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RĪGA STRADIŅŠ UNIVERSITY
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CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL SCIENCES

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ABSTRACTS

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Sovietisation of Latvian Cinema during Stalin's Era (1945–1953)

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Objectives

The objectives of this paper is to focus the attention on one topic that has been marginally treated till now, which is the Sovietisation of Latvian cinema during Stalin Era. In this case I will not evaluate only the ideological aspect but I will also examine the economical sphere.

Methods

The intensive research of primary sources, such as material archive, has been fundamental for the success of this paper.

The research has been conducted in three archives:

- Latvian National Archives in Bezdelīgu street and Skandū street;
- Latvian State Archive for Personnel Files;
- Latvian State Archive of Audio-visual documents.

Results

Most previous studies of Soviet cinema, especially Michael Russell and Jamie Miller, respectively with “Soviet Montage Cinema as Propaganda and Political Rhetoric” and “Soviet cinema: Politics and persuasion under Stalin” have concentrated on its aesthetic and technical aspects, leaving out the role of Soviet cinema, dictated by Moscow, which was showed in Latvia and in the rest of the Baltics.

The topic of this paper would be to explain one phenomenon that has been marginally treated since Latvia represented one of the most advanced area in Soviet Union.

Conclusions

After WWII Latvia, as Lithuania and Estonia, was absorbed by the Soviet Union for the second time after the brief German interregnum. The Social and cultural life of Baltic States was strongly affected by Moscow's regime. Latvian cinema was also influenced as well and Soviet authorities were well aware of cinema's propaganda potential in the Baltic States.

Dialectics of Non-Place: Virtual Language and Utopian Fantasies

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Objectives

The paper is striving to search an answer to the question how and why virtual space is being continuously perceived as a social-dialogue based place where every participant is seen as equal to any other just because of the fact of joining the virtual place. My argument will consist of the critique of the idea of the VR (virtual reality) and VL (virtual language) as a prolongation of the aesthetics of Romanticized place coined by Richard Coyne (2005). As Coyne points out, the digital community and digital place / space can be analyzed using techniques known already in the historical period of Romanticism. VL in my argument will be understood as a major vehicle for disturbing the image of an ideal communication and an ideal space / place of digital environment. VL starts the dialectics of virtual space and spatiality as always interchanging and conscious-based place where the majority of the content is being produced by the leading IT and Media Corporations thus it is rather hard to see the digital places as equally constructed in terms of accessibility, economic backgrounds, political views etc. The person in these relations, for my mind, is placed into the cage formed by the 'grand narratives' of the internet and the only possibility to construct his / her identity is to follow the rules of the virtual community. The question for the paper is to see how the rules are survived and understood by the 'real' virtual community of the users of different VR practices (as online or PC gaming communities, for example)

Methods

The method for the paper unites theoretical assumptions of dialectics as conversation-based practice (in Socrat's terms), the ideas of VR and VL as new-constructs of individual and collective identity (Shreibmann, 2005; Coyne, 2005) and the practical (empirical) part of the research – small field-work conducted in the end of 2017 and the second half of 2018 and aimed at the online-data analysis of virtual communication practices (using R language for the data analysis and visualization) and real-time conversations with the representatives of gaming communities (interview-based part).

Results

The results of the research show that VL and VR practices are used as an additional, choice-based practices for conversation and often economic, politic and other purposes for joining the digital place are not taken into consideration at all. What matters for the users are image-based conversation and sense of unity that, on the one hand, supports the idea of digital place as utopian-type place where the imaginative practices take advantage, on the other – also the principle of the never-ending conversation (dialectics) is saved.

Conclusions

Preliminary conclusions of the research may sound as follow:

1. The source for dialectic background of the virtual / digital place is rooted in its very nature of information sharing.
2. However, the contexts of and for this sharing is not always considered by an end user.
3. VR and VL are often perceived as a utopian fantasy for existence, users often wish to 'dive-in' the space and experience something new, not ordinary or possible in their daily lives.
4. Utopian nature of the digital place is being reshaped by the strong influence of economic, marketing, political contexts.

Making Use of 1789 – Transformations of Revolutionary Performative Tools in the European Nationalism of the 19th Century: Analysis of Selected Public Policies

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Objectives

European societies at the moment experience rapid rise of political populism, which affects various spheres of democracy, including concepts of a nation and criteria of belonging to it. The new, digital populism makes use of old forms of ideology of nationalism, which is known as ethnic or cultural nationalism. Although there is no clear difference between cultural and political nationalism, various forms of ethnic nationalism were developed during the 19th century in different societies in Eastern and Central Europe. Among them German, Finnish and Latvian nationalisms can be mentioned.

Thus the major research question is as follows: How did nationalisms in Eastern and Central Europe [German and Latvian national movements] interpret the revolutionary performative practices of 1789–1794 to create and articulate the idea of a nation in the postrevolutionary (post-Napoleonic) Europe?

A nation was defined as a relatively closed community of destiny, united by a common history, cultural heritage, art, literature and language. At the same time a nation as a concept was not only relevant to suppressed ethnic groups, but became a popular ideology among imperial elites of Russia, Prussia and other countries. Thus a nation became the formula of the 19th century political ideologies, both liberal and conservative. Since the school of constructionism (Gellner, Anderson, Hobsbawm et al.) defined the nation as a result of political ideologies of the late Enlightenment, the nation has been analysed from various perspectives, including the nation as a tool of imperial politics (Berger, Miller). What is missing in the academic research is the analysis of the link between a nation as a formula for the political participation of the middle class elites in Eastern Europe and revolutionary culture of the public politics of 1789.

Methods

The aims and methods of the research:

1. To create a multidisciplinary research on the transformation of the European public sphere, understanding the concept of an ethnic nation as a set of tools to come to terms with the rapid changes of the ancien regime in Europe after 1789, specifically in German countries and Baltic provinces (Latvia).
2. To analyse performative practices of the German and Latvian national movements in their relation to the French revolutionary and German cultural nationalism, its transfer to Latvian national movement.
3. To illustrate how practices of the 1789 Revolution were applied in the public politics of an ethnic nationalism in order to formulate new offer for societal consensus, a nation.
4. To further develop the cultural history of the European nationalism by including memory studies into history of nationalism. The following regional versions of the topic will be analysed:
 - Ethnic nationalism in the post Napoleonic German countries (in particular in Prussia) 1814–1848;
 - Latvian concept of an ethnic nation after 1861 abolishment of serfdom in Russia and during the period of liberal reforms under Alexander II.

Both study cases will be linked to interpretation of the public discourses and performative practices of the French revolution of 1789 by the middle class elites.

The following questions will have to be answered:

What practices and ideological tools of the 1789 Revolution were interpreted by European national movements in the 19th century to define a nation?

How were politics of arts as a part of public revolutionary and counterrevolutionary propaganda applied to formulate and articulate the image of a nation in the public space of the 19th century?

How did middle class as a political protagonist of the nationalism define a nation in ethnic terms and how did the concept of a French nation of 1789–1794 correlate with ideas of political participation and ethnicity in Eastern and Central European societies in the 19th century?

What hybrid versions of a nation were produced and in what media were they publicly introduced (including public events and other non-printed media, such as songs, theatrical performances, public concerts, actions, etc.)?

The study will be conducted using interdisciplinary approaches. The major frame of the analysis will be the performative turn, a set of theoretical and methodological tools which are aimed at finding and analyzing such elements of public discourse, which are “staged” by various actors in the public space, using tools, such as a political demonstration, a petition, a series of debates on a constitution, art exhibition, music performance, a commemoration event (burial of a person considered a political hero or a victim), construction of a building, a religious or quasi-religious ceremony. Defined by Stephen Greenblatt *et al.*, the performative turn can help analysing not only actors, but those behind the stage – groups and individuals, who shape public discourse in its drama version (political action), define scripts and work on public events, rituals and ceremonial part of an ideology. That is why ritual studies will be included as a part of the performative turn. As images is a vital element of a public sphere during the 1789 and in the 19th century nationalism, gender studies will be included into the multidisciplinary study, analysing the gendered image of the nation in German and Latvian national movements.

The primarily sources of the study will be the following:

1. Newspapers of the relevant period.
2. Year books, calendars, caricatures.
3. Diaries, private letters, memoirs.
4. Songs, anthems, plays, operas.
5. Paintings, sculpture, monuments and public buildings.

The sources will be interpreted using semiotics of political discourse, content analysis, interpretation of arts as social energy (Geertz's concept) and symbolic capital (the concept elaborated by Bourdieu in relation to gender issues). Theories of collective memory will be applied additionally, using the concept of collective memory by Jan Assmann and Aleida Assmann.

Results

As the research deals with the reception of the 18th century political culture in the political discourses on a nation, the study will be a combination of various disciplines and theoretical approaches, such as: history of arts, history of culture and ideas, anthropology, gender studies and memory studies.

Conclusions

The Revolution of 1789 had been the most important political event and process in the first half of the 19th century, which shaped liberal ideologies and political performances before 1848. The idea of freedom has been defined by pro and contra revolutionary ideologies as the basic discourse after 1789. The definition of freedom in German national discourse 1815–1848 has been linked to the idea of middle class evolutionary process of acquiring new rights of participation in the state affairs. Education and common media discourse have been realized in various forms of civic participation, such as Lesevereine (reading clubs) and other networks of associations which were supposed to prepare a new political person in the age of transforming European ancien regimes into new political unities.

Critique of Technocracy in Riga Stencil Graffiti

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Objectives

The aim of this research is to describe the technocratic ideology and machinery as a medium within the framework of cultural studies. The objectives include analysis of graffiti messages of critique for technocracy, their poetic dimension and interpretation of those messages in the context of ideological streams of counterculture and contemporary social and communication theory.

Methods

The empiric base for the research are the Riga stencil graffiti collection. The method used to unveil the meaning of graffiti messages according to their ideological base is communication theory's sub-division of social semiotic analysis.

Results

Immanuel Wallerstein speaks about the latest development in the sphere of ideology: "we are well acquainted with the storyline of the new age. In short, it can be formulated as follows: three basic directions of political ideology were formed in the 19th century: conservatism, liberalism and socialism". The turning point is the Great French Revolution that brought "consequences to the system of worldview" in the form of normalization of changes, innovations, transformations and even revolutions in the modern political arena. Political ideologies is only one of the ways how this socio-psychological normalization takes place: the emergence of social sciences by following "an archaeology of the human sciences" started by Foucault's "The Order of Things" is yet another way how to cope with challenges of modernity. The third and final answer is "anti-systemic movements" or counter-culture's ideology, that is the empiric basis for our research – in the messages of alternative media – graffiti.

The conveyor of embryos represent the universe of the movie "Matrix" that speaks about a global simulation in which we live only as a source of energy for self-developing world of machines and as machinery reproductive organs that are remanufactured in a conveyor. The image of a conveyor in a piece of graffiti art arouses thoughts about the poetical dimension of the technical sphere (or the need for industrialization for the work described by Pierre Bourdieu as "a small-scale producer of private mythologies", i.e., a poet, similarly to the one we see in Platonov's "literary machines").

Conclusions

Alongside with language the productive activity itself by mastering the natural forces (praxis) is the origin of humankind, while self-developing production means, i.e., technology / machinery, in Heidegger's opinion, the destiny of humankind should be listened to carefully as the voice of existence is revealed there. Humble listening creates a third way between thoughtless assumptions that technology is something technically handy providing comfort and convenience, and rejection of technical progress. Also, existence speaks to us through language, for instance, proto-machine The teeth- and it's glossy surface power within the realm of hairy reality of primitive man postulated in "Crowds and Power" by Elias Canetti appeared in the etymology of the Latvian language "zobs-zobens": a manifestation of the sequence / arrangement of enamel glossy teeth – the row, the sequence of teeth that destructs flesh and incarnates power (the first amulets were made from teeth and tusks of animals). There is evolution from a tooth through metallurgy to a sword and further – a chromed car. Apotheosis for it is clearly seen in "life-style" glossy magazines with toothy smiling beauties on the front cover that promise eternal youth in which there is no place for death, entropy and illness just like in the fascinating virtuality of glossy computer screens. The digital objects do not erode: the photos in granny's albums become yellowish while digital pictures do not age.

Discursive Models of Politics: Latvians Discussing Parliamentary Politics in TV Broadcast “Tautas Panorāma”

Sergei Kruk

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Objectives

The paper analyses vernacular understanding of politics shared by Latvian population. Low social activity and trust is a remarkable characteristic of Latvians. How do they conceive of the role of intermediary institutions of the public sphere in the bottom-up communication between individuals and the state power?

Methods

117 episodes of TV broadcast Tautas panorāma including interviews with the population of all administrative units of Latvia will be analysed applying Cognitive Discourse Analysis. The programs were broadcast before the 2018 Parliamentary elections, the citizens were asked to evaluate the outgoing constituency and to set tasks of the new one. Cognitive Discourse Analysis suggests that private knowledge is represented as mental models; individuals apply shared knowledge to formulate their private experience discursively. Accordingly, the discourse analysis reveals the adaptation of private experience to what is accepted publicly.

Results

Latvians make use of several discursive models expressing their understanding of politics, but these models do not include the public sphere and voluntary organizations: 1) strong delimitation of the state and private life; 2) the paternalistic state resolving individual problems; 3) the state as a procurer of security and promoter of language and culture.

Most of interviewees express dissatisfaction with the political elite. Moralism discourse model describes the conditions of improvement of politics justifying two modes of citizen's conduct. 1) a politician should improve his / her character; since this time consuming process depends on the subject alone, the interviewees conciliate themselves with the status quo and do not undertake civic actions; 2) young population socialized under the post-Soviet conditions expresses right morality therefore these candidates should be voted for.

Conclusions

Discursive models of politics demonstrate the reliance on subjective characteristics of politicians, however the interviewees disregard the role of rights and obligations objectified in political procedures.

Unconscious Social Interaction as the Main Driver of Human Values Formation

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Objectives

Facilitating of a decision making in a group appears in groups of all living creatures with nervous system from social insects to human groups. The latest discovery in Collective Intelligence presents that people sensitivity beyond the borders of verbal and nonverbal communication also influences on the facilitating group collaboration face-to-face or online. The theory of unconscious social interaction 'Coherent Intelligence' proposes one explanation for all cases of such collaboration in a group based on a quantum mechanics approach. So that Collective Intelligence and a collaboration of social animals are manifestations of the phenomenon of Coherent Intelligence which is the result of interaction and join of nervous systems of all participants of the emotional act in a group provided by quantum entangled state of their neurons.

Methods

The research team has performed tests on 'Coherent Intelligence' with different groups of students. The Research was aimed to approve an existence of unconscious collaboration of many individuals during collective efforts to find right answers without any communication between them. All these groups have made the test divided in 2 test sessions, both of sessions proceeded with emotional stimulation but during the second session only randomly chosen 50% of participants (Receivers) were receiving a right answers on each task.

