, articles and podcasts were suggested based on information consumption habits, and events, according to research participants, would help to get to know scientists even more and this could have a positive impact on the image of the scientist and the image of science in general.

## **An experimental study on the effects of olfactory sensory system influences on memory retention in long-term memory and possible implementation through association in pro to enrich meaningful learning in academic development**

*Keywords: Olfactory sensory system, Long-term memory, Association, Meaningful learning, Explicit Memory, Implicit Memory, NMDA receptors, mGluR*  
*Martin Andrade (Mykolas Romeris University)*

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It is known that some students use different associative methods with the intention of relating concepts during the time they may be studying to present their assessments, such as listening to music, having a specific drink, visiting the same place to review material, even sitting exactly in the same chair throughout the study cycle (Kalat, 2013). This study will focus on analyzing whether the sense of smell that occurs on a large scale when it comes to retrieving memories due to its strong relationship with the limbic system (Castellanos; Hudson; Habiland; Wilson, 2010) could influence academic performance and enrich meaningful learning (Ausubel, 1968) We have evidence that the olfactory system, among all the other senses, has a strong connection with the hippocampus area responsible for the ability to store memories among its functions (Zhou; Olofsson; Koubeissi; Menelaou; Rosenow; Schuele; Xu; Voss; Lane; Zelano, 2021). In this case we could suggest a possible connection to the learning process because the stimulation of this area could indicate a better association when it comes to encoding and storage, as well as retrieval later of contents lived in previous experiences that have been nourished with specific stimuli (Terry, 2006).

## **Meet your dream helper, The German Guy!**

*Awanish Srivastava (European University Viadrina)*

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In an increasingly interconnected world, the challenges and opportunities presented by migration are undeniable. As individuals seek to study or work in Germany, they encounter a myriad of complexities that require nuanced support systems. I am an International Viadrina Ambassador at Europa-Universität Viadrina with a passion for education and a proven track record of helping international student. I start The German Guy, a dedicated startup committed to facilitating these transitions, offers a comprehensive suite of services aimed at empowering individuals to realize their dreams within the German context.

Our array of services encompasses admission counseling, visa assistance, resume crafting, interview preparation, and career coaching, providing tailored support at every step of the journey. Moreover, we go beyond the basics by keeping our candidates informed about scholarships, internships, Au-pair opportunities, vocational training programs (Ausbildung), and job openings. By offering these services, we aim to alleviate the financial burden associated with counseling, ensuring accessibility for all aspiring individuals.

Drawing on our experience and expertise, we have personally guided over 400 aspirants to pursue their careers in Europe. Our commitment to nurturing ecosystems for social innovations and addressing the implications of migration on research sustainability underscores our dedication to fostering holistic growth and development.

The intersection of migration and social innovation presents a fertile ground for exploration and action. As individuals navigate the complexities of relocation, they bring with them diverse perspectives, skills, and experiences that enrich the fabric of society. However, this migration also poses challenges to research sustainability, as scholars and researchers grapple with issues of continuity, access, and inclusivity.

In light of these considerations, TGG recognizes the importance of nurturing ecosystems for social innovations that support the integration and well-being of migrants. By fostering collaboration, dialogue, and knowledge exchange, we seek to create inclusive spaces where individuals from diverse backgrounds can thrive and contribute to social change.

We acknowledge the need to address the implications of migration on research sustainability. As scholars and researchers engage with migrant communities, it is essential to consider the ethical, methodological, and practical dimensions of their work. Through targeted initiatives and partnerships, we aim to support research endeavors that promote inclusivity, equity, and sustainability.

## Room: L-101

### **14:00 - 15:30** | Decoding public trust and science communication in the digital age (I)

This panel session explores science communication and public trust amidst digital misinformation and evolving social networks, and address strategies to counter misinformation, enhance public trust, and bridge the gap between science communication and citizen engagement. Key topics include behaviors and content within online social networks and the impact of post-truth dynamics on public discourse. This session is organized in collaboration with projects supported by the Research Council of Lithuania (INFODEMIJA, P-VIS-23-57) and the CHIST-ERA grant (MARTINI, CHIST-ERA-21-OSNEM-004; S-CHIST-ERA-22-1).

## Navigating the Post-Truth Landscape: Impact on Science, Media, and Public Discourse

*Keywords: port truth, climate change, fake news, disinformation, trust in science*

*Aelita Skarzauskiene (Mykolas Romeris University)*

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The contemporary landscape of information dissemination and public discourse is characterized by a departure from objective truth. The rise of “alternative facts” through social media platforms is posing a significant challenge to the credibility of experts and scientists. This has resulted in a post-truth era characterized by a decline in public trust in science, which can sometimes be a deliberate strategy.

This phenomenon is particularly evident in areas such as climate change, vaccination, and genetic modification. The impact of political pressure, donor funding and technological manipulation on climate change and global crisis reporting is one of the biggest challenges posed by the post-truth era.

Firstly, in the quest for recognition and financial incentives, researchers may rush to publish their findings prematurely or exaggerate them without sufficient justification. Secondly, populist politicians exert pressure on scientists to arrive at conclusions that align with their agendas or to undermine objective scientific findings. Thirdly, geopolitical manipulation and disinformation campaigns in the digital age cannot be underestimated. State actors, like the Russian Federation, employ bots and trolls to fuel debates, spread fake news, sow discord, and weaken the scientific foundation of modern societies. These efforts have implications not only on psychological well-being but also on the physical health and safety of populations. Research shows that scepticism towards scientific knowledge and the media itself worsens mental health (Thomson et al., 2017)

In the current period, experts identify two main disinformation narratives (Kazlauskas, 2020): a) denial of scientific knowledge, which aims to reduce people’s trust in the climate change, health care system, academics, doctors and science in general, b) political propaganda, which aims to reduce people’s trust in democratic institutions, the European Union, NATO, the WHO etc. The first narrative, namely the denial of climate change-related scientific knowledge, is the focus of this project and is particularly relevant in the current Global warming context of the pandemic. The United Nations (UN) has warned that the world is facing “a dangerous epidemic of misinformation, filled with conspiracy theories and hatred”. The UN has launched an initiative to publish more sciencebased facts while tackling the dangers of misinformation. Restoring trust in scientific knowledge is crucial to reduce the negative effects of disinformation. Scientists, media consumers and journalists are encouraged to combine their competences in order to preserve the fundamental value of a progressive society, the right to know the truth (Combating fake news, 2017). The Pan-European Federation of Academies of Science (ALLEA) has recently devoted Discussion Paper No. 3 to this topic, which stresses that in this era, the activities of scientists need to become more public and the results more visible. At the same time, titled scientists and academics are encouraged to actively participate in the online debate by exposing fake news. The importance of this change is also highlighted in EU policy documents (Open Science Policy Platform Recommendations, 2017). The EU’s new science and innovation programme, Horizon Europe, is still in the process of being shaped, but the importance of open science is already enshrined in the initial guidelines. Open science means making databases and data sources available to all, and sharing information on methods of interpreting data. It is important to underline that openness is also pursued through a co-creationist perspective, by broadening the audience of researchers and scientific knowledge, and the way research is organised.

## Acknowledgements

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## Evaluating the Impact of Art Investments on Misinformation Dynamics Amid Geopolitical Conflicts

*Keywords: Contemporary Art Investments; Geopolitical Conflicts; Misinformation Countermeasures; Social Innovation; Fake News*

*Ornela Ramasauskaite (Mykolas Romeris University) Women Researchers Council UNEC*

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In the contemporary landscape, the intersection of art, geopolitics, and information dissemination presents a fertile ground for exploring unconventional strategies for social change. This research delves into how contemporary art investments can serve as a potent countermeasure against the proliferation of misinformation in areas fraught with geopolitical conflicts. Through a multi-faceted investigation, this study intends to bridge the thematic concerns of the conference, "Arts and Edges: Unconventional Approaches to Social Change," with a particular focus on the subtopics of open science and accessibility, measuring societal impact, nurturing ecosystems for social innovations, and the implications of migration on research sustainability.

The core hypothesis of this research is that strategic investments in contemporary art can catalyze significant social innovation by fostering environments where truth and transparency prevail over misinformation. The research sheds light on how art impacts public perception and societal resilience by examining case studies where art has successfully challenged fake news. This analysis mainly considers the strategies investors and curators employ to select and promote artworks that encourage critical thinking and media literacy, thereby enhancing the accessibility of truthful information.

The proposal aligns with the conference theme by advocating for an unconventional approach to social change - utilizing art investment as a tool for societal improvement in regions affected by geopolitical strife. This approach underscores the importance of nurturing ecosystems that support social innovations through creative and financial engagement with contemporary art. The research aims to quantify the societal impact of such investments, providing empirical evidence of the often intangible benefits of art in society. Doing so directly addresses the conference's interest in measuring the societal impact of research. Further, it contributes to the discourse on how social innovations can be effectively nurtured and sustained.

The research methodology encompasses a qualitative analysis of case studies and interviews. This comprehensive approach allows for a nuanced understanding of how contemporary art can serve as a medium for communication, education, and the promotion of truth. By making verified information accessible and understandable to a broad audience, contemporary art contributes to the broader objectives of open science.

In conclusion, this research presents a novel perspective on addressing the challenges of misinformation in geopolitically tense regions through the lens of contemporary art investments. It underscores the potential of art to catalyze social change,

fostering ecosystems that support innovation, resilience, and sustainability. By bridging the gap between art and social innovation, the proposed study aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on the societal impact of research, offering insights into how unconventional approaches to investment and engagement with art can lead to significant advancements in the fight against fake news and the promotion of a more informed, resilient society.

## Navigating the Anti-Vax Narrative: Understanding Actors, Behaviors, and Content in Online Social Networks

*Monika Maciuliene (Mykolas Romeris University)*

The proliferation of Online Social Networks (OSNs) has transformed communication, enabling global connectivity while also allowing malicious actors to manipulate public opinion and disrupt democratic processes (Jamison et al., 2019; Pacheco et al., 2020; Karami et al., 2021).

The lack of robust verification and gatekeeping on these platforms has exacerbated issues of social discourse integrity (Kondamudi et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2019). One significant concern is the spread of anti-vaccination misinformation, which undermines public health efforts and contradicts the recognized influence of accurate knowledge on vaccine acceptance (Cvjetkovic et al., 2017; Tan & Goonawardene, 2017). Addressing the lack of research on the strategies of anti-vaccine actors on OSNs, we present a systematic approach to characterizing these profiles and countering their disinformation, a crucial step in the continuing battle against the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The escalation of anti-vaccination misinformation on OSNs necessitates an in-depth understanding of the malicious actors behind it. This challenge is amplified by their evolving deceptive tactics across decentralized platforms and the need to balance data analysis with user privacy and expression (Ahmad et al., 2019; Aïmeur et al., 2023; Vese, 2022). Our conceptual framework focuses on three critical dimensions of disinformation: the types and networks of malicious actors, their behaviors and tactics, and the content themes they propagate. This multi-dimensional approach allows for a targeted analysis of anti-vaccination campaigns, providing a structured methodology to counteract these disinformation efforts effectively. The ensuing literature review scrutinizes these dimensions, revealing the strategies of these actors, their impact on public discourse, and the thematic evolution of their content in response to public and policy changes:

a) In analyzing the first dimension of our conceptual framework, we focus on the actors operationalizing the spread of anti-vaccination disinformation within OSNs. Leader et al. (2021) stress the importance of identifying these actors due to the critical role they play in amplifying the reach of misinformation. Research counters the assumption that bots are the main propagators; instead, it is real users—both those who intentionally disseminate and those who inadvertently share misinformation—that significantly contribute to its virality (Karami et al., 2021; De Silva et al., 2020).

These actors range from individual influencers to organized groups, each varying in their level of engagement and influence (Harris et al., 2024;). Echo chambers on OSNs further exacerbate the issue, with tightly knit communities forming around

shared, often false beliefs, creating fertile ground for the persistence and propagation of antivaccine misinformation (Bruns, 2019; Memon & Carley, 2020; Featherstone et al., 2020; Herasimenka et al., 2023).

b) The second dimension of our conceptual framework examines the behaviors of antivaccination actors within OSNs, where their adaptability, technical sophistication, and strategic coordination become apparent. These actors employ automation, such as bots, to mimic human activity and increase the visibility of their content, and trolls to incite conflict, as noted by Ortiz-Sánchez et al. (2020) and Herasimenka et al. (2023).

Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior is a tactic utilized across platforms, forming an adversarial network aimed at compromising public health efforts (Murero, 2023).

Anti-vaccine actors adjust their strategies to the affordances of specific platforms, such as Twitter, where community reinforcement is achieved through high activity levels and retweeting practices (Horawalavithana et al., 2023). Moreover, the movement's cross-platform behavior amplifies the challenge of countering disinformation, demanding a holistic approach to tracking and mitigating their influence across the digital landscape (Agarwal & Bandeli, 2020; Wilson & Starbird, 2020). This sophisticated, multiplatform orchestration underscores the need for comprehensive counter-strategies to disrupt unified anti-vaccine narratives.

c) Dissecting the content strategies of the anti-vaccination movement, the final dimension of our framework, reveals how these narratives persist and evolve on OSNs. The anti-vax content, characterized by its multimodal approach, taps into recurring themes and persuasive storytelling to captivate and emotionally engage audiences, often prioritizing emotional narratives over factual information (Wawrzuta et al., 2021; Hughes et al., 2021; Covolo et al., 2017; Mitra et al., 2016). Personal freedoms and skepticism of authority resonate within anti-vax communities, intertwining cultural values with misinformation and complicating public health messaging (Benecke & DeYoung, 2019). Engagement patterns show that anti-vax messages frequently receive higher positive reactions, particularly on visual platforms like YouTube and Instagram (Wawrzuta et al., 2021). As health policies evolve, so too does anti-vax content, with advocates rapidly adapting their messages in a cultural stand against mainstream health information, often outpacing public health efforts in the digital arena. Acknowledging the interplay of emotional and cognitive responses to misinformation is vital, as societal, political, and cultural influences greatly amplify its impact and retention.

Moving forward, the study will continue to iterate and refine the conceptual framework, incorporating the insights gained from extensive data collection and analysis activities on diverse set of OSNs. These reiterations are expected to deepen our understanding of the nuances of disinformation spread and aid in the development of more sophisticated profiles of malicious actors. These profiles will encompass detailed attributes of the actors, including their behavioral patterns and network characteristics on various platforms. The goal is to systematically catalog the strategies employed by these actors, facilitating the creation of targeted countermeasures. Additionally, by continuously revisiting and updating the framework with new data, we aim to adapt to the evolving nature of disinformation tactics, ensuring that our approach remains relevant and effective in the dynamic landscape of online information exchange.

## Acknowledgements

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## Room: I-201

### **14:00 - 15:30** | Solutions for Countering Migration Mis(dis)information and Enhancing Public Discourse

This panel session addresses the challenge of disinformation surrounding migration. The presentations provide solutions for countering false narratives and promoting informed public discourse on migration issues.

#### **Reversing the narrative: emigration as a resource for social change. Bulgarian case**

*Ildiko Otova and Evelina Staikova (New Bulgarian University)*

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The paper takes as its starting point the relationship between migration and the social change focusing on the potential role that migrants have on economic development and more recently, democratization. Although this hypothesis is not new, it lacks verification in the specific Eastern European context and even more so in the Balkan, post-communist reality that is the Bulgarian case.

Bulgaria, now more than 30 years after the democratic changes, continues to be strongly marked by its emigration. The emigration processes, presented by politicians and media as a national catastrophe, create a moral panic and persistent symbolic universes of foreigners' rejection and extremist attitudes.

At the same time, disappointment with the corrupted democratic transition and market economy as a factor for emigration is often summarized in a popular expression: 'Voting with the legs.' In the last decades, especially after the EU accession, migration was transformed into mobility and a new form of citizenship beyond geographic locations emerged. In recent years, Bulgarians living abroad have played a vital role in the most massive civic mobilizations. The paper will analyze the role of emigrants in the process of Bulgaria's democratization in the context of a persistent political crisis (after 2020) and a system dominated by populism.

## Building Societal Resilience in the Face of Information Warfare

*Volodymyr Tsybka (Mykolas Romeris University, Kyiv National Linguistic University (senior lecturer))*

One of key challenges facing modern democracies is the need to mount effective resistance against the “sharp power” projected by authoritarian states. Its most common and dangerous form is ever-escalating information warfare, intended to undermine trust and ruin the very foundation of societies. To address this issue, numerous fact-checking projects have been launched and legal actions have been taken to curb the spread of fakes. Media literacy training has been introduced to build long-term resilience to information manipulation among different segments of population. In addition to teaching how to recognize falsehoods, the scope of these courses may include topics that touch upon various elements of media logic and human psychology, such as gatekeeping and agenda-setting functions of media, social stereotypes, emotional vulnerabilities and cognitive shortcuts, that distort information flow and processing and make people susceptible to manipulation.

Yet, such instruction fails to provide satisfactory answers to some key questions: Why so many people seem unconcerned with the factual status of information they consume and share? Why so many seem willing to knowingly promote obvious falsehoods – not just without moral scruples, but considering it a righteous act? And why some do it for no obvious practical reason? Level of education, strictness of ethical standards, cultural background and selective exposure may only be a part of explanation.

The gap can be filled with findings from cognitive science that describe two distinct moral systems, loosely associated with such labels as “liberalism” and “conservatism.” This line of research was made prominent by cognitive linguist George Lakoff and grew into a popular sub-discipline of cognitive science of ethics. The studies show that these systems are characterized by fundamentally different attitude to hierarchy, different views on the possibility of objective truth, and limits of permissiveness when it comes to defending the moral system itself. Our preference for one of these systems is largely rooted in our emotional experience. But we all share elements of both systems that can be activated under certain conditions.

Increasing public awareness of these features, we can help people understand many puzzling patterns of human behaviour, chart a new course to heal social divisions, and develop new caution. Instead of striving for a universal moral ideal or descending into moral relativism, instead of puzzling over irreconcilable differences, we should shift attention to the dangers of radicalization along either of the moral paths, acknowledge our individual vulnerability, and start building resistance to forces that exploit them.

Introduction of these topics into public debates and media literacy training should be done with caution and scientific rigor. Case studies of nazi Germany, Soviet and Putin’s Russia can serve important reminders of how easy and how far entire nations can go in pursuit of their aims, and how much following and submission their leaders can get along the way.

A lot is said about the fact that openness of democratic countries makes them vulnerable to information attacks, and that building protective walls around them can be equally disastrous. Expanding the curriculum of media training courses and the scope of public debates to accommodate the discussion of moral worldviews informed by cutting edge cognitive science can greatly increase resistance of societies to manipulation and promote social cohesion. This task will require time and effort, but can prove a uniquely effective way to protect and enhance democracy.

## The problem of excessive criminalization of speech in Europe

Vladimir Komarnickiy (Mykolas Romeris University)

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This report is devoted to the problem of excessive criminalization of speech in the countries of the European Union and the Council of Europe. Despite the fact that most European countries meet a high level of democracy and the rule of law, even they face the problem of overly broad restrictions on the right to freedom of expression. It is especially dangerous when a person's right to freedom of expression is limited by the Criminal Law, as the most severe mechanism of legal regulation. The right to freedom of speech is one of the fundamental rights of man and citizen, but even words can cause significant damage to the interests of the individual, society and the state. However, excessive restriction of the right to freedom of expression also entails a violation of the interests of the individual, damage to democracy, pluralism, and the development of society.

Even in democratic EU countries, there are criminal law provisions that may be applied too broadly, and there are cases of improper criminal prosecution of individuals for expressing opinions. To find a balance between the necessary criminal law prohibitions and maintaining the democratic foundations of society, it is necessary to carefully find and observe the criteria by which it is permissible to establish criminal law norms and apply them regarding the form of expression of opinion on the part of citizens.

In addition to the activities of parliamentary deputies in the adoption of normative legal acts, judges, in the formation of law enforcement practice, in the study of issues of freedom of speech, its decriminalization, the contribution of scientific theorists plays a role, who are able to formulate general, theoretical criteria by which criminal law norms and methods can be adequately constructed their assessments by the courts, methods of assessment in general in the situation in the country, region, regarding the situation of freedom of speech.

Despite the fact that in the countries of continental Europe the theoretical works of scientists are not considered sources of law, it is certain that law enforcement officials and legislators get acquainted with them and take them into account in their activities. At the same time, cases of restriction of freedom of expression are often particularly resonant, which demonstrates their social significance.

## Room: L-102

### 14:00 - 15:30 | Transformative Legal Approaches to Family and Property Protection

This session examines the evolution of legal frameworks concerning family formation, property rights, and dispute resolution in Europe. The presentations underscore the role of legal innovations in shaping modern societal norms and rights.

#### Civil partnership as a form of family life

*Filip Cyuńczyk (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities) and Dominika Kuna (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities)*

Civil partnership as a form of family life Both Poland and Lithuania belong to the constantly decreasing group of EU countries (soon Latvia may leave the group) where there is no legal regulation of the cohabitation of two people in a form other than heterosexual marriage. Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, and (still) Latvia belong to this group. Even illiberal Hungary has legally regulated civil partnerships. The vast majority of the doctrine of Polish constitutional law is of the view that the - correct in their opinion - interpretation of Article 18 of the Polish Constitution limits the marriage possibility in Poland to different-sex couples. This is supposed to prevent a simple legal procedure of extending the institution of marriage to same-sex couples. Since the beginning of the 21st century, works on creating a draft regulation providing an alternative to the institution of marriage have been carried out. In particular, it has been drafted for couples who, due to the interpretation of Article 18 of the Constitution dominating both doctrine and practice, cannot marry. The first Polish proposal was drafted in 2003. According to Article 12 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, men and women of marriageable age have the right to marry and to found a family, in accordance with the national laws governing the exercise of this right. This article does not provide for or prohibit the granting of the status of marriage to same-sex unions. In European countries, two fundamental approaches have emerged: the first is allowing same-sex couples to marry (e.g. Germany) or legally defined civil partnerships. A fundamental problem that has emerged in the course of legislative work in various European countries is the issue of discrimination based on sexual preference. The problem relates both to the inaccessibility of marriage for non-heteronormative persons and to the availability, or possible inaccessibility, of civil partnerships for couples who are not obstructed by law from entering into marriage.

The second important issue in constructing the legislation is determining the extent of the legal differences between marriage and civil union, specifically concerning the rights and obligations of persons entering into a particular form of cohabitation. This requires a sociocultural reflection. Establishing the difference between marriage - as the fundamental institution for the

creation of a family in the circle of European culture - and civil partnership will require the introduction of the scope of duties of the partners and the prerequisites for the termination of cohabitation, the dissolution of the relationship. Other fundamental issues are, for example, the availability of health information, cohabitation of property, maintenance for the partner as well as bearing the consequences of the partner's failure to honour financial obligations. The third fundamental problem is to define the elements constituting a civil partnership. On the one hand, it should satisfy the expectations of, for example, persons belonging to the LGBT+ community, and on the other hand, it should not violate other values protected by political communities, above all, the values of marriage, family and parenthood, the welfare of the child. In light of the last, the right to adopt children is controversial. Legislative development requires analysing the existing approaches in other countries and studying the level of public acceptance of the proposed solutions. The issue of parenthood and the adoption of children by same-sex couples has been the subject of lively social debate in Poland for many years. Surveys conducted to date indicate that the attitude of Poles to the issue of 'rainbow families' has a strong political character. The opponents of the legalisation of adoption of children by homosexual couples and same-sex marriages see it as contradictory to the Basic Law and a delegation of exclusive competence in the formulation of family law. As a result, under Polish law, the current view excludes the possibility to treat a same-sex union also as a family. When constituting civil partnerships and same-sex marriages, one should first consider issues related to the overriding value of family law, the spirit of the act creating the rights and duties of parents - the child's good. As the oldest social group, the family is integral to the formation of society. Since ancient times, family relations have reflected the changes taking place in each environment. In Polish law, there is no definition of a family. The legislator rarely uses the term, and legal norms usually address its members - most often a man and a woman who have entered a marriage. However, it is clear from developmental psychology that the best situation for a child is the stability of the family and the presence of both parents, who do not have to be of the opposite sex, so there is no need for a father and mother figure. Therefore, it is worth looking at aspects related to the fundamental values that influence the common understanding of the family. The primary assumption of the proposed presentation is to look at the social, political and - most importantly - legal mechanisms that surround the discourse mechanisms surrounding the issue of civil partnerships. Particular attention should be paid to the clash between liberal-democratic axiology and the Central European (transitional) imaginary of the political community's constitution and substance. That clash is further influenced by the supra- and international system of fundamental rights protection.