Results

All tests presented that participants-Receivers have shown much better collective results when other members of their groups had a confident knowledge about the right answers on questions of the tests.

Conclusions

Unconscious social interaction has been forming society for thousands of years, since the prehistorical period until now. Coherent Intelligence plays an important role in social reality formation and contributes to education in sense of moral training also. Its influence on society is invisible to members, but such a gentle and delicate impact is constant and continuous because of everywhere penetrating unconscious essence.

Visual Framing Analysis of Migration Representation in Latvian Press Photography 2015–2016

Dr. Alnis Stakle

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Objectives

The present research aims to depict the framing of migration in the visual content of the most influential Latvian press media.

Methods

The research sample includes 857 publications in the leading Latvian press media (NRA, Latvijas Avīze, Delfi.lv, Tvnet.lv, TV3/skaties.lv, Leta, Vesti.lv, LR1, LR4, Apollo.lv, LTV Panorāma, PBK “Latvijas Laiks”) dating from 1 June, 2015 to 30 June, 2016. The timeframe of research is related to policy making on the issue of asylum seekers in Latvia as well as to various controversial discussions in the media and the society at large. Relevant publications for research purposes were selected by using the key words: refugees, asylum seekers, migration and immigration in various combinations and declensions. Afterwards, a mixed research method was used, combining content analysis and framing analysis, with a view to exploring both the text of each publication and the accompanying photographs and their descriptions.

Results

The performed data analysis yielded a results that the representation of migration in the media is paternalistic and objectified, homogeneous and conducive of migrant exclusion, them generally being depicted as a mob or part of a group and the images mostly showing no contact of migrants with the locals.

Conclusions

Majority of photographs tend to visualise migration with images of males, which fosters a sense of danger and threat. Numerous photographs in the articles on migration do not portray migrants at all, showcasing politicians as decision makers instead. The use of visual material on the most part does not rely on dramatisation. The editorial policies of some media, however, have precipitated the use of exaggerated, dramatised images. Migration issues are oftentimes illustrated by random photographs which are not directly related to the specific topic discussed in the article. Such images that are generally procured in photo-banks fail to give a concrete expression to the story behind the article or to precisely convey the message thereof.

Cross-Cultural Communication in Business Environment: Changes in Profile of Latvia over the Last Five Years by Hofstede's indexes

Diāna Kalniņa

*Rīga Stradiņš University, Ph.D. student at Communication
Culture and Multimedia, Latvia*

Objectives

The objective of the study is to investigate whether and how the cultural dimensions of permanent residents of Latvia have changed over the last five years according to the Geert Hofstede's indexes. Data of the study are discussed in relation to the entire population of the country, as well as among different socio-demographic groups. The main focus in the analysis is the estimation of distinctive cultural characteristics that affect communication in the business environment.

Methods

To obtain empirical data of the research, a quantitative survey method was and will be used for interviews on the Internet (online). The first nationally representative survey to determine the cultural values of the population of Latvia by the Hofstede's indexes I conducted in January 2014 as a part of my master's thesis. In overall 1005 permanent residents of Latvia aged 18 to 74 were interviewed in this survey. The repeated survey was conducted in January 2019 using the same survey method and the same number of respondents.

Results

The repeated study shows changes in almost all measured cultural indexes. Statistically significant changes can be observed in Power Distance and Pragmatic versus Normative dimensions. Small changes in Individualism and Indulgence versus Restraint dimensions.

Conclusions

The data obtained in the study will allow to assess whether and how the cultural values of permanent residents of Latvia change over time. Thus, it is possible to predict what changes can be expected in communication in the business environment (which is the main theme of this research), as well as in other areas, such as family, school, attitudes towards public institutions, health care, religion, creativity, shopping habits, tolerance for diversity and other issues.

Communication Interventions in Top Level of Social Ecological Model to Initiate New Policy on Oncological Patients' Treatment

Vita Savicka; Aija Kažoka

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Objectives

The aim was to evaluate communication interventions effectiveness to initiate a new politics for oncology patients' treatment.

Methods

Qualitative and quantitative content analyses of discussion of health professionals, members of patients' NGOs in Latvian parliamentary committee on health issues. In the course of the research, quantitative data cover the use of the words that characterize and are included in political documents focused on improvement of treatment of oncological patients (Oncology plan). Qualitative data explore what arguments of health professionals and members of NGOs presented in the parliamentary committee are included in the text of the political document (Oncology plan).

Results

Communication interventions effectiveness in the top level of social ecological model were high because communication interventions have initiated idea of development of new oncology policy but content of oncology plan (new oncology treatment policy) covers just some proposals of health professionals and NGOs what kind activities / solutions should be included in the political document. It means that communication interventions focused on solving problems regarding diagnostics, treatment, finances were effective, but health professional's communication did not impact strength of the system of treatment of oncology patients in general.

Conclusions

In Latvian health care policy improvement – the development and approval of new treatment policy for specific diagnose highlights importance of communication interventions at top level of the social ecology system. Shelley D. Golden and Jo Anne L. Earp admit that to achieve long-term health behavior or improvements, it is important to analyze in how many levels action is needed for it to be effective. In political level communication interventions ensure the adoption of decisions that positively affect health (Golden, Earp, 2012, Schiavo, 2007). The development of the oncology plan can also be looked at through a lens of the definition of the public sphere of Jürgen Habermas. It is a civic / citizen environment in which the public opinion and political will are both formed as a result of the communication process. Habermas also defines a chain of events within public spheres: first, the conversation and discussion circulate around a kind of private label that, from then on, affects the boundaries of the public sphere, and finally may actually affect governance (Habermas 2001, 344).

Are they Angry Voters? No, They are Fans of Populist Politicians! Analysis of Facebook Pre-Election Communication Content and Audience Emotions of Latvia's Right Wing Populist Party "KPV LV"

Prof. *Anda Rozukalne*

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Objectives

We'll lead the country, it is our time, the fourth awakening has begun – these are the slogans used by the right wing political party KPV LV to prove their victory in the 13th election of the Saeima (Latvian Parliament) on October 6, 2018. Supporters of the party wear shirts with the slogan 'The country must begin with itself!', participate in support activities and create a stable audience for the party leaders' regular broadcasts on Facebook (FB). This article analyses the communication and audience's reaction to the Latvian populist party, following daily updates and live videos on Facebook prior to the 13th election of the Saeima. The aim of the research is to determine the type of populism KPV employs (de Wreeese, 2018), and to analyse audience reactions to the communication of KPV LV in Facebook.

Methods

The research data was collected in during pre-election period from mid of the Augusts till the end of September 2018, when the popularity and social media activity of the party increased. The methods of data analysis were qualitative and quantitative content analysis. To recognise the audience emotions, FB users comment analysis used the "Emotions recognition model", which identifies words and phrases mentioning specific emotions. To compare political communication and audience content, quantitative content analysis was employed on audience's posts below party's prime minister candidate Aldis Gobzems publications on FB where the comment count is higher than 50. From the 101 posts created within one month, 22 were chosen for qualitative analysis along with the users' comments. Altogether, the content of 6913 audience comments was analysed. The research data interpretation is based on theoretical findings that include populist communication, politicised fandom, and emotions expressed in social media communication.

Results

The leader of party KPV LV Gobzems uses FB to popularise his party and communicate its activities. He publishes photos from meetings with voters all over Latvia, broadcasts FB Live video from media political debates or interviews. A third (30%) of the post content is dedicated to pre-election campaign activities. A significant part of communication (18%) is devoted to media and journalism criticism. Gobzems's attitude towards media in FB content is of two kinds: he praises publications dealing with serious issues and proving that KPV position is well-grounded (8%); in other publications, he fights against media criticism towards KPV LV. In many posts (9%), he answers voters' questions and explains the party's position on different matters. Gobzems frequently criticises other political rivals (11%) and the government elite (6%), as he wants to present his party as a new power which is the 'only one to make a change'. Like media texts, he also reposts and replies to supportive user comments (5%). The audience actively reacts to Gobzems's content, his posts are actively shared. Within a month's time they have been shared 19 677 times, the posts received 6813 audience comments, and 36 281 reactions by using emoji. Gobzems, speaking to FB users via video, encourages to share his posts. FB user reactions show the audience's support: posts received 91% likes, 4% – love emoji, 3% – ha ha, 2% – wows. Qualitative content analysis of the most commented posts reveal that the audience is more active to react to video and text posts where the politician touches upon controversial issues: criticises the media (36%) explains his political position (27%), criticises establishment (17%), criticises political rivalry (10%). Audience comments also personal events (7%) and Gobzems's reaction to criminal cases regarding his party members (3%). In his most commented FB posts, Aldis Gobzems mostly expresses a negative attitude on the current events, media and journalist activities, criticises political rivals or elite members. Only a handful of posts showing his political position and personal events contain positive or neutral attitude. Analysing FB communication content, the in-groups and out-groups defined by party leader

were identified. Because Gobzems touches upon criticism of political rivals (35%), media (33%) and elite (32%), his FB content reveals a similar out-group structure. The politician contrasts himself and his party to those who have been shaping the current Latvian politics, high-level officials and institutions; he regularly criticises and accuses the media. Gobzems's defined in-groups are connected to party activities, ideas and supporters. The in-group most frequently mentioned on FB communication content consist of party members and Gobzems (43%), described as 'we', 'our kind'. The second largest in-group are the people of Latvia (41%) as an entity, with whom, according to Gobzems, other politicians do not speak, listen, or care about solving their problems. The main KPV political ideas are connected to blaming the elite for politics that has led thousands of inhabitants to leave the country: 10% of the posts mention representatives of the diaspora. Assessing the FB post content, communication style was also identified by separate content analysis categories. Regarding party actions, ideas and contrast to other parties, elite and media, Gobzems frequently claims to be different, better, braver than others. The phrases 'I risk for you'; 'we are the only ones who name things for what they are'; 'journalists are evil, corrupt, engaged' and others give a moral assessment. His style is mostly moralising (40%) or attacking (38%). He is trying to create an intrigue and surprise by publishing documents, private chats, information on others' private lives – these posts are identified as sensational style (22%). Analysing the audience's attitude in comments on Gobzems's posts, it can be concluded that it partially coincides with the reaction-expressed attitude. 64% of the comments are overall positive, expressing support and agreement to the opinions. 32% of the comments display a negative attitude. To precise the object of the negative attitude, content analysis separated the negative attitude towards Gobzems's mentioned issues, people, institutions (25%) and Gobzems himself (7%). The audience mostly supports the politician, only a few comments are criticising or neutral (4%), asking additional questions. Emotions are crucial to populist communication. They are a significant part of social media communication. Data shows that the audience comments frequently mention emotions – some comments even identify two or more emotions. Their structure coincides with the overall positive attitude: commenters express admiration (29%), trust (29%), and acceptance (15%) towards the politician, whereas anger 13%, dislike (7%), rage (4%), disgust (2%), shame (1%) is attributed to those who are criticised by Gobzems or his party members.

Conclusions

KPV actively use social media and other digital platforms in their communication, allowing them regularly and directly address the audience to present their political position, define in-groups and out-groups, and cause emotions in audience. The posts are published regularly; the content repeats itself, recognisable words and slogans are used to appeal to persistent supporters. Answers to research questions: RQ1 – What is the content of KPV LV leader Aldis Gobzems's communication in FB during pre-election period from mid-August till mid-September 2018? Data shows that Gobzems' communication content contains complete populism themes – accentuation of own actions, activities showing party work, elite criticism, support to people's interests. Alongside explaining the political position, a large part of communication regards media and journalist job. The research coincides with an intensive pre-election period, during which media critically evaluates KPV actions. On FB live streams, Gobzems actively responds to criticism or criticises journalists, calling them 'engaged', attacks personally, claiming them unprofessional and unobjective. Opposing his own communication to media, Gobzems constructs the media as an out-group. Part of his communication content is created by media publications, which reveal economic, political or social problems. In comments, he emphasises establishment inability to solve the ordinary people's problems, increasing their suffering. This media content allows Gobzems to criticise political rivalry. Commenting other sources, Gobzems stresses his and his party's superiority. His communication themes precisely define the in-groups: people, non-Latvians, diaspora representatives, and out-groups: establishment, other politicians, media. RQ2 – What is the attention and communication style of KPV LV leader Aldis Gobzems towards voters, political competitors and media during pre-election communication? Analysing data on attitude expressed in FB communication, it can be concluded that Gobzems evaluates events, processes and individuals mostly negatively. Only a few cases display positive or neutral attitude, when speaking about himself or his colleagues. a critical view helps to create a dichotomy between 'we' and 'they', which is important in distinguishing the 'good' KPV and its leaders from the 'bad' critics and rivals. The communication style frequently contains moral evaluation and emphasises KPV moral superiority: openness, honesty, determination. Criticising the establishment, political competitors and media, Gobzems connects moralising and attacking style, threatens particular

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journalists by exposure that puts their reputation in danger. In many publications, he tries to reveal as if unknown information in sensational style: publishes otherwise unavailable documents, personal data and private messages. Thus, he is attempting to emphasise the exclusiveness of the information, as well as his courage. The communication style helps to stress other communication tools – emotional attitude and personal involvement. RQ 3 – What is the content and structure of emotions in the comments created by followers in the comments section next to Aldis Gobzems posts in Facebook? In FB communication, audience attitude can be expressed via emojis or comments. The reaction and comment content displays support to Gobzems' ideas and attitudes. In 90% of the cases, the reaction is a 'like', whereas comments reveal a predominantly positive attitude. The emotion structure shows admiration, support, trust regarding the political leader, whereas anger, disdain, shame, disgust is shown towards the problems Gobzems mentions. The count of reactions and comments shows that a part of feedback reflect automatic responses, which are characteristic to audience' behaviour on social media (Ott, 2016). A part of the comments are just a greeting, slogan and brief support, expressed through 'wave' or other emojis, such as flags identifying the commenter's country. The regular involvement and automatic reactions that are easy to show on a social media platform is shown also in data on audience feedback to posts' content. 25% of the comments speak of the content, other comments are similar and general, they mostly concern the attitude towards the party's ideas, leader, society issues, commenter's experience, emotions. The audience's reaction and comment count proves that a politically and personally interested group has formed. This group expects regular information from the supported political leader. In this aspect, Gobzems's audience feedback shows that he is a successful micro-agenda setter (Wohn and Bowe, 2016). However, his defined daily routine thematically addresses a small fraction of the commenters; most support the party and its leader instead of reacting to the content. Even fewer commenters (7%) engage in discussion, ask questions, discuss amongst themselves, critically assess the party or other commenters' remarks. This environment develops echo-chamber features, where it is difficult for other opinions to break in, but emotions play a big role (Wang and Hickerson, 2016). According to de Wree (2016) classification, Gobzems's publications reflect complete populism, as it clearly identifies people as the support group, precisely determines out-groups, displaying strict anti-elitism. People's interests are emphasised both in content and communication style. In literature, populists are identified when they claim themselves and the 'ordinary people' to be the in-group, finding out-groups as culprits for all people's problems (Hameleers et al., 2016). KPV LV defined in-group are their supporters, Latvian emigrants who have left, as interpreted by the party, because of the unbearable conditions created by the elite. The defined out-group are the current 'old' politicians, irresponsible officials and professional media. Thus, KPV LV reflects typical populist characteristics: anti-elitism and aggressive communication (see also: Hameleers et al., 2016; Alvares and Dahlgreen, 2016).