## The Bulgarian legal tradition of property rights and how conservative law reacts to social innovations and societal transformations

*Milena Karadjova, New Bulgarian University*

### Thesis

In Bulgaria there is a clearly distinguishable and sustainable model regarding the right to property characterized by the fact that the majority of Bulgarian citizens has property rights to real estate. Historically, state involvement has been essential in regulating the size of property owned by people. In this context, extreme liberalism is inappropriate for the Bulgarian economic and social system. The application of social innovations in the changing society must be in harmony with the legal and social tradition so that their application has a positive effect.

## Objective

Presenting the Bulgarian legal tradition and the practices for acquisition, management and administration of property rights and the possibilities for changes in the context of social innovations for transformative society.

A brief historical overview of property rights in Bulgaria

About ten years ago I started actively researching issues related to public property in Bulgaria (my interest in the topic was provoked by the complex reform in the field of property ownership in Bulgaria in the 1990s: the restoration of private and municipal property after the totalitarian regime, the privatization of a significant part of the public sector, the restriction of property nationalization after World War II to the former owners and to their heirs. My work as a real estate lawyer as well as my teaching and research work in Centre of Public Administration at New Bulgarian University (where I developed the academic course "Public Property") contributed to deepening interests. One of the research lines somehow spontaneously led to a historical direction as church and monastery land and property turned out to be an interesting challenge.

The establishment of the Bulgarian legal tradition on the regulation of property law, the historical development, managerial, religious and cultural differences have a significant impact. Until the fourteen century, the main influence on our national legal system had been primarily Byzantine legislation. Drawing on

Roman rule-making traditions, Constantinople created legislation that reflected Christian socio-economic realities and took into account regional specifics. Public relations in Byzantium largely formed the administrative, religious, cultural and economic appearance of medieval Bulgaria. In Byzantium, as well as in Bulgaria, throughout the Middle Ages, state law was created and applied - in contrast to Central and Western Europe, where canon law plays a significant, in some cases - dominant role in various spheres of social and economic life.

The regulation of property relations established by the Slavonic Law also shows the sustainability of specific legal institutions. The Ottoman period in Bulgarian lands left lasting traces, recognized long time after the Liberation. Re-establishment of the Bulgarian state under the Treaty of San Stefano of March 3, 1878, Bulgaria adopted the German model of legal regulation of property rights. The communist regime has radically changed views on property, introducing Soviet legislation.

## Overcoming the Mediation Paradox: A Path Towards Social Innovation

*Indre Korsakoviene, Mykolas Romeris University*

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Mediation is an alternative dispute resolution method where an independent, neutral mediator helps the disputants to reach a mutually acceptable, amicable resolution. It is a cost-effective and efficient process that enables the parties to resolve their conflict both amicably and in a manner that preserves the existing relationship between them. Moreover, mediation is seen as a measure to improve access to justice and to reduce or redistribute the backlog of the courts. The Directive 2008/52/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on certain aspects of mediation in civil and commercial matters (further - the Mediation Directive) aimed to increase the accessibility of mediation services, the public's awareness of media-

tion as well as the use of mediation as a peaceful method of resolving disputes by ensuring a balanced relationship between mediation and the judicial proceedings. The Mediation Directive became an innovative landmark encouraging EU Member States to introduce mediation and ensure compliance with its provisions into their national legislation.

However, mediation is recognised not only as a cost-effective, resource-saving process for the disputants and society, but also as a process that restores social cohesion among its members. Furthermore, it can also be recognised as a social innovation due to several factors. Firstly, it offers a new approach for contemporary societies to resolve arising conflicts by educating them to address disputes of various kinds in a more effective and sustainable way and by maintaining relationship between disputants. Secondly, mediation mitigates the negative and long-lasting impact of conflicts for social development. By involving the disputing parties in the process of dispute resolution and empowering them to take responsibility for reaching a mutually beneficial solution, their cooperation is encouraged. Mediation often leads beyond the resolution of legal disputes but also helps to restore the social peace between society members, improve their social interaction and ensure the validity and sustainability of the agreements resulting from the mediation. Thirdly, mediation is an innovative, highly receptive for technological innovations, open and collaborative future-oriented process, in contrast to the adversarial and past-oriented nature of traditional judicial dispute resolution. It is a new paradigm for understanding conflict as an opportunity for positive social change and social well-being for members of society.

The application of mediation varies widely within the EU Member States. Many countries in the EU do not have a long standing tradition of using mediation, thus it requires the active engagement of public policy makers and legislators in order to exploit the benefits of this mechanism. The preconditions for the institutionalisation of mediation were created by the adoption of the Mediation Directive in 2008, however this legal instrument has unfortunately not generated the expected results, due to the “soft” nature of the regulation and the freedom given to Member States to choose the most appropriate ways to implement the legal regulation in national law. Latest studies on the impact of the Mediation Directive, initiated by the EU institutions, indicate that mediation is used to resolve less than 1% of all civil disputes arising in the EU. This has led to the appearance of a mediation paradox within the EU: despite the widely recognised benefits of mediation and its striking results, society is reluctant to use mediation without additional procedural incentives. A failure to overcome the mediation paradox undermines the possibility of embracing the benefits of mediation as a social innovation.

However, there are also positive examples, such as the introduction of mandatory mediation in Italy, where the use of mediation has achieved a much-anticipated breakthrough. Or the introduction of the mandatory family mediation model in Lithuania from 2020, which, as revealed by an „Ex post evaluation of the existing legal regulation of mandatory family mediation“, has significantly increased the use of mediation in the country, raised public awareness about mediation and served as a solid foundation for utilising mediation to resolve other kinds of disputes. Mandatory mediation is just one of the possible mechanisms for promoting mediation. However the introduction of it into the national legal framework, as evidenced by the genesis of mandatory mediation in Europe, often generates a strong endorsement from the society and the lawyers. In addition, the Mediation Directive has also proposed a number of other procedural instruments, such as the suspension of limitation periods, the enforcement of mediation agreements, and other incentives and sanctions, which have the potential to stimulate the increased use of mediation. Nevertheless, due to the prevailing absence of statistical data on the use of mediation, no research is available on the real impact of these measures and their effectiveness.

This factual situation inspires further research in the area of promoting mediation, and look for more effective measures to overcome the mediation paradox. Some potential measures may include the identification and analysis of effective legislative measures to promote the use of mediation, and the creation of an effective mediation ecosystem at the national and interna-

tional level, which would lead to a more accelerated acceptance of this social innovation and allow the public to experience its benefits more rapidly.

## The impact of the public policy clause under the Brussels Ibis Regulation on the effective functioning of the EU internal market

*Mykolas Kirkutis, Mykolas Romeris University*

One of the objectives of European Union is to maintain and develop the area of freedom, security and justice, including by facilitating access to justice, in particular through the principle of mutual recognition of judicial and non-judicial decisions in civil matters. In pursuit of this objective, the Brussels Ibis Regulation, which replaced the previous Brussels I Regulation and the Brussels Convention, was designed to avoid situations in which proceedings are conducted simultaneously in several different Member States. To reach this aim, Article 25 of the Brussels Ibis Regulation introduced a provision according to which, where the parties have concluded an agreement on the jurisdiction of a court or courts of a Member State to hear their dispute, such jurisdiction is to be considered exclusive, unless the parties agree otherwise. It is recognised that the purpose of this provision is to improve the effectiveness of exclusive jurisdiction agreements and to avoid abusive litigation tactics.

The CJEU's preliminary ruling of 21 March, 2024 in the case 'Gjensidige' highlights the problem under the Brussels Ibis Regulation between respect for the exclusive jurisdiction agreements to resolve a dispute in the court or courts of the Member State, the mutual trust between the Member States, and the non-recognition of a judgment of a foreign court rendered in breach of the exclusive jurisdiction agreement on public policy ground. The CJEU interpreted, in essence, that it is not permissible to refuse to recognise a judgment of a court of another Member State given in breach of an exclusive jurisdiction agreement concluded between the parties. In this case, the CJEU essentially accepted that the such a branch constituted the violation of the right to a fair trial, but according to the CJEU, it could not be considered so serious as to justify the non-recognition of a judgment of a court of another Member State on public policy grounds. Thus, although the case was decided in the context of the Brussels Ibis Regulation and the CMR Convention, it raises the question whether the Brussels Ibis Regulation ensures that the jurisdictional agreements are sufficiently effective and respected. As well as, it raises a question if the application of the public policy clause is balanced in order to ensure the protection of the right to a fair trial.

The presentation discusses whether the reform of the Brussels Ibis Regulation should give greater protection to exclusive jurisdictional agreements concluded by the parties by introducing an additional ground for non-recognition of a foreign judgment when the judgment of another state is rendered in violation of the parties' exclusive jurisdictional agreement.

## Room: I-407

### 14:00 - 15:30 | Advancing Environmental Sustainability (I)

This session explores innovative environmental management and climate justice approaches, including waste management from islands to outer space, issues on climate communication, and climate justice litigation. This session explores innovative environmental management and climate justice approaches, including waste management from islands to outer space, issues on climate communication, and climate justice litigation.

#### **Renewable energy solutions for financing of sustainable urban development.**

*Keywords: sustainable architecture; LCCA, renewable energy; payback period.*

*Georgi Georgiev (New Bulgarian University)*

#### **Research background:**

Importance of the energy consumption in the urban structures is getting increasing attention in the context of exhausting of non-renewable sources of energy and the global warming prospective. Therefore both energy saving and renewable energy options within the built environment are considered to mitigate the looming global negative changes. The concept of Positive Energy Districts (PED) is getting increasing popularity among researchers and urban practitioners. Positive Energy Districts and Neighbourhoods are an integral part of comprehensive approaches towards sustainable urbanisation including technology, spatial, regulatory, financial, legal, social and economic aspects.

Purpose: Worldwide pilot developments are exploring the concept of PED as urban neighborhood with annual net zero energy import and net zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by integration between buildings, the residents and the energy, mobility and ICT systems. The purpose of the paper is focused on the investigating the potential of use the concept by integrating of renewable energy sources in apartment housing estates. The phenomenon of prevailing large scale multistory mass housing estates is taking place in almost all Eastern European countries. It leads to threefold problem of low living standard, low energy efficiency and deterioration of housing in such estates. The use of PED concept for such housing estates could have the potential to solve the problem by integrating of RES within the multistory housing. For the purpose it is instrumental to investigate the local specifics, pros and cons for the case of Bulgaria in regard to housing technologies and legislation climate conditions and residents mentality etc.

Methods: Analysis of the potential of use of mass large scale urban housing to be used for integration of RES. Analysis of potential viable options for use of funds from produced energy for refurbishment of multistory apartment buildings and the related institutional and legal provisions that would be necessary.

## Findings and novelty:

The lack of proper maintenance and management of large scale condominium housing is a common problem in post-Soviet Eastern European countries starting from the very beginning of occupation of such apartment buildings. After the political and economic changes in 90-ies of last century the problem worsened in the context of missing legislation and financing that has led to systemic and permanent process of deterioration of such housing. Another weak point of such buildings is the extremely high extent of energy inefficiency leading to increasing issue of energy poverty for the residents of condominium apartments. The paper investigates the potential to convert the problems into opportunities by integration of renewable energy sources into industrially built mass multistory housing using the funds from produced RES energy to boost sustainable urban housing development.

## Understanding 15-Minute City Planning: A Comprehensive Review of Sustainable Urban Transition Success Factors

*Keywords: sustainable urban planning; city planning; smart cities; 15-minute city; GIS; behavioral economics; civic engagement; participatory planning; urban transition; bottom-up wellbeing; inclusive planning*  
*Aikaterini Taka and Dimitris Kavroudakis, University of the Aegean*

The concept of the “15-minute city” has gained attention in urban planning, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This idea focuses on creating cities where residents can reach their needs within walking distance, biking distance, or a short public transportation ride. When transforming public space, commuting infrastructure has been associated with urban sustainability, resilience, and transportation network efficiency. Studies have indicated that this model could offer insights for city evaluation and help shape policies for smart cities with low ecological footprint, while emphasizing residents’ well-being. Despite its growing popularity, questions remain on how to predict and implement these city planning initiatives. The proposed comprehensive review of existing literature and empirical studies aims to address these gaps and guide future studies.

Insights from behavioral economics and neuroscience suggest that understanding attitudes and cultural biases is crucial for encouraging behaviors before adopting universal “one size fits all” solutions, particularly in cross-country policy making. Important areas in need of exploration include developing a framework to assess adherence to the 15-minute city concept and considering potential socio-economic effects such as gentrification and displacement. Participatory planning and civic engagement in urban planning could benefit the integration process of such a city model. Broader Geographic Information technologies, such as 6G, IoT, Digital Twins and isochronic mapping play a crucial role in urban planning.

While facilitating the design and advancement of 15-minute cities, the utilization of isochrones as a mapping tool comes with certain restrictions that could significantly impact the design and integration plan of a 15-minute city. Isochronic maps use time and speed, which could produce misleading urban planning suggestions, not accounting for factors such as the population age.

This review delves into the intricacies of planning and executing 15-minute neighborhoods by combining current studies to pinpoint areas for further investigation. It emphasizes the pivotal role of social innovations in fostering sustainable environmental transitions within urban contexts. Acknowledging the interdisciplinary nature of urban planning and the necessity of collaborative efforts, the proposed review underscores the value of iterative approaches to 15-minute city planning. Through continuous monitoring, evaluation, and stakeholder engagement, these approaches contribute to shaping resilient and inclusive urban ecosystems.

The presentation will provide valuable literature insights into the challenges and opportunities of 15-minute city planning, aiming to highlight the underlying success factors of the design process that require further investigation. Fostering interdisciplinary dialogue and academic collaboration is necessary to create more resilient, well-being-oriented, and sustainable urban environments.

## Multi-temporal Assessment and Mapping of Ecosystem Service demand in National and Regional Parks of Lithuania

*Marius Kalinauskas and Paulo Alexandre da Silva Pereira, Mykolas Romeris University*

Human well-being is interlinked with the tangible and intangible benefits that Ecosystem Services (ES) provide. National and regional parks (NRP's) are key suppliers of provisioning, regulating & maintenance, and cultural ES that are demanded by humans. The ES demand directly and indirectly increases the pressure on local ecosystems thus causing environmental degradation. Current scientific discourse on ES demand is fragmented and the phenomenon itself is challenging to quantify at spatial dimension. In this study we fill this gap by mapping and assessing ES demand in NRP's at multi-temporal scale (year 1990, 2000, 2006, 2012, 2018, 2022) for provisioning (surface water and groundwater) and regulating & maintenance (soil erosion and flood retention) ES. To calculate the ES demand for each corresponding year Corine land cover (1990-2018) and Esri land cover (2022) data were used at 100 m resolution. We expressed the ES demand as percentage of land use per NRP's required by ES beneficiaries. Flood retention demand includes flood risk assessment based on flood risk zones. For soil erosion we additionally used the Bare Soil Index (BSI) to balance the demand percentage. The results show that the highest demand for groundwater and surface water are in the NRP's located in southwest, west, and center-north of Lithuania. Lowest – in eastern and southern NRP's. The demand for soil erosion is the highest in northern and central NRP's of Lithuania, while the least soil erosion demand is in western and eastern NRP's. Finally, flood retention demand is highest in NRP's located in the west, closer to Nemunas river and Curonian Lagoon. The lowest demand for flood retention is in the parks that have no significant flood risk, located in south-west, south, and northeastern NRP's. The Kruskal-Wallis test showed significant differences between the surface water and groundwater demand between the prior years and 2022. The same test for soil erosion and flood retention demand showed no significant differences between the analyzed years. Mapping and assessing of provisioning and regulating ES demand in Lithuanian NRP's adds a valuable knowledge that contributes to regional and international policy documents (e.g., Sustainable Development Goals, EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030) that are key in supporting sustainable environmental management and human wellbeing.

## Room: I-414

### 14:00 - 15:30 | Intercultural Competence and Educational Transformation

This session delves into the critical role of educational transformation in fostering inclusive learning environments. The presentations explore diverse narratives and methodologies to enhance understanding and integration within educational systems and beyond.

#### **Picking up discourses of others to think differently. Cross-over study of various school situations of welcoming and learning a new school language**

*Maxime Alais (Paris 8 University)*

This proposal targets the axes of “Implications of Migration on Research Sustainability” and/or “Navigating the Complexities of Migration, Exile, and Refugees”. It is based on a PhD study (Alais, 2022) in language didactics and sociolinguistics, focusing on the reception and schooling of so-called migrant children, newcomers, etc., who initially do not speak the language of the school.

More specifically, the main context of the PhD study is the Belgian support scheme DASPA (Dispositif d’Accueil et de Scolarisation des élèves Primo-Arrivants).

The aim of the proposal is to change the deficit view (Alais, 2023) that the French-speaking Belgian School usually has of so-called newcomer students. In the above-mentioned PhD study, a cross-over

(Werner & Zimmermann, 2004) study is attempted on the basis of “what is done” (observations in the target language classroom) and “what is said” (institutional discourses, interviews with students, teachers, principals) between this context and other contexts of schooling in a new school language.

We have chosen other contexts that are usually considered (and presented as being) much less problematic in terms of learning a new language (school networks of the Agence pour l’enseignement français à l’étranger (AEFE) and the Council of International Schools (CIS)).

We have considered what could be said and done in these much more privileged socio-economic backgrounds than in that for the schooling of so-called migrant children. We have picked up positive discourses and have imagined them applied to our field of schooling for so-called migrant children. We believe that social innovation in the face of the challenge of schooling children who don’t speak the language of the school would be to imagine their schooling with discourses and practices that

exist in other school contexts - in other words, to use what is already there rather than seeking to create new discourses, new practices. For critical and responsible research in particular, this would mean allowing oneself to go beyond the boundaries of one's own research field in order to discover and then disseminate other, diverse discourses and practices, etc., discovered in other fields. In this sense, the researcher could be a social agent of change, working "across and between" (Jullien, 2012) to understand situations, audiences, etc., that are little (or not at all) connected.

Our contribution is an oral presentation in two main parts. First, we specify what is meant by deficit discourse (or deficit perspective) about students schooled within the DASPA support scheme; we explain the theoretical framework chosen (Detienne, 2009; Jucquois, 2000; Werner & Zimmermann, 2004) and we define our conception of cross-over studies. We then illustrate how the approach we've chosen has guided our understanding of the data we've collected (extracts from institutional discourses, interview excerpts, classroom observations) in an attempt to renew the usual deficit view of so-called newcomer students schooled in this support scheme. Because these various situations generate experiences of otherness, we conclude by considering the schooling situations of plurilingual students as formative for the school world as a whole.

## Participation of Roma pupils in nonformal education in the context of the transformation of the Lithuanian education system

*Keywords: parents of pupils; participation in non-formal education; Roma pupils; social pedagogues; workers of non-governmental organizations*

*Justinas Sadauskas, Alina Petrauskiene, Gintaute Zibeniene, Vida Gudzinskiene, Brigita Kairiene and Rita Raudeliunaite (Mykolas Romeris University)*

Lithuania has made considerable progress in integrating Roma pupils into the education system, but there is still a need for more significant changes, particularly in the participation of Roma pupils in non-formal education. This presentation aims to explore the opportunities and challenges related to the participation of Roma pupils in non-formal education in the context of the transformation of the Lithuanian education system.

To gather qualitative data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 11 Roma parents, 8 school social pedagogues and 3 workers of non-governmental organizations, followed by content analysis. Roma parents recognize the benefits of non-formal education in providing children with meaningful leisure activities, developing essential skills for the future, and improving health. However, they face challenges in accessing and financing non-formal education for children with special needs. Social pedagogues observe that younger Roma pupils in primary schools are active in events, sports and art groups. However, older pupils are less likely to be involved in non-formal education within the school environment. Instead, young people participate in non-formal education outside of school when activities or events are funded by sponsors rather than from the family budget. The role of NGOs in supporting and involving Roma pupils in non-formal education is crucial, as it not only promotes Roma identity, but also encourages young people to attend school and engage in their studies.

## Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Connections with Development of Social Work: Study Case of Nepal, Lithuania and Germany

Roberta Gilyte and Jolanta Pivoriene (Mykolas Romeris University)

Roberta Gilytė together with her professor dr. Jolanta Pivoriene prepared an article analysing how Hofstede's Cultural Dimension theory influences the begging and development of social work in Lithuania, Nepal and Germany. According to the theory created by Geert Hofstede every culture can be analysed by 6 dimensions: power distance, individualism versus collectivism, motivation towards achievements and success, uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation and indulgence. According to different matrix in these dimensions one can analyse how cultures change and develop, what every member of this society is most likely to value and how they react to uncertain situations.

By analyzing already existing documents and articles authors of this article were searching for connections between these dimensions and social work in certain countries. There were some tendencies seen in those countries. For example, social work in Lithuania was influenced by social work model in Germany. This can be explained not only by Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions model but also the fact that Lithuania got its independence later than Germany and had to look for an already existing social work model. Lithuania, being post-Soviet country, of course took example of more modern country, that already had developed in a different way. In Nepal, on the other hand, social work is also quite new discipline but it also has its own problems. For example, there still is no methodology of social work adapted to that country. What is more, if we try to find connections between Hofstede Cultural Dimension theory, one can see that Nepal is highly collective country (30 points, Lithuania 55 and Germany 79) meaning that many of functions typically addressed to social workers are done by other family members, charity or religious organisations. And this causes extra tension when there is a need to introduce new ideas and organizations in order to help people. What is more, there could be a connection to uncertainty avoidance index, in which Lithuania and Germany have 65 points, while Nepal – 40. This means that people from Nepal are more open for new ideas and they are better at thinking outside the box while people from Lithuania and Germany prefer having less place for creativity and like having everything sorted out. This also affects social work, as social workers have to use different methodologies and strategies while working with clients. Of course, when comparing these countries there is a need to collect more data in Nepal as there are not all the dimensions described in Hofstede's country comparison tool (<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool?countries=germany%2Clithuania%2Cnepal>) but of course, there could be a connection between different cultures and social work development.

This rapport could contribute in Embracing Interculturality and Multilingualism section as there is information about cultural knowledge and how our culture shape how we see the World around us, how we react to one or another situation, how we interact with each other and how one understands difference between “us” and “them”.

## Does a teacher matter? Social mattering and inclusive leadership to boost of the prestige of the teaching profession

*Agota Giedre Raisiene and Justina Budreikatė, (Mykolas Romeris University)*

Teaching has long been regarded as a well-known profession, so changes in the education sector have focused on optimising education costs, on structural issues and, at a narrower level, on students, curricula and methods. It has become common for teachers themselves, as employees, to participate in the scene of change as supporting actors. Traditionally, teachers are expected to make suggestions about the quality of teaching, but as stakeholders they are rarely invited to participate in the debates that shape education policy. In stakeholder discussions, teachers are most often represented by the school administration, which itself only partially addresses the problems expressed by teachers regarding working conditions and opportunities to do their job well. In other words, the teacher as a person has remained in the shadow of his or her profession, which has largely determined the decline in the prestige of the teaching profession. Dissatisfaction with the current situation has led to teacher strikes around the world. In Estonia, the UK, Australia and Zimbabwe, for example, teachers are on strike over pay. Latvian teachers are on strike over workload. Meanwhile, Lithuanian educators highlight the complex challenges in the education system due to salary, workload, class size and difficulties in applying inclusive education.