Social Media as Tool for Political Actors to Encourage Political Participation: Case of Political Party “KPV LV”

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Objectives

The aim of the research is to determine, whether and how different kinds of Facebook groups are used by political actors to encourage low and high effort political participation.

Methods

To achieve the goal, a non-participant observation of several Facebook (FB) groups dedicated to the activities of the party “KPV LV” was made. The analysis of the obtained data was performed by using a content analysis. To determine the political actor incentives used to promote political participation, the social media political participation model by Knoll, Matthes, Heiss was used.

Results

This study has looked deeply in three FB groups devoted to activities of the “KPV LV”, concluding that there is a similar “populist” pattern of promotion of political participation. These FB groups consist of information (shared news, original posts, jokes, memes, also unflattering for the party), that in some way is consistent with political party’s political agenda. “Failed state” narrative is one of the main narratives in these groups, and it allows political actors to act like “saviours” and bearers of the necessary change.

Conclusions

FB groups allow political actors to constantly expose users to political content, thereby involving them in periodical but long term low effort political participation which can lead to a high effort political participation including voting and joining the political party or protest rally. In the case of “KPV LV” related FB groups engagement in low effort participation includes sharing politically loaded FB posts, thereby disseminating beneficial information to the users who don’t belong to the community.

In the FB groups, an attempt is made to create isolated information space by discrediting traditional media and “floating” the information desired by the political actor, thus promoting indoctrination.

High-political political participation is a long-term goal, activated only in particularly important situations (election) or crisis (for example, arrest of party leader Kaimiņš). The promotion of low-effort political participation seeks to provide an alternative public space, where its members can feel the comprehensive support of proposed idea.

Despite the high level of virtual activity, “slacktivism” can be observed in the groups, indicating problems to fully exploit the group potential, without achieving all the intended goals.

Terrible Event and Political News – Revolution of 1789

Prof. *Deniss Hanovs*

Rīga Stradiņš University, Communication Department, Latvia

Objectives

To analyse media culture during the revolution of 1789.

Methods

Discourse analysis.

Results

New interpretative frame of the 1789 revolution.

Conclusions

The revolution will be analysed as a media event.

Institutional Challenge in Delivering Negative Regional-Political Messages – How to Maintain Institutional Reliability and Fulfill Individual Information Needs Situationally and Constructively? Case of Closure of Estonian Obstetric Units

Ph.D. Kadi Lubi¹; Katre Koppel²; Ph.D. Marko Uibu²

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Objectives

The aim of this research is to analyze people's information needs regarding pregnancy, childbirth and transfer to the obstetric units in the context of closure of smaller obstetric units in Estonia, and to examine the role of media coverage in fulfilling information needs. Our research questions were:

1. How accessible and sufficient is available information about pregnancy, childbirth and transfer to the obstetric units?
2. What are the perceived gaps in this information?
3. If and how institutional communication in media influenced public perceptions in closure-discourse?

Methods

The analysis is based on the web-based survey and thematic analysis of respective media coverage. 226 people of babies born in 2017 and 2018 having various educational and occupational backgrounds from all counties in Estonia responded to the survey. In the analysis we constructed new aggregated index variables to measure information usage activity and variety. The sample for media coverage analysis contains 150 articles from 6-months period, since the announcement of the plan to close two smaller units.

Results

The results revealed perceived gaps regarding the transfer process in the beginning of childbirth (when, where and how to go). Perceived lack of institutional support is related to the limited possibilities to attend hospital-led courses and controversial and inconsistent media messages during the closure process. 63% perceived state's receding leading to higher community-based resistance towards institutional decisions (i.e. increase of local and media activism).

Conclusions

In case of reforms influencing occasions that cannot be planned (e.g. natural childbirth process), institutional communication must be consistent, in time and support fulfilment of areas of information gaps (e.g. reliable information regarding old and new processes, replacement options from state and hospitals, clear instructions etc.). Otherwise, people will adopt the perception that state is receding and abandoning them in critical, but personally and demographically important moments.

Media Literacy Can Change Our Places

Christiane Versuti

Universidade Estadual Paulista Júlio de Mesquita Filho - UNESP, Brazil

Objectives

Presents and relates the concepts of media literacy and social movements, in the sense that, through media literacy, social movements can increase their visibility, their networks of articulation and the impact of their actions, transforming online and off-line spaces.

Methods

Bibliographical review and articulation of the concepts of media literacy, social movements, social movements in network and citizenship.

Results

For Bévort and Belloni (2009), the importance of media literacy is present in several instances: dealing with the omnipresence of the media in social life; to fight against the inequalities of access to the different media and to provide the critical competence to use the information made available. In addition, it can be said that with the acquisition of informational skills resulting from this training it is possible to empower the citizen with access, reading, selection, interpretation and production of content, articulation with other groups, and consolidation of his participation as a citizen. Bibliographical review and articulation of the concepts of media literacy, social movements, social movements in network and citizenship.

These skills are fundamental to social movements, that are “forms of organization and articulation based on a set of common interests and values, with the purpose of defining and guiding the forms of social action. Such forms of collective action aim, from frequently non-institutional processes of pressure, to change the existing social order, or part of it, and influence the results of social and political processes involving social values or behaviors or, ultimately, institutional decisions of governments and bodies regarding the definition of public policies” (MACHADO, 2007, p. 253).

Conclusions

Media literacy can contribute to a better performance of social movements by accessing, analyzing information and producing their content in a creative and active way in their citizen action, transforming spaces.

Latvian Cinema: Production, Genres, Audiences

Dr. Dita Rietuma

Rīga Stradiņš University, Communication Department, Latvia

Objectives

The objective of the presentation is to characterise the present situation of the Latvian film industry and to analyse the substantial growth of the production, diversity of genres and admissions of the Latvian film industry in recent years. In 2018, Latvia produced the biggest number of feature-length films since the restoration of independence in 1991. In my presentation, I would like to analyse the methods, the production value and the genre structure of the films which achieved these results.

Methods

Content analysis, statistical analysis.

Results

The presentation will emphasise the methods which helped not only to increase the production of Latvian cinema but also reach the biggest admissions since the beginning of the 90s.

Conclusions

The increase of the production and subsidies for the film production are crucial for the improvement of the market share of national cinema, an increase of the admissions and the strengthening of national film culture. Moreover, these traits are highly important for the European film scene as an alternative to the global dominance of the Hollywood film industry.

Why State: from Central Asia to the Balkans and the Baltics

Ph.D. Klavs Sedlenieks

Rīga Stradiņš University, Department of Communication Studies, Latvia

Objectives

This presentation explores some of the possible explanations for this willingness to be a subject of the state.

Methods

Based on examination of available ethnographic texts from a wide range of countries in Central Asia, Caucasus, the Balkans and the Baltics.

Results

Despite the fact that all human societies currently conceive themselves as divided into and belonging to units called 'states', the analysis of these units more often than not pays attention to the problematic, hegemonic or oppressive characteristics of the state. Much less attention has been given to the active looking for the state and as Steff Jansen (Jansen, 2015) calls it "yearning" for the state. Ethnographic work from a rather diverse area starting from Central Asia (Reeves, Rasanayagam, and Beyer, 2014), Caucasus (Mühlfried, 2014) and the Balkans (Jansen, 2014; Brković, 2015; Greenberg, 2010) and ending with the Baltics (Dzenovska, 2018) demonstrate that despite the problems caused by the state (ranging from violence to corruption), people in these societies have a strong belief in the beneficial potential of the state and thus instead of evading (or in some cases – parallel to such evasion), they take active steps towards being a part of the state, often perceiving the state as the necessary solution to the lack of structure they experience in their daily lives.

Conclusions

Firstly, it could be explained by confusion of the state and the ethnic belonging where state often stands for the ethnic group one wishes to belong to. Secondly, the alternative to the bureaucracy-based state system is a society that is based on the private knowledge-based networks, which demands constant updating and strengthening of the network. This principle is rather tiresome and does not ensure equal access to resources. Thirdly, the longing for the state may be interpreted as a loosely articulated and at times unconscious critique of free market capitalism, in particular in the circumstances where such critique does not fit the generally held orthodoxy.

Lukewarm Nationalism – Between Disciplinary and Normalising Power: Case of Lithuanian State and Lithuanian Poles

Karolis Dambrauskas

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Objectives

The state – Polish minority conflict in Lithuania has not generated violence, despite continued discontent among the Poles with the country's constant inability to resolve the minority problems. This paper problematises these peaceful relations between national majority and national minority in Lithuania and thereby tries to get a better understanding of what lays between hot and banal nationalisms (Billig, 1995, 2017; Skey 2009).

Methods

This requires moving beyond the discourse of rights to that of power. Power can be not only disciplinary and coercive but also normalizing and subjectifying (Foucault, 1982). The rights, enjoyed by minorities *de jure* (as in the case of Poles in Lithuania), can be restricted directly (i.e. through closing minority schools) or indirectly (i.e. by responsabilising minorities for the implementation of their own rights). The line between direct and indirect violations, therefore, can be blurry: minority rights' violation can be an unexpected outcome of an attempt to govern in the best possible way.

The “best ways” often depend on interests and power, however. Therefore, in terms of minority rights in Lithuania, this paper is concerned with “a kind of rationality...intrinsic to the art of government” (Foucault, 1991:89) and with “thinking about the nature of the practice of government (who can govern; what governing is; what or who is governed)” (Gordon, 1991:3).

The nature of the practice of government is examined through several instances of such practice: a) the state's refusal to grant Lithuanian Poles the right to write their names in passport in their original form (i.e. Mickiewicz instead of Mickevičius); b) ‘optimization’ and reform of the state's school network, including minority schools.

Results

The analysis suggests that minority-majority relations are shaped by different, yet often coexisting “arts of government” (Foucault, 1991), informed by different ideas of what the good governing is and exemplifying different – restrictive nationalistic or creative neoliberal – forms of power.

Conclusions

The interplay between these different forms of power, this paper concludes, creates a lukewarm status quo in minority-majority relations.

Altering Presence of State

Ph.D. Elina Troschenko

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Objectives

This paper explores people's relations to and engagement with identity documents illustrating how the state's presence has been changing in the lives of rural Uzbek communities in Kyrgyzstan over the last decades.

Methods

This paper is based on an extensive fieldwork conducted in Kyrgyzstan from 2013 to 2014.

Results

Identity documents, being the paradigmatic artifacts of state control and subjection, can give a particular insight into how people experience the state in everyday life and how the state enters and embraces the mundane practices of people. Based on a fieldwork conducted in the borderlands of Kyrgyzstan, this paper explores people's relations to and engagement with identity documents illustrating how the state's presence has been changing in the lives of rural Uzbek communities in Kyrgyzstan over time. The various periods of state's presence or absence – the overarching presence of an authoritarian state, the withdrawal of the crumbling state and re-territorialization of a nation state – have been accompanied by changing concerns among people regarding individual documents.

Conclusions

This paper argues how the anthropological exploration of people's engagement with identity documents – the material artifacts of the state bureaucracy – can reveal the fluctuating presence of the state and give an insight into the micro-politics of interaction between state agents, bureaucrats, and documented persons.

Self-Construction of Citizenship in Slum of Alagados (Salvador, Brazil)

Ph.D. Lorena Volpini

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Objectives

Brazilian slums are commonly perceived as stateless, ungoverned spaces. The case of Alagados (Salvador, Bahia) shows the opposite. Started in the 1940s as a small slum in a coastal swamp, by the 1970s, Alagados was known as the biggest Latin American favela built on stilts. Dwellers' self-construction efforts were followed by State attempts to eliminate or contain fast expanding squats and to execute social housing projects. After decades, the shelters on stilts became houses built of blocks. Part of the swamp was grounded and incorporated to mainland working class neighbourhoods. This paper analyses spatial practices in Alagados and relates them to dwellers' citizenship and State making processes.

Methods

The ethnographic data here presented were produced through extended fieldwork (2013–2015). Participant observation of everyday life of dwellers and neighbourhood associations members was combined to in-depth interviews, to gather data on spatial practices and multiple encounters of citizens and the State.

Results

Nowadays Alagados displays intense civic and political life. Numerous local organisations run community social projects, lead dwellers' rights claims and liaise with state agencies in participation processes. Community leaders ascribe this large presence and activity to dwellers' habitus of resistance, acquired through decades of squat practice, displacement threats, self-construction in adverse ecological settings. I highlight the continuum of spatial practices from private to public sphere as a key to understand the politics of space and citizenship in Alagados. Vicinality practices that allowed resistance in former occupations, enable nowadays successful partnership with the State (through claim making, participation politics and community social work).

Conclusions

Despite local narratives of abandonment, the State present in Alagados past and present. An analysis of contemporary neighbourhood collective action allows to unearth reciprocal implication of everyday life, politics of space and state making "from below".

States as Temporary Resources for Long-Term Home-Making Projects

Ph.D. Agita Lūse

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Objectives

The objective of this paper is to provide a preliminary answer to the following question: what new meanings the notion of state acquires for people who have fled a state torn by protracted civil war and are claiming asylum in a state founded on humanistic principles and values of liberal democracy?

Methods

Since 2016, the author of the paper has conducted an intermittent ethnographic observation of and listening to an asylum-seeker family (originating from Afghanistan, afforded an alternative status in Latvia and residing in Germany) as well as their friends and advocates. To analyse the ethnographic data in a broader context of anthropology of forced migration and contemporary asylum policies, a literature review was conducted.

Results

The most important result of the study has been pinpointing the strategies that the participants of the current research have been employing, to ensure a bearable life for themselves and their children. The state institutions of the receiving country are viewed as providers of shelter and minimum of social assistance. The cultural institutions and patterns of the society left behind as well as those of the ethnic diaspora, on the other hand, are drawn on daily in order to ensure cultural connectivity and continuity. The above mentioned practices in the proposed paper are viewed against the background of the liminal zone of a “non-recording state” (Kalir 2017) and interpreted in the light of the analytical categories “de-territorialized diaspora”, “ductile homeland” and “liquid home” (Cohen 2008).