The education sector affects a country's economic growth. The expectations placed on teachers as the future shapers of society are too important to ignore. Research shows that, in addition to relatively well-defined issues such as education funding and infrastructure improvements, today's teaching profession is exceptionally stressful. Increased levels of stress are inherent in any work with people, but the work of a teacher has changed in recent decades, along with changing attitudes to the student-teacher relationship. Our paper contributes to the scholarly discourse with empirical insights into the psychosocial situation of teachers, while at the same time providing guidelines for where we can start on the journey of restoring the prestige of the teaching profession.

The paper examines how teachers perceive the importance of themselves and their work, using the construct of mattering. Mattering is the need of individuals and their groups to feel significant.

The results of our survey of secondary school teachers showed that they moderately valued the importance of their person and their work. The analysis of demographic differences showed that the perception of importance varied according to the age of the respondents. The group of middle-aged teachers rated their importance to others significantly better than younger teachers and the older generation. There were also gender differences - female teachers rated their importance better than male teachers. When assessing the role of professional position, it was found that respondents in leadership positions rated themselves as more important to others than non-leaders. In addition, leaders rated the importance of their ideas and suggestions higher.

Finally, teachers with individual needs (those with impairments or disabilities) were more likely than teachers without specific needs to believe that their work was important to society. The study also showed that the culture of inclusive leadership developed in the school had a significant impact on teachers' higher sense of mattering.

The study offers practical insights for education policymakers and school administrators. One of the most effective ways to enhance the prestige of the teaching profession is to bolster the self-esteem and pride of teachers in their work. Additionally,

cultivating inclusive leadership at all levels, from the school to the institution where educational policy decisions are made, is essential for increasing the prestige of the teaching profession.

## Room: L-101

### **15:45-17:30** | Decoding public trust and science communication in the digital age (II)

This panel session explores science communication and public trust amidst digital misinformation and evolving social networks, and address strategies to counter misinformation, enhance public trust, and bridge the gap between science communication and citizen engagement. Key topics include behaviors and content within online social networks and the impact of post-truth dynamics on public discourse. This session is organized in collaboration with projects supported by the Research Council of Lithuania (INFODEMIJA, P-VIS-23-57) and the CHIST-ERA grant (MARTINI, CHIST-ERA-21-OSNEM-004; S-CHIST-ERA-22-1).

#### **Decoding Public Trust in Science: INFODEMIJA Framework for Targeted Science Communication**

*Asta Zelenkauskaitė and Aistė Dirzytė, Mykolas Romeris University*

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##### Annotation

Attitudes towards science are regularly surveyed in many countries (e.g., Wellcome Trust, 2023), with results showing that confidence in science is influenced by demographics, political beliefs, and economic or social status (e.g., Funk, 2019; Schäfer, 2018). At a national level in Lithuania, studies of this kind have not been conducted. Thus, there is currently a particular lack of data-driven guidance on how to effectively engage different audiences with science and use innovative communication tools tailored to different audiences. This lack of insight limits the effectiveness of science communication currently carried out by different institutions and creates the conditions for the spread of misinformation. INFODEMIJA project funded by Research

Council of Lithuania (Grant Agreement No P-VIS-23-57) explores the intricate dynamics of science communication as an outlet for elevating the Lithuanian public's engagement with scientific discourse and fortifying societal defenses against the prevailing "infodemic". As part of this mission, we have devised a three-tiered conceptual analysis framework (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Conceptual analysis framework (Source: developed by authors, 2024)

Macro level: defining the contextual attributes	Meso level: analyzing the population and media consumption patterns	Micro level: forming the audience clusters
<p>This element involves analysis of availability and accessibility of different media outlets in Lithuania together with the cultural norms that collectively influence public receptivity to scientific information.</p> <p>This macro analysis sets the stage for understanding the initial audience — the diverse collective of individuals at the inception of our communication efforts.</p>	<p>This involves surveying a swath of psychographic factors, including community values, beliefs, and attitudes, in tandem with media consumption patterns, to paint a robust portrait of the Lithuanian audience. This stage is enriched by additional layers such as the educational backgrounds, scientific literacy levels, and the dynamics of social networks that reflect the interplay of communal forces shaping the science communication landscape.</p>	<p>These clusters are not mere demographic aggregations; they are intricate mosaics of individual psychographics, personal media habits, and educational as well as scientific literacy, all interwoven by social and informational network dynamics. It is at this granular level that the fluid nature of public opinion and the complex web of factors that can pivot perceptions and behaviors are most acutely observed.</p>
<p>Methods applied: literature analysis; media landscape analysis (representation of science in media outlets)</p>	<p>Methods applied: representative survey (N = 1000)</p>	<p>Methods applied: Qualitative and quantitative content analysis</p>

At this preliminary phase of research, our multidisciplinary team presents the results of contextual analysis. The macro perspective sets a critical backdrop for understanding the initial audience — a diverse collective of individuals whose engagement with science is molded by a tapestry of national and media narratives. The initial findings provided a comprehensive mapping of the Lithuanian media ecosystem, detailing the availability and accessibility of different media outlets, the prevalence of science communication within media structures, and the prominence of scientific issues within the news cycle. This overview of the media landscape reveals the extent to which science communication is woven into the fabric of media structures, highlighting how scientific issues are represented in the news cycle and the degree to which they capture public attention. Moreover, cultural norms within the Lithuanian society are pivotal in shaping the public's trust in different institutions, including scientific ones. Our research is peeling back layers of cultural perception, revealing how historical contexts, education systems, and prevailing belief systems contribute to the public's critical evaluation of, and confidence in, scientific

information. Trust varies markedly across different strata of the society and is influenced by a confluence of traditional values, national pride, and the perceived role of science in everyday life (Vilmorus, 2024).

The conceptual framework and resulting insights are intended to facilitate the design of targeted communication interventions cultivating a nuanced understanding of science-based information among various societal strata in Lithuania.

### Acknowledgements

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## Redefining Learning: Alware's Pedagogical Strategy for an AI-Integrated Future

*Gintarė Guleviciute (Mykolas Romeris University), Jan Pawlowski (Ruhr West University of Applied Sciences), Kati Clements (University of Jyväskylä), Lana Sattelmaier (Ruhr West University of Applied Sciences), Antti Ruonala (University of Jyväskylä) and Dimitra Dimitrakopoulou (EA)*

In the digital resurgence where artificial intelligence (AI) interlaces daily life, the Alware project (Grant Agreement 101087136) advocates for the crucial integration of AI education into school curricula. At its core, AI is defined as machines' capacity for human-like cognition—learning, problem-solving, and decision-making (Russell & Norvig, 2010). The emergence of tools like ChatGPT by OpenAI, synthesizing technologies from large language models to neural networks, has catapulted the public interface with generative AI, challenging our perception of rhetoric, writing, and critical thinking. This project aligns with the necessity to equip students with the knowledge to navigate, critically assess, and ethically employ AI—skills imperative for future careers and discerning the authenticity of information in an era fraught with misinformation.

Recognizing the gap in European curricula, we propose a pedagogical framework centered on problem-based and cross-disciplinary learning, enabling educators to adeptly navigate AI teaching. In general, pedagogical frameworks guide the delivery and optimization of education, embodying a variety of instructional strategies, methods, and principles tailored to enhance learning (Koper et al., 2008; Susanto et al., 2020). For AI education specifically, a considered pedagogical approach is essential to address the field's intricacies and its evolving nature, equipping students not just with technical know-how but also with critical and ethical reasoning skills, readying them for a future interwoven with AI technologies. We adopt the Design Science Research Methodology (DSRM) for development of the pedagogical framework, an approach esteemed for its systematic, problem-solving efficiency, especially suited to the fluid and evolving domain of AI education (Peppers et al., 2007; Venable et al., 2016). Each stage of DSRM builds cumulatively, ensuring the resulting educational model is grounded in solid theory while remaining practically relevant for real-world AI teaching challenges.

Essential in the process of DSRM is the identification of problems and the formulation of objectives. Our extensive study across Finland, Germany, Greece, and Lithuania has highlighted several obstacles impeding AI's full integration into education. Challenges such as insufficient teacher training in AI, budgetary constraints, job security fears among educators, privacy and data security, an over-reliance on AI, and misconceptions about its capabilities and role in academic integrity are prevalent. Next stage of DSRM process is the definition of solution design. This involves conceptualizing how the model will address the identified

problems and meet the set objectives. The design phase considers theoretical underpinning informing the model and is based on literature review. It serves to gather existing knowledge, theories, and practices related to AI education and pedagogical models. Foundational models such as Puentedura's SAMR (Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, Redefinition) provide a graduated pathway for educators to enhance teaching with digital tools, from basic substitution to transformative redefinition of learning experiences (Puentedura, 2014). Complementing this, Mishra and Koehler's TPACK (Technological, Pedagogical, and Content Knowledge) framework navigates the intersection of technology with content and pedagogy, underscoring the need for harmony between these elements for effective technology integration in the classroom (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). The SPaM framework further adapts TPACK, tailoring the interplay between subject, pedagogy, and modality for hybrid learning environments (Simon, 2022; Thomson, 2022). The OPUS framework by the Education Alliance Finland (2021) and Väättäjä & Ruokamo's (2021) model of digital pedagogy highlight the importance of creating well-rounded and adaptable educational technologies that align with pedagogical objectives, user experience, and support structures. These frameworks form a robust basis for developing AI-centric pedagogical models that can navigate the complexities of modern education.

Drawing on the principles of the SAMR model by Puentedura (2010) and the TPACK framework by Mishra and Koehler (2006), as well as evolving concepts like SPaM (Simon, 2022; Thomson, 2022), we designed a model that centers on real-life problem solving, cross-subject learning, and addressing social implications such as privacy, ethics, and diversity. This framework aims to transcend traditional boundaries, integrating AI into various subjects and preparing students to ethically engage with AI technologies while developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Emphasizing participatory, experiential, and design-oriented learning, it encourages collaborative approaches to understand the real-world applications and consequences of AI (Kirschner & van Merriënboer, 2013; Jonassen & Hung, 2008; Goodyear et al., 2014; Hmelo-Silver et al., 2007; Floridi et al., 2018). Our framework also contemplates the challenges of bias, fairness, and equitable access to technology (Väättäjä & Ruokamo, 2021; Yue et al., 2022), striving for a comprehensive educational approach that prepares students for the multifaceted reality of a digital future.

Upon conceptualizing the framework, the Alware project will embark on a rigorous testing phase in four European countries, incorporating co-creation with teachers, students, and AI experts to refine and adapt the model. This hands-on collaboration ensures the framework's relevance and effectiveness, leading to its widespread dissemination across schools. Our mission is to equip learners with an AI education that is contemporary, comprehensive, and cognizant of the ethical and societal dimensions of this transformative technology, preparing them for the multifaceted challenges of a digitized future.

## Acknowledgements

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## Bridging the gap between climate change and citizen science through communication

*Keywords: citizen science, science communication, communication with citizens, environmental crisis, citizen science for environmental crisis*

**Skirmante Bikaite (VilniusTech)**

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The climate change emergency poses a significant threat to both the daily lives of individuals and the delicate balance of ecosystems worldwide. Human activities have catalyzed a cascade of consequences, ranging from localized disruptions to global-scale environmental shifts, including extreme weather events, prolonged droughts, and intensified flooding episodes. As societies grapple with the multifaceted challenges posed by climate change, innovative approaches are imperative to comprehend and mitigate its impacts.

Citizen science has emerged as a promising avenue for addressing various facets of the climate crisis, harnessing the collective power of engaged individuals to contribute to scientific endeavors. By actively involving citizens in data collection and analysis, citizen science projects such as CompAir, which collates air quality data across Europe, and the Growth project, aimed at monitoring environmental degradation, enable scientists to collect and process a huge amount of data for further research and recommendations.

Effective communication lies at the heart of successful citizen science initiatives, serving as a linchpin for engaging and mobilizing participants. Current research (Schiele, Shafer, Burns, Dijkstra, Benneworth, and others) shows a need to create a connection between citizens and science communication, which is now often led by top-down communication that only creates more friction between the public and scientists.