Conclusions

It ensues from the ethnographic data recorded for this study that to the people who have fled their country of origin due to civil war and are hoping to find asylum in a Western country the state appears a notion of a secondary importance. It is viewed primarily as a means rather than the end, while the primary importance is attached to home-making, in the sense of collectively projecting a homeland, i.e., a socio-cultural space of relative familiarity and continuity in the unstable and rapidly changing contemporary world.

Dreams About an Anchored State

Diego Valdivieso Sierpe

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Department of Social Anthropology, United Kingdom*

Objectives

Drawing on the anthropology of the state, anthropology of affects, and infrastructure and mobility studies this paper seeks to answer how the construction of ‘Delegación Municipal’ (Municipal Delegation) on Quehui Island (only reachable by motorboats), one of the more than 40 islands that form the Archipelago of Chiloé in the south of Chile allows the emergence of affective registers which express a longing for an anchored state.

Methods

1 year ethnographic field work.

Results

Motorboats, a particular type of technology of mobility, enables, on the one hand, the mobility of field-level officials implementing public policies and social programmes on the island; and on the other, allows the trip to Castro (the capital of the province localised in the main Island of the archipelago and where the majority of the state bureaus are located) of those islanders who need to sort out bureaucratic procedures and paperwork required by some state or local government departments in order to gain access to, or remain in, the different welfare programmes. In order to face the inconveniences that this dependence on the motorboats generates, the local government of Castro started the construction of a Delegación Municipal (Municipal Delegation) on the island.

Conclusions

As a public infrastructure intervention the construction of the ‘Delegación Municipal’ enables the circulation of narratives of desire and distrust informed by situational configurations and historic relations, and also a deeper reflection on the symbolical representations of the state assembled by, both, the past and current mediation of motorboats, and the dream about an anchored state.

Let's Eat Them Together': Food Procurement Practices of Domination and Resistance in the City of Athens

Nafsika Papacharalampous

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Department of Anthropology, Ph.D. researcher, United Kingdom*

This paper discusses how food procurement practices at times of crisis become political acts. Athenian market spaces today are transforming and we witness the rising of everyday urban politics of negotiations, resistance and insurgency in unexpected class strata. More specifically, of the various grassroots solidarity initiatives in the city of Athens, this paper focuses on those relating to sourcing food, namely no-middle-men markets and middle-class delis that reshape political foodways.

The no-middle men markets operating around the city challenge pre-existing capitalist structures. At the same time, they bring Athenians closer to nature and to the Greek rural, by restoring the broken foodways between the country and the city. At times of crisis Athenians go back to practices of the past and to the comfort of rurality. This way of understanding and dealing with the crisis manifests as well in the middle-upper class Athenians. These Athenians create their own political foodways forming networks of small neighborhood clusters shops, in a new rising shopping model of sourcing food directly from/closer to nature which resembles the old ways of shopping. In essence, these shops operate in the same way the no middle-men markets operate, but in a different class sphere.

Across class divides, the crisis has affected Athenians in similar ways: moving away from state support, they tap into past practices and exonerate and celebrate the rural, by creating a moral economy and reembedding sociability in the markets. By researching all these movements described here this paper illustrates how across class divides, food becomes a trope of resistance in a city in crisis and a way to renegotiate relationships with the State.

State Reproduction from Below: Role of Informality and Unorganized Resistance in Reconfiguration of State's Political Life

Dr. Abel Polese

Dublin City University, Ireland

Transcending its initial focus on informal payments and shadow economies, this presentation widens the scope of informality research to apparently non-economic and non-monetary practices. Using a definition of informality as the aggregate of transactions that are (deliberately or incidentally) concealed from the state, it argues that the distinction between economic and non-economic informality is tedious. Ultimately, the function of an informal transaction might change over time. A transaction perceived as holding an economic meaning (i.e. an informal payment) may come to take social significance (i.e. generate a long term dependence relationship) and vice versa: transactions that have (apparently) only a social meaning can acquire economic signification in the medium and long term.

Starting from this point, this presentation maintains that there is no informality but many and identifies some of the spheres of public life where they are more likely to be found (elitist, classic, popular and emerging¹). Each informality can be regarded as having a particular function and a mode of affecting the public life of a state (see table below). By the same token, informality is not a negative element to get rid of but simply part of the range of possible ways citizens and their state interact. By force of this, informality in governance is not necessarily transitory or temporary but a constant in most political systems. The presentation uses cases from fifteen years of observation, and reflection, on informal phenomena to discuss self-protective mechanisms, responses to incomplete or unfocused policymaking, and strategies employed by individuals, classes, and communities to respond to unusual demands.

Performing ‘Standardised’ State: Making Social Policy and Avoiding Confrontations at Street-Level in Rural China

Christof Lammer

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Cultural Anthropology, Austria*

Objectives

People's hope for, rather than against, the state is often studied in contexts in which citizens are yearning for a 'normal life' due to the apparent absence of the state. In the Chinese context of substantial state investment in rural infrastructure and welfare, corruption, rather than the absent state, plays a crucial role in discourses about state failure. This suggests a different angle from which to explore what kind of state citizens are longing for and performing into being.

Methods

In 2015, the Bureau of Civil Affairs in a municipality in Sichuan Province cancelled all existing Rural Minimum Living Allowances and decided to 'standardise' a supposedly 'chaotic' situation that had led to citizen complaints. According to central government documents, the 'democratic appraisal' of applications should curb corruption and make sure that the needy receive state support. New applications for state assistance were thus to be evaluated by other citizens in public meetings. The ethnographically informed paper asks how state officials, applicants and other citizens use 'the state' to negotiate responsibility in policy making. Adopting a relational approach, the attention is shifted to how these different actors perform the boundaries of the state in these public events.

Results

The ethnography shows that these rural citizens perform a split of a 'standardised' policy-implementing bureaucracy 'below' and a policy-making government 'above'. In the potentially conflict-laden situation of renegotiating neediness and deservingness, this performance allows them to make, judge, and reject claims while avoiding open confrontations.

Conclusions

This case thus shows how street-level officials and other citizens – who make, rather than only implement, local social policy – may use the image of 'the state' as an entity standing above 'society' to push responsibility 'up' and 'out' of the village. The performance of a 'standardised' state helps to satisfy the yearning for harmonious relations among neighbours.

Wilderness: Multispecies Collectives, Public Policies, and New Users of the State

Ph.D. Paride Bollettin

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Durham University, Department of Anthropology, United Kingdom*

Objectives

The present work discusses the role of public policies in producing multispecies collectives in the contest of the growing attention to biodiversity conservation, in EU and elsewhere. An example is the idea of “wilderness”, which is used to promote the restoration of marginal lands at global level. The management of “wild areas”, reintroducing wild species and reorganizing human presence, acts on both human and other animals populations, producing new social and environmental relations, conflicts, imaginaries and public actors. Concomitantly, on-going discussions on animals’ “personhood”, for example in debates about the use of animals in circuses or the recognition that great apes are legally “human-like”, redefines ethical and juridical forms of organizing multispecies relations, with the corollaries of multiply the “subjects of rights”. In this panorama we will discuss how such collectives suggest a complex panorama in which ethical, political, economic, and social factors let new non-human users of the State to emerge.

Methods

To discuss our aims, we will describe some ethnographic cases from EU and non-EU countries. The methodological frame of multispecies ethnography, with the attention for the entanglements between humans and non-human beings, will provide useful tools for observing the emergence of such collectives.

Results

Our descriptions highlight how human and not-human collectives are the result of tensions between multispecies engagements and public policies, letting non-human animals to emerge as State users.

Conclusions

From description and discussion presented in this work, we can observe that current biodiversity conservation policies are the result of complex webs of interactions between the public and the local spheres. Additionally, the recognition that non-human animals are proper actors in such negotiations indicates toward the emergence of non-humans as State users, with the consequent necessity of rethinking the forms of conservation policies decision-making.

Accountant and Gambler Walk into a Bar: Tragedy of Austerity in Latvia

Andris Suvajevs

Latvia

Objectives

The purpose of the paper is to investigate the subtle but deep links between austerity, infrastructure, and sovereignty. It does so by analysing the tragic events of the 21st of November, 2013 when the roof of a supermarket collapsed in Zolitude killing 54 people. One of the underlying objectives of the paper is to demonstrate how this one specific event encapsulated the fundamental ills of the Latvian society: drastic cuts in public sector; painful ethnic divide; weak justice system; and the resultant lack of solidarity which characterises social relations between people more generally.

Methods

I do this by drawing on an extensive archival research from journalistic reports and accounts from as early as 2010, three years before the tragedy. Additionally, I reflect on my own positionality within the event weaving in a narrative of the self as I attend Zolitude's memorial events and speak to people related to the tragedy. These attempts are complemented by a close analysis of letters and testimonials written by relatives of the deceased as well as the survivors.

Results

One of the central arguments of the paper is that the tragedy was not an accident. It was in fact a logical outcome of policies designed in the post-crisis regime. More controversially, the paper tries to poke a sleeping bear by highlighting the role of ethnicity in the tragedy, namely, that most of the casualties were of Russian-speaking background.

The main point I develop throughout the text is the way neoliberal ideology not only absolves anyone from any responsibility over the tragedy but indeed rewards the guilty parties with promotions and awards. Consequently the content of social relations becomes twisted and absurd producing a vacuum of sympathy.

Conclusions

The reigning conclusion is that the tragedy has never ended. Careers were made, ambitions satisfied above the graves of innocent people.

Corporeal Politics in Digital Environment: Case Study of Social Media Censorship in the People's Republic of China

Ph.D. Mārtiņš Daugulis

Rīga Stradiņš University, Faculty of European Studies, Latvia

Objectives

Chain of political scientists links sustainability of democratic regimes to everyday routines of so called corporeal politics – elements of live participation in decision making process through physical movement and interactions in-between participants of politics. In this particular moment lines between scientific disciplines are blurred and political science shifts into anthropology – analysis of persons routines that composes them as “corporeal citizens”. In this particular article main objective is analysis of corporeal elements in digital environment (of how corporeality is expressed in digital field) narrowing with the case study of censorship in digital area of the People's Republic of China as an contra-movement to “digital civic resistance”.

Materials

1. Scientific literature on corporeal politics and it's adaptability in digital field.
2. The PRC's Strategic Censorship instruments in digital field.

Methods

Content analysis/Interdisciplinary comparative analysis.

Results

1. Elements of corporeal politics that are transferable to digital environment.
2. Instruments versus “digital civic resistance” based on case study of the PRC's strategic censorship.

Conclusions

It is possible to conclude that there are several elements of “analogue corporeal politics” which are directly transferable into digital environment and are seen equally important for censorship aims into context of civic resistance possibility.

Framing Effect of Methodological Nationalism in Western Balkans

Andris Saulitis

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Objectives

The objective of this study is to examine the current practices of quantitative data interpretation in a research project, which has a cross-border character. How is the data interpreted and what role does the methodological nationalism play in it? Are there significant differences among the national borders or rather these differences have no substantive meaning? What are the alternatives in addressing cross-border data and what is the public perception of different ways presenting data and research findings?

Methods

The study looks at the data interpretation practices in a three-year research project INFORM on formal and informal practices in the Western Balkan countries. I look at the publications which were developed during the project and how they address methodological nationalism. Additionally, two field experiments are carried out in social networks. i.e., Twitter and Facebook using survey data from the project.

Results

The results show that researchers are willing to look at data from a methodological nationalism perspective. This widespread practice in many cases have no meaningful reason. Pre-analysis registration is one way to address the issue.

The field experiments reveal that academia is not the only one which prevails for methodological nationalism. However, the consequences are different, as it might provoke aggressive discussion in the social networks.

Conclusions

The data show how audiences in Western Balkans react to the framing effect of the survey data based on the methodological nationalism. Taken together, the paper highlights the responsibility of researchers when working with data and interpreting findings of a cross-border study.

Managing Child and Elderly Care in Montenegro: State and Kinship Perspective

Diāna Kiščenko

Latvia

Based on eight months of ethnographic fieldwork (2017/2018) in the central and northern part of Montenegro, in this paper I explore how everyday child and elderly care is being organized in Montenegro by looking at who provides what type of care. I suggest that there are two main care organizing mechanisms in the society – kin ties and state provided services or the absence of them.

While in some parts of society elderly care is still linked to patrilocal values of care implying the idea that son and his family is responsible for parents, the ethnographic material suggests that nowadays daughters are recognized as care givers too. And sometimes seen as even more successful than sons. State provided nursing houses are perceived as morally wrong option and are seen as low quality of service. In childcare, on contrary, both state service (e.g. kindergartens) and kin ties (e.g. grandparents) are combined. In the paper I argue that state and family provided care are not competing mechanisms, rather they supplement each other and provide successful organization of care.

Economic Practices of Rural Households

Kristīne Rolle

Rīga Stradiņš University, Latvia

Objectives

My doctoral research focuses on the socio-economic practices of rural households in Latvia. In my paper I am going to identify and analyse the main hallmarks of the economic practices of rural households.

Methods

Results are based on the ethnographic fieldworks conducted from 2017–2018 in Latgale and Vidzeme regions. Semi-structured interviews and observations were conducted in 12 rural households. The obtained data were analysed by qualitative and quantitative data analysis software MAXQDA.

Results

Latvian countryside usually is characterised by labour shortages, the poor accessibility of the region, the outdated infrastructure and the absence of state budget support for regional development that hamper the growth of entrepreneurship. Consequently, rural farming and economies of rural families are seen as hopeless and irrational. The results of the research show that economic activities of rural families characterise following features: diversification of income sources, creative and intelligent use of local resources, high motivation for skills and knowledge improvement, non-economic rationalism and widespread social networking.

Conclusions

Rural areas are often considered as “the problem” in contrast to the urban environment, where political, economic and social development is constantly taking place. The rural areas are marginalised as underdeveloped and traditional, but at the same time needed as “a source of strength, a basis for the Latvian lifestyle” (Dzenovska, 2012). On the one hand, family farms are seen as the basis for rural socio-economic and cultural environment, but on the other hand, increase of economic efficiency of agricultural production is prioritised (Gray, 2000).

The preliminary results of the research confirm that the economic life of rural families is not based on pure economic rationality. Therefore, evaluation only on the basis of economic criteria will give a very limited understanding of their viability, since their daily rationality is based on various social and cultural values and norms.

Methodological Problems of Social Services Evaluation Research: Example of Family Assistant Service

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Objectives

The aim of the study was to evaluate the impact of the family assistant service on changes in the client's social situation; to evaluate the process of evaluating the family assistant service; to find out the factors affecting the work of a family assistant.