This research addresses this communication gap by exploring a two-way dialogue approach that fosters reciprocal engagement between scientists and citizens. This research focuses on developing a communication model tailored to ignite initial public interest and encourage participation in citizen science projects focused on addressing the climate crisis.

*Keywords: citizen science, science communication, communication with citizens, environmental crisis, citizen science for environmental crisis.*

## Room: I-201

### 15:45-17:30 | MIGRATION: Integrating Refugees: Strategies, Challenges, and Support Systems

This session delves into the multifaceted challenges of integrating Ukrainian refugees, highlighting the innovative urban strategies adopted for their inclusion, the psychological adaptation issues they face, and the comprehensive supportive efforts aimed at enhancing their well-being and resilience

#### **Social Work Challenges While Working With War Refugees from Ukraine**

*Vaida Aleknaviciene (Mykolas Romeris University)*

In 2022 the war refugees from Ukraine started moving to Lithuania and social workers were the ones who met new challenges in their work. According to theoretical studies navigating the complexities of providing social work support to war refugees presents challenges rooted in trauma, displacement, cultural adaptation, and access to essential services, requiring a nuanced and culturally sensitive approach to address their multifaceted needs effectively. So, the research aim of this survey was to find out the challenges of social workers working with children and youth as war refugees from Ukraine. The main research question - what challenges have social workers met while working with children and youth as war refugees from Ukraine? For that purpose a qualitative research methodology was used. The research participants - fifteen social workers working with children and youth in youth centers, child day care centers where Ukrainian war refugees come. In depth interview was used for data collection. Content analyses of collected data revealed five subcategories of challenges of social work with children and youth as war refugees: language barrier, lack of experience and information, lack of specific knowledge, different cultures and different traditions, long term integration and well-being. Analyses of the data reveal nowadays social workers' challenges and show social workers' needs. Social workers are experiencing and adapting to a new normal and this includes increasing influence on well-being and community (Ashcroft, 2021). In addition, the profession contributes to the fabric of societal functioning and caring about children and youth does not matter of what nation, so the challenges experienced by social workers analysed in this research could be a great help to formulate what support do they need in order to help them to feel comfortable in their working place or what competencies should future workers contain.

The challenge revealed in this study show that social workers were looking for ways to adapt to new working conditions and were ready to overcome challenges in order to help their clients. It is important to document the challenges experienced during the work with children and youth as war refugees from Ukraine and share that experience with new social workers just coming to work. There should be more seminars or meetings where social workers could share their gained experience, learn

more psychological help aspects, learn or improve foreign languages. Government should pay more attention to volunteering as one of the elements to help social workers during the crisis periods. Educational institutions should pay more attention to languages teaching as today's social worker must be ready to work in international area.

## Supporting the Well-Being of Ukrainian War Refugees: the case of Mykolas Romeris University

*Nomeda Gudeliene and Grazina Ciuladiene, Mykolas Romeris University*

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The study will be aimed to present research findings on university and local community engagement with regard to serving the Ukrainian war migrants. MRU has been helping Ukrainian war migrants since the beginning of Russia's caused war in Ukraine in 2022. MRU community members collected humanitarian aid and helped them settling in Lithuania. The academic campus has become probably the largest war refugee centre in Lithuania (about 600 people live just across the street from MRU central building). MRU provides state support to Ukrainian students and employs Ukrainian war migrants - university lecturers and researchers - includes Ukrainian partners in projects and international professional networks. MRU also shares its premises with the school for war refugees "Gravitas Schola". In 2022 about 500 children of various ages studied at MRU, in 2023-2024 about 170 high school students (grades 8-11) are studying in MRU premises. When Russia attacked Ukrainian energy facilities, MRU was the first in Lithuania to start producing warming candles for trenches and sending them to Ukraine for civilians and soldiers. In 2024 a group of researchers explored the well-being of Ukrainian teens as observed by psychologists and educators working with the Ukrainian young people. The research finding indicate the challenges Ukrainian teens face including economic difficulties and emotional and psychological challenges ranging from loss or separation of home and the loved ones, to anxiety, fear and high level of uncertainty. Recommendation are provided for teachers and educators equipping them to help and foster Ukrainian youth well-being.

## Navigating the Migration Maze: What Makes Polish Cities Bet on Innovative Strategies to Integrate Forced Migrants from Ukraine

*Keywords: forced migration management, urban policy innovation, refugee integration, Poland, Ukraine  
Igor Lyubashenko (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities)*

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The sudden mass migration from Ukraine to Poland in the wake of the 2022 crisis has prompted an urgent reassessment of local and national strategies for managing forced migration. The proposed study delves into the strategic dichotomy between proactive and reactive approaches undertaken by Polish cities in the integration of Ukrainian forced migrants. Despite Poland's historical ambivalence towards refugees, the country has found itself at the forefront of a significant humanitarian

response, marked by a unique dual strategy that blends centralized policy directives with decentralized, community-driven problem-solving efforts.

The proposed research aims to analyze the behavioral patterns of Polish city authorities in managing this influx, focusing on two potential strategies: the adherence to central government guidelines (reactive) and the innovative transcendence of these guidelines (proactive). The study aims to identify the conditions that promote a proactive stance or discourage a reactive one in crafting policy solutions for handling the refugee influx at the local level.

The paper positions 12 Polish cities – members of the Union of Polish Metropolises – within the broader context of migration policy and management, challenging the conventional wisdom of central government dominance by highlighting the pivotal role of local authorities in urban areas—where the majority of the world's forced migrants now reside. The analysis is grounded in an extensive review of international norms on migration integration, existing frameworks of central government policy, and the autonomous policy innovations at the city level.

The core of this investigation lies in identifying explanatory conditions that may shed light on the city's strategic choices, delineated into three primary domains: the scale and nature of displacement, socio-economic and cultural contexts, and the institutional and political landscape of the city. This study employs Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA), leveraging qualitative data on urban solutions curated by the Union of Polish Metropolises, insights from interviews with local officials and community leaders, insights from focus groups involving city residents, and a range of quantitative indicators that portray the socio-economic fabric of the city.

This comprehensive approach enables a nuanced understanding of how Polish cities navigate the complex landscape of forced migration management. By identifying the drivers of innovative governance—including proactive public actors and the fostering of a bottom-up approach—the research contributes to a deeper understanding of the conditions underpinning urban innovation in the face of migration challenges. This aligns with the themes of the SOCIN'24 conference by elucidating the critical role of cities in shaping resilient, inclusive, and adaptive societies through social innovation in migration management.

## Psychological Adaptation Issues Among Ukrainian Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons During the Russian-Ukrainian War

*Alina Proskurnia and Oleksandr Vakulenko*

The issue of migration during the Russian-Ukrainian war is becoming increasingly important, not only from a demographic standpoint but also from a purely psychological point of view, particularly in terms of adaptation. Individuals who have been forcibly displaced and have lost their homes, possessions, and even loved ones have a different traumatic experience when they search for refuge in relatively safer regions of Ukraine and when they move to other countries, often with corresponding financial means. However, adaptation difficulties with similar causes can be found in both cases.

The current work investigates the psychological and social challenges that displaced people face in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war. The authors focus on the consequences of traumatic experiences, language situations, and the correla-

tion between migrants' aggression and loneliness. The comparative study was concentrated on Ukrainians who relocated to other countries, including Poland, Germany, and Canada, as well as those who had been internally displaced in Kyiv.

The findings indicate a high level of aggression, particularly among men, associated with circumstances and a sense of loss. The factors that contribute to adaptation difficulties for Ukrainian forced migrants and immigrants were identified, and it was outlined that the absence of group support and social integration can exacerbate adaptation problems. The Russian-Ukrainian war is characterized by unexpected and unprecedented cruelty by the occupiers, exacerbating the traumatic experiences of forced Ukrainian migrants. Traumatic experiences, conflict situations, language issues, and loneliness all contributed to aggressive behavior and complicated the adaptation process. As a result, Ukrainian migrants faced adaptation challenges in receiving countries such as Poland, Germany, Canada, and even Ukraine (internally displaced persons). Their rage stems from a sense of injustice as they compare their losses with the stable existence of others. However, most importantly, according to the comparative study on aggression, conducted with online surveys and standardized questionnaires using the Buss-Darkee Hostility Inventory and Russell-Ferguson methodology, there is a correlation between aggressive manifestations and subjective loneliness. Generally, based on the study's findings, the following factors contribute to adaptation difficulties for Ukrainian forced migrants and immigrants could be outlined:

- exaggerated expectations, paternalism, and frequently unjustified requests based on the premise that “we deserve this”;
- lack of knowledge about customs, social norms, and fundamental societal values of the residents of host countries providing refuge to refugees;
- an absence of awareness about the experiences of Ukrainian diasporas, an inability to engage in productive interactions due to fragmentation and a lack of grounds for contact establishing;
- blurred identity and Russian language of many migrants, which could result in them being perceived as victims of a civil war rather than victims of Russian aggression;
- the absence of group dynamics capable of providing the reconstruction and correction of individuals' external experiences and internal potential;
- a proclivity for anomie, explained by feelings of loneliness and frustration.

Migrant adaptation challenges affect not only individuals but also the global image of Ukrainians, emphasizing the importance of unity in a war-torn country. Understanding these factors is critical for developing efficient approaches to assisting individuals in the adaptation process and in promoting the country's reputation.

## Room: L-102

### 15:45-17:30 | Evolving Democracies: Challenges and Opportunities

This session explores critical aspects of modern democracies, focusing on the importance of public solidarity for developing mature democratic systems, the possibilities and challenges of implementing deliberative democracy in Lithuania, the European Union's readiness for potential enlargement, considering the implications for its democratic structures.

#### **Public solidarity as a condition for the development of a mature democracy**

*Andrius Sprindziunas, Mykolas Romeris University*

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What happens when there is a lack of solidarity in society? What is the difference between solidarity and collectivism characteristic of totalitarian societies? How is solidarity important for the development of a democratic society? What are the foundations of solidarity as a moral, civic, social, economic and political value? How to encourage the growth of solidarity of the societies of Lithuania and other European Union countries?

International comparative studies have revealed that Lithuanian society is characterized by lower indicators of a favorable attitude towards volunteering, a lack of empathy, and various problems related to the integration of war refugees and labor immigrants. From a sociological point of view, this can be explained as a manifestation of the lack of solidarity among people. There are more undesirable social phenomena that can appear as the consequences of the lack of solidarity: selfishness, the inability to maintain public dialogue, confrontation between social groups, growing exclusion and wealth inequality, as well as various forms of corruption, emerging when some individuals or particular groups of society focus on their selfish interests and neglect universal principles of justice.

From a moral point of view, solidarity is based on the awareness of responsibility for another person (Jean-Paul Sartre and other authors). How is responsibility for another possible in modern democratic societies after postmodern individualistic attitudes are established? However, Eurobarometer surveys have recorded high rates of awareness of the importance of solidarity as a social and political value. In search of the most important factors determining solidarity, correlations with EU identity, nationality, gender, age group, social origin, financial status and religion were studied.

From a civic point of view, solidarity is expressed as compassion, understanding of other people's needs, respect for human rights, specific concern for the safety and development prospects of one's area of residence, concern for the interests of persons in one's professional circle (participation in trade unions). According to sociological studies, the civic solidarity of Lithuanian society is growing, but weak points remain, such as the passive activity of trade unions, a low perception of civic power, an unfavorable attitude towards the rights of immigrants and even emigrants of their compatriots.

Movements of sports fans and especially citizen cohesion in the face of military threat should be mentioned as separate but very important phenomena of solidarity.

Solidarity in the economic plane is primarily a responsible tax collection and redistribution system based on the political decision to create a welfare state for all and avoid social contrasts. According to John Rawls's Theory of Justice, the main instrument of economic solidarity is progressive taxes, which are implemented in one form or another in most countries of the world.