Methods

An analysis was conducted on the grounds of quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative analysis included analysis of 28 family assistant service client cases (has received family assistant service at least one year) from three Territorial centers of Riga Social Service Office. Tools used for analysis were Risk assessment questionnaire and Questionnaire of social functioning. Data processing methods – median was used to calculate mean values, Wilcoxon signed rank test was used to compare two related samples, and a one-way Binomial test was used to determine whether there was improvement in customer collaboration and motivation.

Qualitative analysis included analysis of results of 6 semi-structured interviews, 2 discussions with social workers from five territorial centers of Riga Social Service Office, 4 interviews with family assistant service coordinators from family assistant service provider organizations and Family assistant survey with 37 respondents.

Results

1. Quantitative analysis showed that there is no significant change in any of the social functioning criteria after receiving the service, but social functioning in general (without dividing by criteria) improves significantly after the family assistant service.
2. Qualitative analysis showed that taking into account the social portrait of the recipients of the family assistant service, the service is long-lasting, and its effectiveness can be seen as not deteriorating the social situation of the client.

Conclusions

1. The family assistant service produces the expected effect.
2. The information obtained in the qualitative study explains the results of the quantitative study on the factors affecting the effectiveness of the family assistant service.

In-Work Poverty in Latvia

Ph.D. Ritma Rungule; Taņa Lāce

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Objectives

In-work poverty is one of the factors influencing social inequality in Latvia. The in-work poor represent a relatively large group in the overall poverty statistics – in 2017, 9.0% of employed people in the Latvia were at risk of poverty. During 2012–2017 in-work at-risk-of-poverty rate was slightly below the EU average. A person is at risk of in-work poverty if he / she is in employment and lives in a household that is at risk of poverty.

The aim of the article is to find out which categories of Latvian population are most affected by in-work poverty and to evaluate the policy measures taken to reduce it.

Methods

Comparative analysis of administrative and survey data and indicators provided by the EU statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC) and the Labour Force Survey (LFS) allowing to analyse the in-work poverty issue and contextual information on the employment situation, salaries, affordability of services, the impact of social transfers and the tax system.

Results

In-work poverty in Latvia remains a challenge particularly for employees with less than primary, primary and lower secondary education, those on temporary contracts and self-employed, employees in the low work intensity household.

The in-work poverty rate varies significantly by household type. Such factors as having dependent children and number of working adults in the household have an impact on in-work poverty rate. Institutional factors such as an minimum wage, relatively high taxes on low wages, the lack of in-work benefits and limited accessibility to child care services contribute to in-work poverty.

Conclusions

Reduction of in-work poverty in Latvia should be defined as a policy priority, paying particular attention to policy development, implementation and monitoring to those groups that are exposed to a higher in-work poverty risk. It would be advisable to develop in-work benefits in Latvia to improve the stimulus for low wage earners to work.

Emigration from Latvia to Sweden after 1991: Analysis of Life Stories

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University of Latvia, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology*

Objectives

To research reasons of emigration and to analyze how the integration into the new home country takes place, based on a person's sense of belonging, and loyalty to the country of the origin and the host country.

The first wave of emigration from Latvia to Sweden was after the World War II. The second wave of emigration from Latvia to Sweden began with the time that followed the restoration of independence of Latvia in 1991 and continues to this day. This emigration is not caused solely by decisions of certain individuals, but it falls into more significant processes of the economic instability in Latvia and the mobility fostered by globalization.

Methods

Qualitative study methodology – biographical approach. Data obtaining method is collection of life stories with individuals emigrating from Latvia to Sweden after the restoration of Independence in 1991. Narrative and thematic analysis of life stories as theoretical approach is used for sociological study. This information reveals the motivation to go, the adaptation strategies in the new state. Statistical data regarding emigration from Latvia to Sweden is integrated in the presentation to give the overall characteristic. The photo material from the interviews will be presented.

This study is based on life story interviews collected in the Latvian National Oral History (NOH) collection.

Results

More than twenty biographical interviews with the second wave emigrants are collected during some expeditions in Sweden. A rich photo collection regarding the everyday life is complementary visual data material.

Conclusions

Life history method gives the voice to the individual, offers an opportunity to express their interpretation of individual and social events.

The study identifies the main reasons why Latvia people choose to make their homes in Sweden:

- education;
- improvement of living standards;
- difficulties to live with the prejudices in Latvian society;
- opportunities to receive necessary health services, etc.

The study reveals the motivation to go, the adaptation strategies in the new state. The “new emigration” is still ongoing process and should continue to be explored. Researchers have an opportunity to capture processes in action by return to the informants to identify changes that have taken place.

Spatial Peripherality and Social Inequality in Accessibility of Services in Rural Latvia

Ilze Lace

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University of Latvia*

Objectives

In rural areas where population numbers are on decline, delivery of high quality public services is increasingly expensive and complicated thus creating risks of further population loss and lower level of quality of life. By looking at living environment in rural Latvia a three-dimensional place comprised of relative location, material infrastructure and symbols and meanings attached to it, as defined by John Agnew (1987, 2005; also Halfacree, 2007; Woods, 2011; Shucksmith & Brown, 2016), the objective is to explore the impact of relative location and material infrastructure on use of services in rural areas (1) compared to urban areas, and (2) diversity among different groups of rural inhabitants.

Methods

Quantitative survey data 2010–2014 on typical use of everyday services in different territorial is used as the main data material, complemented with official statistics and other research results from 2016–2017. Statistical analysis methods – comparison of mean aggregate index values, non-parametric tests and Spearman correlation as well as cluster analysis are used.

Results

The analysis shows considerable urban-rural differences in use of opportunities and services in place of residence. Access to services between urban and rural areas varied less. However, the impact of rurality on access to different services was highest on respondents with limited economic resources and older respondents. Cluster analysis revealed a variety of patterns of service use and its spatial distribution. Wider use of services and opportunities on a wider geographical scale is related to access to resources, while a lower variety of services used spatially limited to the place of residence is characteristic to respondents with no access to a car, lower level of income and education and to older respondents.

Conclusions

Services spatially are located further away from the rural areas to urban centres of different scales, thus making geographical mobility an inevitable necessity. Access to public transportation and private means of transport can be problematic vulnerable rural inhabitants with limited resources. Thus relative peripherality in location of rural compared to urban areas reinforces existing social inequalities in rural Latvia.

Disability and Medical Social Aspects for Long-Term Patients

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Objectives

To study the impact of medical social aspects on the health and life quality of a person of working age in the rural territory of Latvia.

Methods

Quantitative; descriptive; graphical.

A study was carried out on patients treated in the hospital X resuscitation unit: they were incapacitated for a long time (up to 52 weeks) and had a disability.

Materials: statistical data of hospital X and Work Expertise Doctors Commission archive data.

Results

Information summarized on patients of the hospital X from 2016–2017.

Patients are structured according to the type of recovery. An analysis of the stated disability groups, causes and deadlines were performed. The social status of the patients has been clarified (working; poorly secured; status of the poor).

Conclusions

The rehabilitation possibilities for residents in the rural territory of Latvia are limited and prolonged incapability for work does not diminish the occurrence of disability.

Towards In-Depth Inclusivity: from Compartmentalisation to Personal Sustainability

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Objectives

In the changing and ever more complex world a human being experiences increasing divisions into numerous particular relations and personas that split her personhood into different facets prompted to existence by different and often simultaneous workplaces, social milieus and relationships of various nature and longevity. Albeit these facets may be contextually valued and situationally rewarded, this state of affairs causes psychological compartmentalisation and personal dissociation. These, in turn, come in contradiction with the need of self-continuity as the attribute of both personal integrity and unimpaired social life.

Methods

For our analysis, we use the social interactionist approach, personal identity theories developed in philosophy, gender and queer studies, and recent advances in neurobiology.

Results

The phenomenon of social exclusion was created by discriminatory social practices and substantivist theories of the self underlying it: as a group, humans define themselves by differentiation from others, by definition of ourselves (hence creation of social and psychological borders supporting the idea of self-contained individual) and exclusion of others. So the politics of inclusivity aims to bring into the mainstream social life and educational practice those previously excluded from it and marginalised. However important, social work concerned with inclusion doesn't exhaust the problem: it offers mutual adaptation of both parts without challenging the very social structure and system of beliefs that underpin it.

Conclusions

Substantivist theories of the self and society undervalued the communicative nature of human self, preferring the ideas of well-bordered individual to the dynamic vision of it. Thus attainment of the in-depth inclusivity and personal sustainability is not about seeking new gender and other identities. It's about realization of a performative and ever fluid self.

Global Challenges in Network Societies

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Objectives

Thirty years after the fall of the Berlin wall, the mood of the world has changed. In 1989, the world was opening for democracy and global contacts. In research, the term “transition” described how the eastern part of Europe was expected in a few years to change from authoritarian rule to western democracy. In media research, comparative studies showed different media systems to converge into the liberal model, according to classics like Hallin and Mancini (2004).

Today we see other trends. Three main trends are present in most countries in Europe to various degree:

- The increasing power of global platforms like Google and Facebook. They connect the world in a good sense, but they also challenge the public sphere: They take the economic resources from traditional media, their rules decide the limits of free speech and the power of global platforms in collecting data can even increase to be a threat to democracy.
- Media is put under increasing political pressure in many countries, especially state controlled public service. Increasing nationalism in countries as Hungary and Poland also wants to control media, and information/ desinformation is used as a weapon in conflicts like Ukraine. Propaganda is using social media networks to influence public opinion across borders.
- Digitalization of media systems brings new possibilities to citizens and for deliberative democracy. But it also brings a threat towards professional journalism when business models are destroyed and professional expertise is not important anymore. The polarization in social media networks replace responsible and ethical journalism and brings a de-professionalization of journalism.

Taken together, current trends give a gloomier picture than 30 years ago. The question is how research can interpret these trends, and how media systems can be analyzed in the 2020's. Other variables have to be defined than in 1990's and the liberal democratic values cannot be taken for granted in any part of Europe of the world. With new models for analysis of media systems, these threats can be made more visible and a picture more realistic can be painted.

Spanish Sociedades Laborales as an Active Labour Market Policy to Reactivate the Unemployed in Start-Ups

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Objectives

Probably the only best practice model of both employee share ownership (ESO) and active labour market policy (ALMP) in micro-corporations is the case of Sociedades Laborales from Spain (European Parliament, 2016). However, although micro-enterprises play an important role in the economy of most other EU Member States, no supportive measures for ESO are implemented for them as yet. Furthermore, a large variety of start-up subsidies to reactivate the unemployed existing in all EU Member States were recently analysed in the EEPO review (European Commission, 2014) with mixed results. Following these EEPO criteria to evaluate start-up subsidies a new study on Sociedades Laborales (Lowitzsch / Dunsch / Hashi, 2017) found that in comparison they were superior in all indicators under consideration. The Sociedades Laborales model has important benefits that make it particularly suitable for combining it with existing national start-up incentives for the unemployed.

A Sociedad Laboral (SL) is a qualified form of conventional corporation, majority-owned by its permanent employees. Unlike a cooperative, a SL having a minimum of three owners, two of which must be working partners, is based on shared ownership and is permitted to utilise non-employee capital. No partner may own more than 33% of the company's stock (public organisations may own up to 49%). A SL must set up a Special Reserve Fund containing 10% of their annual net profits. Government grants facilitate the integration of un-employed persons as worker-owners as well as technical assistance and training; further-more, investment in fixed assets and the reimbursement of loan interests are supported.

Methods

A major reason for the steady growth in the number of SLs is that since 1985 in lieu of receiving monthly payments, job seekers may choose to capitalise their unemployment benefits into a lump sum in order to found a new SL or to recapitalize an existing SL by becoming a member. It is estimated that about one-third of SLs utilise the capitalisation of unemployment benefits at the time of their founding. Between 2006 and 2013 on average 2240 persons capitalized unemployment benefits to set up or join a SL in Spain, with an average annual total of around EUR 13,233 per person. In general the youngest age groups are significantly underrepresented, as the vast majority of them will not have been previously in employment – a prerequisite to make use of the capitalisation mechanism. SLLs generally have higher survival rates than their conventional competitors but there are regional differences. They survive long enough to amortise capitalised unemployment benefits: The average paid-out lump sum represents roughly the cost of 1.3 years worth of un-employment benefits; on average, 88% of all SLs survive this long.

There is a significant difference to conventional start-up subsidies for the unemployed in that SLs are set up not only by unemployed persons but also by ordinary entrepreneurs and typically involve external investors which account for 27% of their partners. Unlike conventional start-up subsidies for jobseekers, SLs offer not only access to capital but practical assistance and entrepreneurial advice to an unemployed person joining or setting up an SL. With respect to secondary employment, SLs have two structural features that differentiate them from ALMP start-ups: 1) they involve outside investments, a condition for growth; 2) they require a minimum of three partners as a condition of incorporation and are designed to integrate additional employees. According to employment data for 2008–2013, 1.3 additional jobs were created per founding worker partner.

Results

There is a significant difference to conventional start-up subsidies for the unemployed in that SLs are set up not only by unemployed persons but also by ordinary entrepreneurs and typically involve

external investors which account for 27% of their partners. Unlike conventional start-up subsidies for jobseekers, SLs offer not only access to capital but practical assistance and entrepreneurial advice to an unemployed person joining or setting up an SL. With respect to secondary employment, SLs have two structural features that differentiate them from ALMP start-ups: 1) they involve outside investments, a condition for growth; 2) they require a minimum of three partners as a condition of incorporation and are designed to integrate additional employees. According to employment data for 2008–2013, 1.3 additional jobs were created per founding worker partner.

In the Basque Country from 2006 to 2013, an average of 49 SLs were created annually, providing jobs for 164 owner-workers and 213 non-owner-workers. With annually on average subsidies of EUR 355,917 for 377 jobs this breaks down into a subsidy of EUR 944 per job created. Non-profit organisations representing SLs, e.g., ASLE in the Basque Country, provide major ongoing support for entrepreneurs – training, coaching and similar services are provided by ASLE at an average annual subsidy cost of EUR 817 per SL. In the Basque Country somewhat more than one-third of SLs, i.e., 309 out of 883, are clients of ASLE and thus beneficiaries of this type of subsidy.

The legal transferability of the concept of *Sociedades Laborales* being based on that of conventional limited liability companies makes it particularly interesting for other EU Member States as an example of a successful connection between the active labour market policy and employee financial participation. Supportive measures at national level within a European framework could be triggered by the European Commission action in particular with regard to the mechanism to capitalise unemployment benefits to set up or join an exiting SL (so far only present in four Member States). Furthermore, microfinance or similar programs could be adopted to extend the existing SL concept to unemployed young people.

Does Criminology Have Future?

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Objectives

The aim was to identify the tendencies of criminological development and to point to their future possible perspectives, considering the fast globalization process, intensive scientifically-technological development and socially-political contradictions.

Methods

The descriptive method by which the current state in criminology and its elements, as well the insight into their influencing factors are described. The modeling method, which is based on the study of crime and its process in order to justify the development prospects.