Unfortunately, Lithuanian and foreign economists have repeatedly drawn attention to the fact that the creators of our country's tax system have not yet found a suitable solution to ease the tax burden on the majority of the working people of Lithuania. The Gini index is considered to be a fairly objective indicator of the wealth and income equality of the country's population, which also allows us to judge the achievements of society in terms of economic solidarity. According to the data of the World Bank survey (2014), the value of the Gini index recorded in Lithuania was 0.38 (the same result of the 2015 Eurostat survey), according to this indicator, Lithuania took the last place in the European Union and the penultimate place in Europe. Later, the value of the Gini index in Lithuania decreased slightly (Lithuania - 0.36; EU average - 0.296). The value of the Lithuanian Gini index objectively indicates that something is wrong with the distribution of the material values created in the country, and there is an obvious lack of economic solidarity. Mature democratic societies are characterized not only by concern for national interests, but also by certain indicators of international and global responsibility. A lot of comparative data and insights about the outline of the solidarity of the societies of the EU and other European countries is presented in the study by C. Lahusen & M. T. Grass "Solidarity in Europe. Citizens' Responses in Times of Crisis", 2018. Countries and societies that have achieved a higher level of public solidarity are characterized by a more favorable attitude of people towards the weakest, most vulnerable members of their society: the disabled, unemployed and refugees (immigrants), and stronger participation of people in political life.

## An overview of the possibilities and challenges of implementing deliberative democracy in Lithuania

*Keywords: deliberative democracy, citizen participation, public governance, Lithuania*

*Ausra Sukviete, Andrius Stasiukynas and Justinas Staliunas, Mykolas Romeris University*

On a theoretical and practical level, citizen participation in public governance is a crucial aspect of modern public administration and institutional performance improvement. It promotes transparency, openness, and other essential principles of public sector. However, democratization of public governance and citizens' involvement in decision-making processes is a complex process influenced by various circumstances. Although international organizations clearly identify the need of changes in public management and provides specific recommendations how to involve citizens to participate in decision-making, it is necessary to evaluate different forms of citizen involvement in the context of particular country.

Also, when examining the best practices of democratic governance, it is crucial not only to consider ways how to empower citizens in the decision-making processes, but to ensure, that their involvement would promote equality, accountability, efficiency, and would contribute to the better public policy. However, traditional representative institutions do not completely implement any “democratic ideal” and only partially fulfil expectations, depending on the chosen participation and involvement methods (Bandeira & Ferraro, 2017, p. 650). The changes occurring in public administration and society also affect how citizens’ political participation itself is perceived (Blühdorn & Butzlaff, 2020, p. 380-381).

The deliberative democracy idea suggests that people should engage in discussions to evaluate and critique each other’s ideas and arguments regarding issues, conflicts, needs, and interests (Šarkutė, 2023, p. 25). Although the terms deliberative and participatory democracy are often used interchangeably, they differ in how individuals and their representatives are involved: deliberative process should provide equal access to everyone through a “lottery” mechanism that uses random selection of participants. It means that in Lithuania only participatory democracy instruments such as referendums, petitions, unofficial movements, promotion of NGO activities, citizen’s surveys, etc., are commonly used. This study aims to explore how deliberative democracy tools can empower citizens in practice, following the recommendation of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers to member states (2023) and OECD report (2020).

The purpose of the study is to analyse the possibilities and challenges of implementing deliberative democracy in Lithuania, taking into account the practices of foreign countries. Tasks: (i) introduce the concept of deliberative democracy; (ii) review the challenges and risks that may be encountered during the implementation of deliberative democracy in foreign countries; (iii) identify the possibilities of deliberative democracy implementation in Lithuania.

Applied research methods: analysis of scientific literature, legislation, and secondary statistical data.

## A Democratic Backsliding: From Grand Illusions to Democratic Retreat

*Algis Krupavicius (Mykolas Romeris University) and Ligita Sarkute (Vytautas Magnus University)*

History is not a linear or closed progression from one political and social order to a better one. The past three to four decades have witnessed a complex evolution in the global landscape of democracy, marked by a trajectory from optimism to disillusionment. This abstract examines the phenomenon of democratic backsliding, tracing its roots from the grand illusions of the 1990s, through the concerns of the 2000s, to the stark realities of democratic retreat in the 2020s.

The 1990s started an era of unprecedented optimism for democracy, fueled by the collapse of authoritarian regimes and the spread of liberal ideals worldwide. As the 2000s unfolded, concerns about the sustainability and depth of democratic transitions began to emerge. The pitfalls of premature institutionalization, the persistence of corruption and inequality, and the rise of illiberal tendencies within ostensibly democratic systems cast doubts on the durability of democratic gains. By the 2020s, the optimism of the 1990s had given way to a sobering reality of democratic retreat. Across regions, from Eastern Europe to Latin America, from Asia to Africa, democratic institutions faced mounting pressures and erosion. The rise of populist leaders, the manipulation of electoral processes, the curtailment of civil liberties, and the undermining of the rule of law became com-

mon features of the political landscape. Moreover, the proliferation of digital technologies posed new challenges to democratic governance, enabling surveillance, misinformation, and the manipulation of public opinion.

In conclusion, the democratic backsliding is the gradual erosion of democratic norms, institutions, and principles in a democratic system. This includes the weakening of checks and balances, the erosion of the rule of law, including civil liberties, and the concentration of power in the hands of a few, leading to a deterioration in democratic governance. Still the concept of democratic backsliding often lacks specificity about its root causes, making it difficult to comprehensively address the underlying issues.

## Ukrainian perceptions of European values: empirical results

*Keywords: values, European Union, estimation, social values*

*Olga Nosova, Mykolas Romeris University*

The paper aims to assess changes in the public perceptions of European Union values in Ukraine in the conditions of external aggression. It explores how conflict escalation affects the public views in different groups, and changes attitudes and beliefs regarding adopting European Union values in society.

The paper analyses the concepts of value and demonstrates the devaluation of cultural and social values in some population groups. The methodology applies a survey based on online interviews and descriptive statistics methods. The Schwartz methodology in the World Values Survey 2020 is used to create a survey questionnaire. An online survey of Ukrainians' worldviews of European Union values perceptions was conducted for Ukrainian citizens in all regions except for the territories, occupied in 2022.

The survey results highlight the trend of commitment of a major part of Ukrainian citizens to European Union values. The research demonstrates the inconsistencies in the importance and satisfaction of social values and stereotypes, compliance with the law, personal freedom and human rights, level of economic freedom, and commitment to European integration. These contradictions will be resolved through the development of favorable conditions and of beliefs and convictions of people that support the adoption and dissemination of European values.

## Is the EU ready for potential enlargement?

*Marita Gorgiladze, Mykolas Romeris University*

The outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war marked a geopolitical awakening for the EU. It prompted a reevaluation of EU foreign and security policies, revealing shortcomings in direction and cohesion. Over the years, the EU has benefited much from the

enlargement program. In the EU, on average, more individuals (52 percent) support continued EU enlargement than oppose it (38 percent). The main discussion is focused on the need for reforms of the candidate countries, however, the readiness of the EU itself in this process is no less important and interesting. It is important to consider what challenges and the necessity of carrying out reforms will arise within the European Union itself. The enlargement of the European Union is an issue that inevitably affects the population and financial situation of the European Union. This leads to the need for research and analysis on enlargement not to remain confined to academic and political circles. Under the Lisbon Treaty, article 9A, Representatives of the citizens of the Union shall make up the European Parliament, their total number shall not exceed 750. This means that after the accession of Ukraine for example, as one of the biggest countries by population, the parliament will exceed this limit. New members will have the right of veto in the Council of the European Union. Their vote will carry a lot of weight in qualified majority voting, which means it will change the current balance. Increased budget and financial resources are required to carry out institutional reforms. To conclude in order to be ready for further enlargement, the European Union should start immediate preparation for it. Reforms of institutions and changing of budget are the necessary steps if the European Union intends to enlarge. Only reforms in candidate countries will not be enough, itself European Union should be ready for this process.

Marita Gorgiladze second-year doctoral candidate in law at the institute of International and European Union Law of the Mykolas Romeris University. The topic of my doctoral dissertation is the following: "Legal Preconditions of freedom to conduct a business under the new EU sanctions regime". Areas of academic interest are: sanctions, EU enlargement, CFSP. Participant of several international conferences.

## Room: I-407

### **15:45-17:30** | Advancing Environmental Sustainability (II)

This session explores innovative environmental management and climate justice approaches, including waste management from islands to outer space, issues on climate communication, and climate justice litigation.

## Re-Cyclades: A paradigm shift in managing plastic waste in the context of the island of Syros in the Cyclades

*Keywords: Plastic Recycling, Circular Economy, Island Communities, Sustainability Education*  
*Rafail Andrianos Pappas and Helen Charoupia, University of the Aegean*

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Plastic pollution is a pressing global issue, and island communities are particularly vulnerable to its environmental and economic impacts. We present the “Re-Cyclades” project, which aims to address this challenge by proposing a circular model of plastic management for sustainable island living. Under the full title “Closing the circular loop of plastic for sustainable island communities - strengthening education for the next generation”, the initiative is centred on the dual objective of creating educational opportunities and establishing a functional recycling laboratory on the island of Syros, Greece.

The project has two main components: an educational programme and a plastic waste collection and processing workshop. We believe that involving the community, especially the younger generation, is crucial for long-term success. Therefore, we are in the process of designing and implementing an educational initiative that targets different levels of primary and secondary education, raising awareness about circular plastic management and fostering a culture of prevention, reuse, and recycling. This programme so far includes school visits to the recycling lab and a student competition for creating green recycling spots at schools that induce students to recycling processes.

Additionally, we have established the Precious Plastic Syros lab, a small-scale recycling laboratory, to demonstrate the practical aspects of plastic waste management. This lab serves as a pilot for collection, sorting by type and colour, multi-stream recycling of different types of plastic, and the design and production of upgraded, reusable products. More specifically, the lab includes a workshop and sorting area, and its recycling production is based around four machine designs by the Precious Plastic community: a shredder, a compression machine, an injection moulding machine, and an extruder. By the end of 2024, we aim to expand our impact by increasing production capacity, refining our waste management processes, and reaching more students through our educational outreach programmes.

We are involved in this project via “Apano Meria”, a social cooperative enterprise (SCE) in Syros. Apano Meria was founded in 2015, encompassing various initiatives aimed at protecting and promoting the northern part of the island (also called Apano Meria). Its work supports sustainable activities of the local community, such as primary production and the development of forms of tourism that respect the land and its inhabitants. Seeking to act as a living counter-example of good tourist practices, it offers young scientists – quality visitors (rather than mass tourists) the opportunity to study Syros’ distinct ecosystem, as well as its unique geology, and to contribute to generating social and environmental impact, via residencies and volunteering opportunities. For implementing the Re-Cyclades project, Apano Meria is collaborating with “KEPEA Syros”, the centre for environmental and sustainability education of Syros which specialises in organising activities for schools and students, and the “DAFNI” Network of Sustainable Greek Islands, a non-profit organisation of island local and regional authorities.

Apano Meria hosts the Precious Plastic Syros lab on its premises, in Ermoupoli, Syros. The academic community of the University of the Aegean and the Department of Product and Systems Design Engineering in Syros have embraced the lab, using it for research, experimentation and student internships, while two dissertations have already been written, incorporating its infrastructure. The involvement of a design department in social innovation may seem unconventional, but it brings a unique perspective. Design, at its core, is about finding creative solutions to complex problems. By applying participatory design

principles, we engage the community in co-creating solutions, ensuring that our initiatives are relevant, effective, and therefore long-lasting. Additionally, material-driven design considers the entire lifecycle of a product, from source to disposal or reuse, aligning with our circular plastic management goals.

Our recycling lab is inspired by and largely based on the global Precious Plastic community, which promotes open-source and accessible technology for plastic recycling. By adopting and adapting their designs for plastic recycling machines and processes, we aim to leverage this global community and knowledge to tackle plastic waste locally. The Precious Plastic movement showcases how sharing knowledge and technology using an open-source ideology and methodology can lead to meaningful, widespread social and environmental impact.

Since its establishment, the Precious Plastic Syros lab has made significant strides. We have successfully piloted multi-stream recycling and produced a small range of products using HDPE and PP plastics. Our educational programme has started engaging with schools and students, fostering a deeper understanding of circular plastic management and the importance of waste prevention through a hands-on and embodied learning experience.