Results

The question as to criminology prospects is not rhetorical. It deals with crime, its determining factors, the offender's personality and criminality restriction prospects, devaluation of research component and academic significance. Crime, its types and forms, studying of the damage done is fragmentary and episodic. Criminology like a study course is gradually disappearing from the study programmes, or its structure is minimized. At the same time we have to admit, that the new technologies are developing very fast, the same refers to informatics and communication. Criminal structures and anti-socially tended persons are successfully acquiring and using the innovative technologies, not suffering from the lack of resources or normative limitations. The structure of criminality and its types are changing qualitatively and quantitatively, marking the criminal activities like one of the most profitable income gaining forms. Law enforcement institutions, in particular those of the post-Soviet area, lack, in fact, well-qualified personnel, finances and modern technologies. Crime recognition, its prevention and combatting system, both in the theoretical and practical aspect, is missing a systemic, integrative approach. In legal sociologic studies, no detailed investigation has been done on antisocial, criminal behaviour determinants, which have not only local nationally territorial importance, but that of global and transnational one. Crime preventive measures should be extraterritorial, whose development and implementation have no any adequate legal regulation.

Conclusions

Despite the crime-dependent expansion, its recognition process is not systematized, it is not sufficiently normative and scientifically methodologically grounded. Criminology as a complex theoretical and practical basis of interdisciplinary science is getting unreasonably levelled.

Insolvency Control Service – Implementer of State’s Policy in the Field of Insolvency Proceedings

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Objectives

The author is set two main objectives, researching the topic concerning the Insolvency control service: 1. How the scope of functions and duties has changed after the renaming the Insolvency Administration? 2. What methods and techniques are used by Insolvency control service, during the process of implementation of the state’s policy?

Methods

In the research there are used analytical and descriptive methods. Using these methods are analyzed normative acts and state’s policy planning documents. Comparative method is used to compare the functions, duties and role of the Insolvency control service and Insolvency Administration during the implementation process of the state’s policy in sphere insolvency proceedings.

Results

Inventing the Insolvency control service, or renaming the Insolvency Administration, was one of the last steps to ensure scope of the objectives of the state’s policy, stated in the Insolvency Policy Development Guidelines for the Years 2016–2020th and Implementation plan of above-mentioned Guidelines. Author initialized, that the scope of action – to promote that administrators are qualified and professional specialists, who effectively fulfill their duties and take care of the prestige of the profession, is reached within a process of invention / reorganization of the old / new state institution – Insolvency control service. Continuation of the functions, led by Insolvency Administration, such as control and supervision of the administrators; examination and qualification system of administrators and disciplinary matters administrators, to examine that professional activity of an administrators and compliance of it with the prescriptions of the legal regulations.

Conclusions

State, by establishing the Insolvency control service, as the multi-functional structure, have reached critical aims and objectives, settled in the political guidelines and implementation plan in the field of insolvency proceedings. Insolvency control service, endowed with authority to teach, qualify and examine the applicants to the responsible position of administrator of insolvency proceedings, fulfill the state ambition fully control and supervise the sphere insolvency proceedings.

Process of Securing a Claim in Legal Policy Planning Documents

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Objectives

In the framework of his scientific work, the author wishes to carry out a research on the problematic aspects of the process of the securing a claim and possible solutions to make the process of the securing a claim more effective. One of the most important grounds for ensuring the effectiveness of the process of the securing a claim and civil process in general are legal policy planning documents, because the process of legal policy takes place before legislative process. The aim of the present abstract was to investigate and analyze legal policy documents regarding to the process of the securing a claim to determine their compliance or non-compliance for defined aims of improving the efficiency of court proceedings.

Methods

In the present abstract, using the analytical, descriptive and deduction / induction method, was analyzed the normative acts and legal policy planning documents.

Results

Analyzing the legal policy planning documents related to the effectiveness of the process of securing a claim, it has been established that the main focus is to increase the material base for courts and to digitize court proceedings, but there is no vision how to improve the actual civil procedure regulation. In author opinion, legal planning documents' conclusion that cancellation of the securing a claim in the insolvency proceedings has been resolved is unjustified, because the current regulation does not comply with the principle of the preservation of rights by the Insolvency Law – the rights of creditors acquired prior to proceedings shall be observed during the proceedings. The restriction of rights of creditors specified within the scope of the proceedings may not be greater than is necessary for achieving the objective of the respective proceedings.

By contrast, the aim of reducing the outstanding civil cases in 2020 (23 216 (2017)) for only 1200 cases is not an appropriate solution to consider that the functioning of the courts really becomes effective.

Conclusions

To achieve the legal policy documents' aims related to the effectiveness of the civil process, including the process of the securing a claim, the state needs to define the measures to achieve defined aims more precisely. Particular attention should be paid to the improvement of the current civil procedure regulation, because, except the need to introduce a similar securing a claim mechanism in claims which are not financial in nature or are not required to be assessed, other proposals how to improve current civil procedure regulation can not be found in the legal policy planning documents. Given the fact that the principle of the preservation of rights established by the Insolvency Law is not fully respected in the actual regulations of the securing a claim, it should be necessary to research the question of what benefits could be granted to a creditor with the securing a claim in the insolvency proceedings if such creditor's claim was approved within the insolvency proceedings and there is no dispute over rights.

Recovery of the Latvian Gold Reserves in Foreign Banks after Restoration of Independence – Fresh Look from the International Public Law

Dr. Janis Grasis

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Objectives

Objectives of the paper are to perform research concerning Latvian gold reserves in foreign banks before the forcible annexation of Latvia into Soviet Union in 1940 and how Latvia recovered these golden assets after restoration of independence after 1990.

Methods

The author have used already known publications by Ineta Ziemele, John Hiden, Brigitte Stern and others, published documents from archives and also a new documents received from the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia. All documents were analyzed from the point of view of the international public law, especially to look at state continuity of the Republic of Latvia. The historical method was used to study the origin of Latvian gold reserves and investing it into foreign banks till 1940. The comparative method helped to understand different approaches by several countries concerning disputable issues concerning Latvian gold assets in foreign banks: for example, Sweden agreed to release Latvian gold to Soviet Union, but France refused to turn over the three tons of gold deposited in this country to the Soviet Union. Induction method was used in the processing of empirical material, and the author has examined the specific facts concerning Latvian gold reserves, which allowed him to make logical generalizations, which formed the basis of the author's results and conclusions.

Results

Research has shown the problems what Latvia faced during the recovery of its pre-war gold reserves. United Kingdom, on the one hand, never recognized the incorporation of the Baltic countries into Soviet Union; on the other by disgraceful agreement signed on 5 January 1968 between the UK and USSR, the Soviet Union renounced all claims to the Baltic gold held in the Bank of England in return for the waiver of all claims by the UK resulted by the nationalization in the USSR. Later the UK government transferred an equal amount of gold reserves equivalent to £90 million back to the Baltic states in 1992 and 1993. United States of America after the Soviet occupation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania froze all financial assets of the Baltic states.

Conclusions

In spite of different approaches by several countries concerning Latvian golden reserves in foreign banks, Latvia as a country successfully recovered these assets after restoration of independence. Wrongful acts by some countries led to the legal consequences to compensate Latvian golden reserves. Latvia under rules of state continuity had the full rights to recover pre-war golden assets.

International Practice for Combating Corruption in Private Sphere

Angelina Symkina

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Academian Stashys Scientific Research Institute for the Study of Crime Problems*

Objectives

The practical and relevant aspects of counteracting corruption in the private sphere of foreign economy.

Methods

The research is conducted by empirical method of scientific knowledge.

Results

Based on the foregoing it should be noted that the fight against corruption is of strategic importance to business. Based on the opinion of Western experts, it is possible to distinguish the following criminological reasons that most contribute to corruption in the sphere of private entrepreneurship:

- 1) bureaucratic obstacles and obstacles in the process of solving certain issues of entrepreneurial activity;
- 2) growth and significant manifestations of corruption throughout the system of social relations;
- 3) the desire of entrepreneurs to quickly resolve, and with the benefit, certain issues of their activities, if this decision depends on other persons;
- 4) imperfection of the legislation regulating entrepreneurial activity;
- 5) lack of real support for the development of private business by the state;
- 6) reluctance of entrepreneurs to turn to the law enforcement authorities for the facts of corruption they had to face;
- 7) moral and legal “negligence” of the entrepreneurs themselves;
- 8) lack of internal effective mechanisms of counteraction to corruption in the sphere of private entrepreneurship;
- 9) lack of a fully competitive market environment;
- 10) engagement of certain subjects of private business with criminal structures.

Conclusions

Based on the above results of this study, the following conclusions can be drawn that it is obvious that for the sphere of private entrepreneurship a rather large degree of corruption is characteristic. Under these conditions, as the world practice shows, the problem of corruption can not always be solved, being based on classical instruments of criminal law influence. It is possible to solve these problems by introducing corporate responsibility tools into the national anti-corruption practice. At the same time, the world experience in combating corruption in the field of private business speaks of the need to use non-legal instruments (anti-corruption training programs for personnel, creation of business associations) that can form an appropriate level of legal consciousness in the business environment, which is, in our time, the main condition of counteraction to corruption in the private economy.

Prospects of Development of the Form of Authorisation by Natural Persons

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Objectives

Authorisation is a legal institution, which makes it possible to exercise individual's rights effectively by involving other persons. Only personal rights may not be transferred to others. As a rule, rights are delegated by means of a power of attorney, which is a declaration materialised in the form of a procedural document presenting the principal's intent with respect to tasks given to the agent and their timeframe. That is to say, the power of attorney is a document certifying the agent's right to act for the principal. The objective of the research is to examine the forms of recording a natural person's declaration of intent by means of a power of attorney and the procedure for granting powers of attorney within the context of modern global technologies in order to identify routes ahead in this area and offer suggestions for improvement of the existing legal framework.

Methods

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

Results

There are two aspects underlying public certification of a natural person's power of attorney: to secure rights of the principal and to safeguard rights of third parties. When a power of attorney is certified publicly, legal effects of the power of attorney being granted are explained to the principal, while, as regards third parties, it is a guarantee that the principal is aware of the legal affects of the power of attorney. This *prima facie* gives an impression that both the principal and third parties are protected against any threats to their rights and interests.

Conclusions

The written form of a power of attorney facilitates interpretation of the principal's declaration of intent and assurance as to principal's identity. Meanwhile, legal protection provided by public certification can be viewed as illusory to a certain extent as public certification does not rule out falsification; based on an analysis of the interpretation of tasks given by a power of attorney and the binding force of execution with respect to the principal, one may conclude that public certification does not ensure protection because the likelihood of disputes between the principal and the agent is not excluded. Predictability of a legal relationship is of no value in this respect because disputes arising between the principal and the agent may neither affect nor impair rights of third parties. The principal must accept tasks carried out by the agent. Given the above, the evolution of the authorisation by natural persons can be driven by possibilities offered by e-signature, namely: the future power of attorney is issued by a natural person electronically and signed with that person's e-signature. From the viewpoint of law, a declaration of intent made by means of an electronic document is analogous to that made before a sworn notary or family court, while awareness of legal effects is attributed to person's individual characteristics rather than the form of the power of attorney, emphasising that the Civil Law does not require public certification of powers of attorney. Such public certification may be necessary only for certain types of authorisation. A power of attorney certified with a natural person's e-signature would equally secure rights of the principal and assure third parties of principal's identity and scope of the authorisation.

Summary Results of Corruption in Medical Sphere of Ukraine

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Objectives

Ukrainian citizens were inquired in order to determine corruption rate in various social spheres. It was conditioned by reforming criminal justice and administrative management, which is directed, particularly, for liquidation of corruption in the state. The purpose of the inquiry is to determine:

- 1) population's attitude towards to corruption;
- 2) the most corruptive social spheres;
- 3) efficiency of anti-corruption measures;
- 4) readiness of population to participate into struggle with corruption.

Special emphasize is stressed on corruption rate in the medical sphere.

Methods

The inquiry was conducted using a special-purpose inquiry form. Questions were related to:

- 1) citizens' contact with corruption;
- 2) corruption expansion rate in state authorities, self-governing authorities, in various infrastructure spheres, particularly, in healthcare;
- 3) awareness about struggle with corruption in the state and in the region and determination of citizens' readiness to cope with corruption.

Respondents' distribution by key demographic parameters coincided with the population make-up registered by the official statistics. There were 48% females and 52% males among respondents. The majority of respondents were of employment age with equal level of education (91%). The above-mentioned citizens and staff of healthcare institutions were inquired.

Results

All social life spheres are influenced by corruption. Corruption contact level of citizens remains steadily high. Corruption in the medical sphere is the most widespread: during the previous year before the inquire 63% respondents were involved into corruptive schemes either personally or were informed hereof by other persons. Corruption in the medical sphere can be subdivided in the following levels: from patient to doctor; inside the hospital – from a healthcare institution employee to the executive hospital staff; on state level concerning state procurements of medications. A bribe to health care professionals was given for: receipt of a sick leave certificate and various references (for example, about unfitness for military service, fitness for driving a car or fulfillment of particular works) (75%); high-quality *yakiche* conduct of an operation, medical servicing rendering (50%); writing out a “necessary” prescription (10%); approval or hiding of any bodily injuries (10%); falsification of a true cause of death (1%). Special attention is paid to “forced” charitable donations (70%). All health care professionals have come across different corruptive practices, among which the following payments are widespread: for employment in a hospital, license for private medical practice or establishment of private clinics, “avoidance” of checks of healthcare institutions' activity. The largest bribes are given state officials for participation in tenders for medical drugs supply by pharmaceutical companies.

Conclusions

In respondents' opinion, a scrupulous information campaign is a positive tendency: 45% consider this is a guarantee of anticorruption. Nevertheless, only 5% respondents assume personal notification of anticorruption bodies about receipt of a bribe by medical staff.

Healthcare Robotics and Patient's Rights

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Objectives

During last five years the level of medical technologies as well as healthcare robotics used in medicine has increased. Constant developments lead to new generations of robots, “machines” smart enough to invent technologies on their own. In our days robots are used in healthcare in such areas as surgery, patient care, emergency consultations for stroke, cardiovascular, and burn service, and exoskeletons. Nowadays robots are used to disinfect any space in a healthcare facility, in pharmacy ect. There are many situations and complications with respect to liability if something goes wrong during medical interventions. In the case of robotic error damages to a patient can occur. The questions are follows – who is responsible in that case – hospitals, medical practitioners, designers, programmers ect. Do we have national or international regulations of medical robotic legal aspects?

Methods

In the paper there are used descriptive, analytical and deduction-induction methods. Using these methods, there are analyzed legal acts, recorded opinions of legal scientists, and drawn conclusions and made suggestions. The method are used to describe characteristics of a specific phenomenon of healthcare robotics related issue and patient's rights. In the research there is also used a systematic review, including database search, management and acquisition of relevant literature, thematic and literature review.

Results

Nowadays robotics in healthcare become more and more important, however legal problems in relationships between robots and patients in healthcare have not been discussed enough. There are not clear rules in particular area, and this can be the reason for seriously troubles in near future, especially in the cases of liability and responsibility on robotics.

Conclusions

The ethical and legal issues of robots in healthcare must be discussed at the governmental level. The fundamental regulations of robotics in healthcare shell be provided within the EU and on national level.

Powers of Police and Various Authorities Preventing Violence at Football Matches: Settlement of Mutual Relations between Fans, Clubs, Police and Society in Latvia and Abroad

Karina Zalcmane

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Objectives

The aim of the study was to determine the effectiveness of one of the most important powers of the police and various authorities in prevention of disorder and violence at football matches – the settlement of mutual relations between fans, clubs, police and society.

Methods

The data presented was gathered during a period of 2 years, from 2016 to 2018, in Latvia, Ukraine, Italy, Russian Federation. The fieldwork focused principally on mentioned 4 countries due to the holding of the 2018 World Cup in the Russian Federation, the participation of Ukrainian fans in political protests in 2014, the unwillingness to cooperate with the authorities of Italian fans and the determination of the level of communication in Latvia. The fieldwork involved multiple methods of data collection, including semi-structured interviews, observation, documentary analysis, and analysis of fanzines, internet websites and media reports.

Results

Good and sound mutual relations between fans, clubs, police and society in general are simply fundamental in modern football. There is an association of fans, at European level, which tries to give voice to fans' issues in the matter of ticketing, fan culture, discrimination and policing in football. Professional football clubs have official fan clubs, which are supported by club administrations and are widely involved in social projects of clubs. The independently united groups of "football hooligans" and "Ultras" are contacting with the leaders of football clubs very reluctantly.

Conclusions

Constant communication will improve the quality of dialogue and mutual understanding. Leaders of fan groupings should be such communicators. The higher their authority in the grouping, the more structured and vertical the organization of the fans – the easier it will be for the security service, police and various authorities to communicate their demands. Naturally, the severity of security measures, depending on each match, should vary, based on the behavior of the fans and the fulfillment of their promises in previous matches.

Development of Regulatory Framework of Payment Services in European Union

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Objectives

To research development of regulatory framework of payment services in the European Union including Directive 2007/64/EC known as First Payment Service Directive (PSD1) and Directive (EU) 2015/2366 known as Second Payment Service Directive (PSD2). To research the necessity to regulate payment services in European Union level and the necessity to replace PSD1 with PSD2.

Methods

The research is qualitative, empirical research and the data is obtained with document analysis method.

Results

In 2005 European Commission started to work on proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on payment services in the internal market. The aim was to set the rules for payment services including obligations and information requirement for payment service providers. In 2007 First Payment Service Directive came into force. In 2013 European Commission started to work to repeal the First Payment Service Directive as the First Payment Service Directive did not cover all the new payment services that came into market. In 2016 the Second Payment Service Directive came into force to improve rules for electronic payments such as strict security requirements and transparency of conditions.

Conclusions

Fast development of new technologies forced the European Union to establish new regulatory framework for the payment services.

Application Possibilities and Effectiveness of Expedited Proceedings within Investigation

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Objectives

Aim of the article is to analyse application possibilities of the expedited proceedings on the stage of the investigation, describe the procedural actions to be implemented in such process, which would allow to achieve the aim of the criminal procedure as quickly and economically as possible, as well as offer solutions for more efficient application of the expedited process.

Methods

During the preparation of the article methods of interpretation of legal norms, as well as comparative and case analysis methods were used.

Results

Expedited process was implemented in the criminal proceedings in accordance with the Law “Amendments in Criminal Procedure Law” dated 20.06.2018, which came into force on 1 September 2018. In the framework of the expedited process previously existing types of simplified criminal proceedings – urgent procedures and summary procedures were combined and developed. This law also simplified fixation of the several procedural actions, what allows to apply expedited procedure more effective way.

By implementing expedited process studies, analysing legal norms and practices at the very beginning of this process, by proposing improvements to application practices, the author can make a significant contribution to putting this simplified process into practice and maximizing its effectiveness.

The article will look at:

- 1) scope and changes of the expedited procedure compared to the urgency procedure and the summary process;
- 2) the recording of procedural steps to enable the expedited procedure to be applied more effectively;
- 3) expedited process protocol, its content and necessity;
- 4) the progress of the expedited process at the investigation stage, incl. analysing the possibility to hand over simple criminal proceedings within the framework of an expedited procedure to the prosecutor's office, the court while person is still detained.

Conclusions

By implementing effective application of the legal norms introduced by the Law “Amendments to the Criminal Procedure Law” dated 20.06.2018, it can be concluded that the expedited process will become the most suitable type of criminal proceedings in the investigation.

Criminological Aspects of Fear of Crime

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Objectives

The aim of the study is to analyze the criminological aspects of the crime based on the theoretical and empirical basis.

Methods

Analysis of scientific literature and analysis of researches made before. Analytical, comparative; historical, systemic, publications and analysis of resources.

Results

Fear of crime has become a major societal challenge that significantly reduces quality of life and has a negative impact on social and economic well-being. The study found the main reasons for the fear of crime.

Conclusions

Fear of crime is a complex and polygamous criminological problem. Fear of crime depends on a number of factors, which are greatly influenced by actual crime, both at the micro level and at the macro level.

Existence of Homeward Trend in the Case Law of the Republic of Latvia

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Objectives

The objectives of this study is to focus on the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods (CISG) case law of Republic of Latvia; to determine whether and how the mandate given in Article 7 (1) of CISG to consider its international character and need to promote uniformity in its application is observed in Latvian courts? The author examines and analyzes court decisions related to the applicability of the CISG in Latvia for the last five years. The author notes that arbitration decisions are excluded from this study due to their mostly confidential nature.

Methods

The study has been done in purely theoretical manner assessing and comparing the compliance of judicial decisions with the objectives of the CISG, however, the views of academics and legal scientist have been taking into consideration.

Results

The study reveals that courts, although recognize the CISG applicability, use domestic principles in determining the outcome rather than make decisions based on CISG case law. Therefore, it identifies that Latvian courts are prone to so-called homeward trend. It can be concluded that Latvia has been subjected to two classical types of homeward trend, namely, the circumventing of the application of the CISG where it should be applied and application of CISG through the domestic law prism.

Conclusions

In the end, the author discusses and suggests possible solutions in order to minimize the homeward trend.

Development of Legislation of Motor Third Party Liability Insurance in Latvia

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Objectives

The article is devoted to the Civil Liability Insurance of Owners of Motor Vehicles called in the European Union Motor Third Party Liability Insurance (MTPL) which is compulsory in Latvia since 1997.

The first law on MTPL in Latvia was created when Latvia was in preparing stage for joining the European Union and knowledge about insurance in common was poor.

Since 1997 the Compulsory Civil Liability Insurance of Owners of Motor Vehicles Law was changed many times including new text of it in 2004 when Latvia had joined the European Union.

Methods

General scientific methods as well as special legal research methods – analysis and synthesis methods, comparative method and historical method were used. The research base is analysis of documents, courts decisions, including the Court of Justice of the EU, legal acts, as well as observation.

Results

The research concludes that Latvian legal framework of MTPL has a lot of unsolved issues starting with understanding that the legislation for compulsory insurance such is MTPL cannot create a new law regulation for civil liability but only states how on basis of insurance agreements insurers compensate road accident victims' losses instead of guilty driver who has obligation to compensate its according to civil law. The issues are also right terminology and understanding what is insurable event in MTPL. A rules for compensation of moral damages for victims need to be clarified.

Conclusions

The research concludes that Latvian legal framework of MTPL need to be improved.

Legal Framework for Processing of Genetic Data

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Objectives

The aim of the paper is to analyze existing legal framework regarding processing of genetic data focusing on the scope of protection depending on data subject, object, method of data processing and regulated field to conclude about the similarities and differences in regulation and subsequent reasons as well as to recapitulate whether the existing regulation constitutes proportional balance between the development of scientific progress and modern technologies, on the one hand, and genetic data protection, on the other hand.

Methods

In order to conduct the research a variety of sources have been explored, namely, books, journals in different languages as well as law and case law.

Regarding methods:

- 1) comparative method comparing various national and international legal regulations of genetic data and its processing as well as case law;
- 2) historical method – acquiring understanding of the evolution and interpretation of genetic data processing;
- 3) analytical method – evaluating and concluding about the legal framework of genetic data processing;
- 4) inductive method – creating conclusions about the understanding of legal framework of genetic data processing based on individual, theoretical approaches;
- 5) deductive method – stipulating objectives and creating conclusions of the research;
- 6) logical method – analysing legal framework of genetic data processing and introducing conclusions of the research;
- 7) grammatical and teleological method – analysing various terms pertaining to genetic data processing;
- 8) systemic method – analysing above mentioned terms in conjunction with philosophical, historical and legal interpretations.

Results

The study concluded that the existing legal framework should be ameliorated in order to provide proportional balance between the development of scientific progress and modern technologies, on the one hand, and genetic data protection, on the other hand.

Conclusions

Regulation of special category data stipulated in Article 9 of Regulation 2016/679 constitutes controversial protection of genetic data attributing it solely to live human beings.

Interpretation regarding status and protection of persons before the birth derives not from the legal provisions of the right to privacy and data protection or human rights per se but from the regulation regarding scientific research as well as application of technology constituting autonomous regulation which exceeds the traditional legal concepts.

Protection of genetic data and prohibition of processing of genetic data uniquely identifying a natural person should be attributed to a human being from fertilization as it is the moment which constitutes unique, identifiable and reputable genetic identity.

Discretion left for the Member States to define the status, moral qualities and corresponding legal protection should be led by the unified guidelines which, especially in the context of increasing scientific progress and development of technology, is decisive in order to define analogous starting points for all the states and to encourage interpretation of legal concepts in the light as living or healthy instrument.

Problematics with Presumption of Estate-Leaver Will in Civil Law

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Objectives

By studying the normative regulation and the tendencies of practice regarding the presumption of the will of the deceased, to study the problems of the normative regulation in the context of its practical application.

Methods

Analysis of court practice using inductive, deductive and comparative method was performed during the research.

Results

The presumption of the will of the deceased person included in the norms of the Civil Law is perceived in two meanings:

- 1) in the positive, when the legal norm itself refers to the order of the will of the deceased, for example, Article 467 of the Civil Law stipulates that “No special form is required for the appointment of the heir the testator expresses his will”;
- 2) in the negative, when the legal norm does not refer to the decree of the will of the deceased, but contains the wording “unless otherwise stated in the will”, for example, Article 480 of the Civil Law stipulates that “the subordinate obtains, unless otherwise specified in the will, the same part of the inheritance what his replacement heir would get.”

Analyzing the principle of the presumption of the will of the legatee inherited by the law of inheritance from the prism of court practice, it can be concluded that nowadays the presumption of correctness of the will is focused, which focuses on will as a legal category, and that the expression of will is correct and accurately reflect the will of the rightholder as well as the will. the statement should follow the legal form. Therefore, it is precisely the normative regulation that determines the requirements for the form and content of the will of the deceased's will to be clear, understandable and practically enforceable. This applies to both substantive and procedural rules. The principle of legal predictability requires that participants of legal relations, when familiarizing themselves with the text of a provision of the law, can forecast and evaluate the legal consequences of their planned actions and express their will to perform or not perform the respective activity accordingly.

Conclusions

From the prism of the principle of the presumption of will of the deceased, analyzing the third chapter of the Civil Law, which regulates the testamentary inheritance, it should be concluded that the structure of the chapter will fulfill the task expected by the legislator and the legatee, if the legal norms, as in the Estonian, Lithuanian and Russian heritage rights, would be merged into the content of the articles.

Invocation of Strategy for Reducing Possibilities of Committing Crimes in the Sphere of Foreigners' and Stateless Persons' Crime Prevention in Ukraine

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Objectives

The objective of research is on the basis of empirical study to develop the perspective directions of the strategy for reducing the possibilities of committing crimes by foreigners and stateless persons in Ukraine.

Methods

The methodological basis for the research conducting is statistical analysis (of the official statistic data of the State Statistic Service of Ukraine, the State Migration Service of Ukraine, the Prosecutor General's Office, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Judicial Administration of Ukraine) and sociological methods (study of archive criminal cases, questionnaire etc.).

Results

It was found that the level of crime and the level of conviction of foreigners and stateless persons hadn't been stable. Some increase in these indexes occurred in 2017. The proportion of crimes committed by foreigners and stateless persons in Ukraine and the proportion of convicted persons with such status is 1-1.5%. During the last decade about 16 000 foreigners and stateless persons were convicted. There are three levels of prevention crime of foreigners and stateless persons: the general social, the special-criminological and the individual ones. The invocation of a strategy for reducing the possibilities of committing crimes is corresponding to the special-criminological level, in terms of which was proposed the strategy for reducing the possibilities of committing crimes by foreigners and stateless persons in Ukraine. It consist of an administrative (organizational and managerial), normative, informational, anti-corruption, law enforcement, and ethnic lines.

Conclusions

Realization of capabilities of a strategy for reducing the possibilities of committing crimes by foreigners and stateless persons in Ukraine will forward to the reduction of crime in Ukraine.

Problematics within Notice of Termination of an Employment Contract in connection with Proposed Amendments

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Objectives

By examining the regulatory framework and the practice trends regarding employer's remission as proposed in changes of employment contract, to examine the legal aspects of the legal necessity of such notice and the actual applicability of judicial aspects in employment relationship.

Methods

Research and analysis of court practice and employment contracts were carried out using inductive, deductive and comparative methods.

Results

The study found that Article 98 of the Labour Law (LL) is an independent basis for termination of the employment contract, and that in practice the following main problems are related to the application of Article 98, which are related to: 1) the basis for termination of the employment contract; 2) the relevance of the proposed amendments to the employment contract; 3) the legality of the proposed amendments to the employment contract; 4) presentation of the proposed amendments to the employee; 5) the deadline for the employee's response to the amendments; 6) the validity of the terms of the collective agreement by amending the employment contract; 7) the term for bringing an action; 8) the need for a trade union agreement.

The study indicates that the question of which notice period applies when a notice is given under Article 98 LL is still relevant, as the application of that article is closely linked to Section 101 (1) of the LL, since Article 103 LL provides for shorter periods than one month in the event of termination of the employment contract. However, the study finds that if the employment contract is terminated, the first term of the month referred to in the first paragraph of Article 98 LL should apply. In the context of the study it is important to find out that Section 101, Paragraph three of the LL refers to the amendment of the employment contract in accordance with Article 98 LL, as the first part of this Article refers only to the first paragraph of Article 101 LL. However, if the employee renounces the proposed amendments, the employment contract is terminated and then all the requirements related to the termination of the employment contract must be complied with, so that the dismissal is legal, including the provisions of Section 101, Paragraph three of the LL.