Looking ahead, we aim to build confidence in products made from waste-derived plastics by ensuring their quality and durability, while ensuring that our product designs are sustainable and cover the functional needs of their users. We will continue to refine our waste management processes, enhance our sourcing of recyclable plastics via sorting at the source practices, and expand our educational reach. Our end goal will be to develop a case for local recycling initiatives as a viable and sustainable business proposition with significant societal impact. Simultaneously, we will continue to develop and deliver our educational workshops and events, aiming to raise awareness about the issues of waste management, recycling, reducing, and reusing of plastic for the next generation of locals.

The Re-Cyclades project demonstrates how a combination of educational initiatives and practical recycling solutions can drive social innovation, especially in the peculiar context of insularity. Through a combination of a social cooperative mindset, building collaborations with educational institutions, and funnelling academic, design, and open-source expertise towards desirable future outcomes, we believe in stewarding a more sustainable future. Through our efforts, we strive to create a proven and sustainable model that can be replicated in other island communities and beyond, economically contributing to a transformative society that values circular practices and the responsible management of plastic waste.

## **Sustainability and law in the context of space debris management.**

*Aušra Girtaite-Mikalajuniene (Mykolas Romeris University)*

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In the context of today's outer space activities, the issue of space debris and its proliferation is becoming increasingly important. Since the first launch in 1957, over 5,600 missions have contributed to the growing mass of debris in orbit. This situation is exacerbated by the Kessler syndrome - debris collides and generates even more fragments. Due to the existing orbital speed, a collision with the smallest, even 1 mm space debris, can damage or destroy a functioning space object. The environmental implications of the debris population are profound, indicating a pressing need for regulatory and mitigation strategies.

The international community has yet to reach a consensus on the status of space debris, and there is currently no legal framework in place establishing obligations that compel nations to adhere to environmental principles similar to those on Earth in space activities. This lack of regulation highlights the relevance of Article I of the Outer Space Treaty, which asserts that outer space is to be freely accessible for exploration and use by all countries. The principle of free access implies that outer space must remain open to all nations and their citizens. However, the increasing presence of space debris poses significant risks and challenges, potentially making it hazardous for nations to enter or operate in space without material losses. In light of these issues, this researcher contends that there is an inherent duty for the international community to ensure free and safe access to outer space. This responsibility extends beyond mere concern for the environmental impact of space activities; it encompasses an obligation to actively protect space environment.

Since the prospects for the re-regulation are obscure, as a solution to this problem the researcher proposed the framework for recycling of outer-space debris. In this context, the author proposes the classification of space debris into two distinct categories: ownerless debris and debris that is associated with a specific country through registration. This framework suggests that unidentified debris could be categorized as space resources, potentially available for space mining initiatives. However, this approach would be governed by stringent international guidelines that prohibit states from claiming ownership of space objects originally belonging to other nations. The researcher explores the introduction of a new category “technical space resources”. This new category would allow countries to appropriate such resources in compliance with established environmental principles, fostering a responsible and sustainable approach to space exploration and utilization.

Throughout the presentation, the aim is to reveal how law can encourage and support social innovations that contribute to a sustainable space environment.

## From climate litigation towards climate justice: a climate catalogue of rights

*Anyssa Fatmi (Mykolas Romeris University/Bordeaux University)*

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*In what axis(es) does your subject fall?*

The subject attempts to be part of an axis addressing the new legal growing litigation regarding climate related cases and the enforcement of human rights to protect the environment. The combination of both notions fall under the prism of environmental, climate law and human rights. It aims to merge the current criteria for litigants to access their claims before courts through the concrete necessity for a legal protection to mitigate climate change. The goal is to reach to highlights differences but also points of intersection in order to feed the debate within the scientific and civil society.

*Why is the subject you propose problematic in law? What legal problems have you identified? (Problematic)*

Within the ECHR, there is no explicit right to a clean and healthy environment, but when an individual is directly and seriously affected by noise or pollution, a question may arise to which extent ECHR provides a protection within the catalogue of the rights explicitly granted. Thus, it is necessary to assess the practice of the ECtHR in this regard.

Legal frictions between environmental and climate law

A difference of standards between countries and within the EU

- Legal anthropocentrism vs legal biocentrism : irreconcilable priorities ?

*What do you think you want to demonstrate in your speech? (General idea)*

To provide for a legal catalogue that litigants could use before Courts to take their part in mitigating climate change.

*How do you intend to demonstrate this idea in law? (Methodology)*

Text-based analysis and dynamic statutory interpretation must be used to analyse and comprehend the climate litigation phenomenon in order to establish the necessity of a climate justice. As its main purpose is to contribute to the desacralisation of a rather opaque legal system, the case-law analysis will allow to disclose and comment, broad overview in order to establish a catalogue of rights for litigants to access climate justice. Finally, comparative legal analysis method is vital to draw-up the catalogue to serve as a basis for litigants.

*Why do you defend this demonstration ? (Theoretical Framework)*

The fight against climate change is part of a European effort, even a European struggle, through various legal instruments. It is the subject of a proliferation of attempts at legislation which often lead to contradicting the very idea of a litigant's protection. Thanks to the comparative approach between the different legal texts, a global solution could emerge in order to reconcile the two imperatives that are currently imperfect. It is necessary to establish the feasibility of European climate law, with the imperative necessity of insuring the protection of human rights. The scientific discussion on the environmental considerations affecting human rights litigation would make it possible to establish a common ground integrating and addressing both urgencies.

Projected Axes of the Plan

1. Admissibility aspects: the original lack of direct referral to the right to a health environment in the Convention
2. The inclusion of climate in Convention's *ratione materiae*
3. Conclusion

## Room: I-414

### **15:45 – 17:00** | Digital technology's Role in Sustainable Well-being

This session explores the transformative role of technology in enhancing societal well-being. The session highlights how technological advancements can drive sustainable and inclusive progress in various sectors, such as health and social care.

## Digital Innovations for Sustainable Futures

Zuzanna Siwińska (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities)

In his 1516 essay “Utopia,” Thomas More described an almost perfect society, which is quite different from today’s world governed by capitalism.

In the current Anglo-American version of stock market capitalism, despite declaring otherwise by directors of the companies, criteria for success is simple – shareholder value, expressed by the share price (Handy, 2002, s.329). This approach brings up important question - if making money is the most important thing in business, what about people needs? How it can be, that solutions to problems that are real are not gonna last if they are not profitable enough? This focus on profits over people raises serious concerns about the sustainability and ethics of our current economic system.

This gap in the market, as a business person would call it, is thankfully starting to disappear due to social innovations. Social innovation refers to innovative activities and services that are motivated by the goal of meeting a social need and that are predominantly diffused through organizations whose primary purposes are social (Mulgan,2006). They are suppose to help the society become more sustainable and more centered about accommodating the needs of humanity. But for society to thrive, we need business and development as well. That is why UN identified 17 goals of sustainable development (SDG). A study conducted by Eichler, G. M., and Schwarz, E. J. (2019) demonstrated that 89% of social innovation case studies could be linked to one or more SDGs. It also clearly showed that the SDGs are a suitable categorization system in the field of SI - which is helpful in further research in this field. This integration illustrates a structured approach to addressing societal challenges through innovation, aligning with global sustainability objectives.

Given the ambitious scope of the United Nations’ 169 targets planned for achievement by 2030, there is a growing consensus on the necessity for increased social innovations to meet these objectives timely. How it could be done?

The spread of technologies associated with all 17 SDGs, specially blockchain, IoT, artificial intelligence, and autonomous robots that are increasing their role and presence exponentially, completely changing the current way of doing things, offering a dramatic evolution in many different segments, such as health care, smart cities, agriculture, and the combat against poverty and inequalities (Dionisio et al., 2023). This technological transformation has given rise to a new category known as digital social innovations.

The potential of digital social innovations as a future cornerstone for social innovation can be supported from the perspective of collective intelligence. This perspective, holds that true intelligence can ultimately be found only in the collective of multiple interacting entities. In isolation, the intelligence of the individual human and AI entities within a system is extremely limited. True intelligence emerges when multiple entities collaborate over longer periods of time (Peeters et al., 2020).

This holistic approach to technology and innovation aligns with the fundamental principles of sustainable development and promises a more effective pathway to meeting global challenges.

## Transformation of Health System in Lithuania for the Value to the Patient

*Danguole Jankauskiene (Mykolas Romeris University)*

The study provided information about the importance of transformation of health care organization highlighting the process and challenges and different attitudes of stakeholders towards the healthcare system. It specifically focuses on the case of Lithuania and its healthcare reform seeking to increase value for patients.

Lithuania has faced issues with its healthcare system, leading to relatively low life expectancy compared to the EU average. The COVID-19 pandemic further impacted life expectancy negatively. The main causes of preventable mortality include ineffective primary care, bureaucratic obstacles, limited access to specialized care, and inadequate health safety measures.

To improve healthcare quality, the study suggests several steps, including data analysis, setting targets, improving accessibility, patient involvement, and collaboration among healthcare organizations. The public health policy priorities for 2021-2030 in Lithuania aim to increase social well-being, strengthen health, and improve the demographic situation by promoting health conservation, lifestyle changes, and reducing disparities between regions.

The restructuring of healthcare institutions is crucial to ensuring basic health services for the population, coordinating provision, and improving emergency care. The results of the healthcare system transformation are expected to lead to better quality of life and health indicators, earlier diagnosis of illnesses, and improved outpatient care.

The study outlines specific benefits expected from improving health prevention and promotion, healthcare quality and access, such as increased early cancer diagnosis, reduced stroke mortality, and improved emergency ambulance response times setting the network of health care institutions, improving competencies of medical staff.

Overall, the goal is to provide high-quality and safe healthcare services to all residents of Lithuania, regardless of their location or socioeconomic status, leading to improved health outcomes for the population.

## Application of Information and Communication Technologies in Social Work with Family: Opportunities and Advantages

*Raminta Bardauskiene (Mykolas Romeris University)*

The significant impetus for applying ICT in social work was the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly restricted opportunities for direct contact with clients. ICTs promote inclusion by breaking down physical and social barriers that may prevent certain families from fully participating in society. UNESCO defines ICT in 2009 as various technological tools and resources used to transmit, store, create, share, or exchange information, including computers, the internet (websites, blogs, and emails), live broadcasting technologies (radio, television, and internet streaming), recording technologies (podcasting, audio and video players, and storage devices). When presenting social work as a profession, the aspect of social work involving direct contact

with clients is emphasized first, where the relationship between the social worker and the client is essential. The presentation aims to enrich research on how and to what extent ICT can serve social work practice in Lithuania. The object of the study is the application of information technology in social work. The aim of the article is to reveal the possibilities and significance of applying information technology for social workers working with families. The article analyzes the results of a qualitative study conducted in 2023 with social workers working with families experiencing difficulties. Semi-structured interviews were used for data collection. The study participants were social workers working with families experiencing difficulties in City N. Eleven social workers agreed to participate in the study. All study participants were women, with an average age of 33 years and an average work experience in social work of 9 years. The average duration of the interviews was 40 minutes. Content analysis was chosen as the method of data analysis. Research questions: What ICT do social workers apply when working with families? What social work activities are ICT applied to? What is the significance of ICT use in social work with families?

The research data indicate that computers, smartphones, applications, and various technologies that facilitate work activities and processes have become indispensable tools for working with families. In these times of rapid technological development, ICT undoubtedly play a significant role in the field of social work management and administration, and social workers actively utilize them. ICT are most commonly applied to processes related to social work management and administration, aiming to provide services more effectively and sustainably and adapt work to contemporary technological changes. Social workers acknowledge that ICT tools accelerate work, facilitate communication, information dissemination, and data processing, enabling more effective and sustainable management of client files, helping to avoid errors, enabling remote meetings, and speeding up internal organization processes. Despite all the advantages of ICT, social workers working with families emphasize the importance and indispensability of live contact with the client. ICT undoubtedly expand the possibilities of social work and pose new challenges. Further research is needed on the use of ICT in direct client work, ethical issues related to technology use, and adaptation of training programs for specialists to new technological challenges.