Conclusions

The employer must offer the employee an amendment that is objectively justified, and the notice should indicate why the employment contract is being amended and objectively necessary, as well as specific circumstances related to the employee's behavior or ability, but if the notice is based on economic, organizational, technological or similar measures, they should be specified.

Patient's Right to Manifest Freedom of Religion in the Republic of Latvia

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Objectives

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion is a fundamental right which is enshrined not only in the European Convention on Human Rights but also in a wide range of other national, international and European legal acts which protects human rights. In the Republic of Latvia freedom of thought, conscience and religion as a fundamental human right is protected by the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia.

Under the terms of legal acts which protects human rights “everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.” In other words, freedom of thought, conscience and religion includes different religious, non-religious and atheistic beliefs, and the right to accept religion, or choose not to belong to one religion.

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion also contains two strands – one on the right to hold a belief and the other on the right to manifest freedom of religion. The right to hold a belief is absolute and unconditional. The State cannot interfere with it, for instance by dictating what a person believes or taking coercive steps to make him change his belief. Whereas the right to manifest freedom of religion is not absolute because it may have an impact on other and it could be subject to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Under the Law On the Rights of Patients of the Republic of Latvia (fifth paragraph of Article 3) a patient and his or her relatives have the right to receive mental care which, in accordance with the laws and regulations governing the activities of chaplain services and religious organisations, shall be provided by the chaplain of a medical treatment institution. Within the framework of the right to mental care, both the patient and his or her relatives have the right to moral support and counseling on religious matters. Patient receives mental care as a specific legal entity with the rights established by the Patient Rights Act. Right to receive mental care does not include right to manifest freedom of religion. The patient has the right to manifest freedom of religion as a person with human rights. In accordance with Law On Religious Organisations (fifth and six paragraph of Article 14) religious activities may be performed in hospitals if the persons present therein so wish. The anticipated time and place for an event shall be co-ordinated with the administration of the hospital. The activities of religious organisations and believers shall only be restricted in those cases when the Constitution and laws of the Republic of Latvia are violated.

Methods

In the study has been analyzed legal acts that include patient's right to manifest freedom of religion in the Republic of Latvia and the scientific literature in the field of medical law.

Results

National regulation of Republic of Latvia does not provide or specify how permission to perform a religious manifestation should be given and which persons' wishes should be taken into account when taking a decision. Legal regulation of the Law On Religious Organisations, in which the manifestation of religion in the hospital may be restricted, may be contradictory in assessing it with legal acts which protects human rights. Likewise legal regulation does not provide or specify any regulation of patient's right to manifest freedom of religion in other medical treatment institutions, which are not hospitals.

Conclusions

Following the results of the study national regulation of Republic of Latvia which regulate patient's right to manifest freedom of religion in medical treatment institutions should be improved.

Contract of Employment (*Locatio Conductio Operarum*) and Contract for Work (*Locatio Conductio Operis*) as Roman Law Institutes for Use of Paid Labour

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Objectives

The aim was to explore, consider and analyse information that can be found in the original sources of Roman law in relation to the conditions for use of paid labour.

Methods

In the course of the research, the primary sources of Roman law – the Code of Justinian (*Codex Iustinianus* – Latin, C 4.65.tit.), the Digest (*Digesta* – Latin, D 19.2. tit.), the Institutes of Justinian (*Iustiniani Institutiones* – Latin, I 3.24 tit.) were explored, considered and analysed, by using inductive, deductive and comparative method.

Results

In accordance with the principles of Roman law, the legal structure for employing free men (not slaves) for a remuneration based on a mutual agreement of parties was built on a legal basis of a lease / hire agreement (*Locatio conductio* – Latin) – “When a task is assigned, it is lease / hire.” (*“Quotiens autem faciendum aliquid datur, locatio est”* – Latin). (D 19.2.22.1.) Therefore, two types of contracts are mainly used – *Locatio conductio operarum* (Latin) or contract of employment and *Locatio conductio operis* (*faciendi*) (Latin) or contract for work. Contract of employment (*Locatio conductio operarum* – Latin) was for hiring another person’s work / provided services, i.e. employee as a lessor (*locator* – Latin) of his work (*operae* – Latin) provided services to an employer as a lessee (*conductor* – Latin) based on a mutual agreement of the parties. A relevant remuneration / salary (*merces* – Latin) was paid to an employee. Contract for work (*Locatio conductio operis* (*faciendi*) – Latin) was an agreement that provided that an entrepreneur as a lessee (*conductor*, *redemptor operis* – Latin) undertakes an obligation to perform services or works (*opus* – Latin), using material/s provided by the lessor / customer (*locator* – Latin) for a mutually agreed remuneration (*merces* – Latin). Among others, as a contract for work (*locatio conductio operis* – Latin) were regarded an agreement for transportation (carriage) of goods and passengers and entrepreneur / lessee’s (*conductor* – Latin) construction works on the customer / lessor’s (*locator* – Latin) plot.

Conclusions

Legal rules that governed the above contracts, both *Locatio conductio operarum* (Latin) (contract of employment) and *Locatio conductio operis* (*faciendi*) (Latin) (contract for work), must be regarded as sufficiently efficient at that time, detailed and complex legal tool for sustainable management of human resources and ensuring sustainability of the ancient Roman state.

Characteristics of Contract on Repo Transactions: Latvian Experience

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Objectives

Whereas Repo transactions are known to the Latvian market and moreover there are no legal research of the Repo transactions in Latvia, the objectives of these papers are

- 1) to provide brief review of Repo contracts used by Latvian financial institutions when entering into repo transactions with their customers;
- 2) to outline the main characteristics of the Repo contracts;
- 3) to discover inconsistencies if any.

Methods

The achievement of the objectives was ensured by means of comparative analysis of empirics (contracts used by financial institutions when offering repo (reverse repo) transactions to the customers). Empirics, used for the purposes of research consist at least 80–90% types of the contracts currently used on the market, or used before MIFID II (2014/65/EU) stayed in force. Grammatical and historical interpretation methods, as well as analytical and descriptive methods were used in frame of research. Not structured interviews with experts was used in the cases of lack of information as well as for the clarification of inconsistencies discovered in the contracts.

Results

The results show that:

- 1) For the entering into Repo transactions framework contracts (agreements) are used. The form of the contract is writing, but repo transaction may be concluded by acceptable means of communications. Repo transaction is documented.
- 2) There is no one uniform Repo contract used by the market, the strong tendencies in the contract are observed only if the contract belongs to the hand of the same author. In such cases only technical (organizational) peculiarities differs, for example terms of delivery or payments. Some contracts are affected by Scandinavian practise; Framework contracts contain uniform provisions of the Repo transactions, but financial terms of every separate Repo transaction such as (purchase and repurchase dates, purchase price, repurchase price or method of it' calculation etc.) are agreed by the counterparties separately. There is no inconsistency with the international market practise. It should be outlined, that Latvian practise show different approach of the market participants in the situations when market price of securities increases or falls. Manufactured payments of income are recognized.
- 3) One group of the contacts does not recognize transfer of the ownership in repo transactions. For this group special research was performed to clarify the reasons of inconsistencies with major market practise. Inconsistencies in the transfer of the ownership discovered.

Conclusions

In result of research we came to conclusions that in the Latvian market Repo transaction is one complex transaction consisting of two parts (legs): two sale purchase transactions. The absence of the uniformity in understanding of Repo (especially in questions related to the title transfer) could be explain only by lack of knowledges of author of the contract (dilettantism), from one hand but on the other hand Latvian repo more is used for the credit purpose rather than for the purpose of speculation with securities received in result of Repo, so the Repo is used as the type of “credit-pledge” contract. By the nature, Latvian repo transactions are like margin lending transactions, where margined securities are held on separate account. It could be the reason, why some market participants abstained themselves from entering into repo transactions after the “Law of financial collateral” came in force in 2005.

Author's Property Rights and Limitations

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Objectives

The aim of the study is to analyse the international and national legal framework for limiting the property rights of the author, its shortcomings and making proposals to improve the legal framework.

Methods

The work uses legislation, scientific literature and judicial decisions. The study draws on the analytical method of scientific research, as well as the grammatical, teleological and historical method of interpreting legal norms. The inductive and deductive method of scientific research has been used to draw conclusions and put forward proposals.

Results

The main nature of copyright action is to promote creativity and protect the ownership of the author. However, these rights are not absolute and are subject to certain restrictions. These restrictions aim to strike a balance between the rights of the author and the interests of the public. Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that each person has the right to participate freely in the cultural life of society, to enjoy art, to participate in scientific progress and to exploit its benefits. In order not to deprive the public of access to information, while the author would not be deprived of the right to obtain remuneration for the work he created, it is important to balance the interests of these two groups, where the national attitudes and actions play an important role. The Bern Convention, the TRIPS and WIPO copyright agreement provide for a so-called "three-step test" allowing exceptions to copyright protection. They state that exceptions to copyright protection are admissible only in specific cases; if they comply with the rules of normal exploitation of the author's work; and do not unduly prejudice the legitimate rights of the author. The use of the author's work without authorisation and for free of charge must not be contrary to the rules of normal use of the author's work and unduly restrict the legitimate interests of the author or cause damage to him.

Conclusions

The copyright law imposes a variety of restrictions where the author's work can be used without a special permit for the use of the author's work or free of charge, such as in the educational or research process, but restrictions on the exercise of these rights are not clearly defined.

Cooperation between National Police and Public in Prevention of Crimes Related to Violation of Rules of Protection and Use of Mineral Resources in Ukraine

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Objectives

The objective of research is to analyze the role of the public and cooperation between locals and police in prevention of crimes related to violation of rules of protection and use of mineral resources in Ukraine.

Methods

The methodological basis for the research conducting is an analysis of the official statistic data of the Prosecutor General's Office, the State Judicial Administration of Ukraine and sociological methods as study of archive criminal cases, questionnaire and others.

Results

During 2013–2017 about 600–650 crimes related to violation of rules of protection and use of mineral resources (Art. 240 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine) were committed every year. At the same time each year more than 200 persons had been convicted of committing such crimes. The historical regions, where violations of rules of protection and use of mineral resources are most widespread, are: Bukovina, Donbass, Pre-Carpathians, Carpathians, Transcarpathia, South of Ukraine. The most popular targets of these crimes are: amber, grit, oil, turfs.

The police officers report that the public take part in prevention of violations of rules of protection and use of mineral resources. About this fact said 40% of respondents. About 0.5% of them pointed, that such cooperation has no results.

Conclusions

The ways for improving the cooperation between the National Police and the public in the field of mineral resources protection are: conversations on compliance with the law; joint raids; joint meetings; strengthening partnerships; mutual assistance; transparency, honesty, frankness and truthfulness as the basis of such cooperation; public discussion and decision making; advance treatment of citizens; constant interaction in the field of information exchange; the creation of community formations to help the police; raising the level of public consciousness that will foster more productive cooperation. Its realization on practice will further natural resources and crime rate reduction in Ukraine.

Role of Dactyloscopy in Detecting Criminal Offenses and Its Development Tendencies

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Objectives

To explore the future development tendencies of dactyloscopy.

Methods

The following theoretical methods were used in the paper: historical, comparative, statistical.

Results

The results of the research allow indicating the most significant directions in the development of the methods and approaches used in dactyloscopy.

Conclusions

Development tendencies of dactyloscopy provide with untapped opportunities for detecting criminal offenses.

Rights, Duties and Responsibilities of Legal Representatives of Educatee in Educational Process of Child

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Objectives

To ascertain the extent of the rights, duties and responsibilities of the legal representatives of the educatee in the educational process.

Methods

The Latvian Education Law determines the rights and obligations of parents of the child. The content of the legal relationships of the parents and teachers of the child in the law science of Latvia has not been studied. In particular, educational institutions and student parents' cooperation, through the law science methods, has not been studied. The grammatical method studies ascertains the obligations and rights defined by the legal entity – the parent of the child – in their specific legal meaning, not in an ordinary sense. In particular, the term of parental responsibility and similar terms is analysed. In contrast, the historical method is used to cover the extent of parental responsibilities and rights in ensuring the education of the child, i.e. from various periods of time. The systemic method is used, for example, for the term “parental responsibility”, “custody”, “right to education” and other terms to disclose their interrelationships, viewed in their context with other norms, laws, principles of law (e.g. the best interests of the child) and the entire legal system of Latvia. Finally, the teleological method is used to reveal, in accordance with legal and social objectives established in the legal provisions, the extent of parental rights and obligations in ensuring the education of the child.

Results

It is clear from the case – law of Latvia that the rearing and education of a child is a long term, permanent, continuous, systematic process with a definite purpose and a separate act or omission in the context of such a process may suggest that parents do not, in some way or generally, fulfil the obligation of upbringing and education.

Conclusions

The author concludes that the extent of the duties and rights of educatees parents in the provision of education is determined, as in special laws, such as Latvian Education Law, Children Rights Protection Law, and also in general law such as Latvian Civil Law.

Legal Challenges and Solutions for Termination of Shared Property Ownership

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Objectives

The norms of the Civil Law do not directly regulate the termination of shared property. With a theoretical termination of the shared property does not end the actual situation where a building belonging to one person is located on the parcel of land belonging to another person.

The Civil law states grounds for the unification principle of Land and buildings but in reality resulting from the Land Reform parts of the Land and buildings in Latvia are permanent property rights objects, meaning, shared property rights.

By terminating the shared property ownership, building owners may lose ownership, while landowners gain ownership of buildings on the ground.

The Latvian legal framework lacks a solution of how to legally design the transfer of ownership and how to protect of each of the owners. There is a need for a legal framework, which will be established by law, since the existing legal uncertainty in the future can give rise to extensive litigation.

Methods

Basic method, empirical method.

Auxiliary method: analysis and synthesis, historical and logical method, comparison.

Methods for the interpretation of legal provisions: grammatical, systemic, historical, teleological.

Materials:

Likums "Par atjaunotā Latvijas Republikas 1937. gada Civillikuma ievada, mantojuma tiesību un lietu tiesību daļas spēkā stāšanās laiku un kārtību",

Likums "Par zemes īpašuma atsavināšanu valsts vajadzībām Rīgas tirdzniecības brīvostas teritorijā",

Likums "Par zemes reformu Latvijas Republikas pilsētās",

Likums "Par zemes privatizāciju lauku apvidos",

Likums "Par valsts un pašvaldību dzīvojamo māju privatizāciju",

Likums "Par 1950. gada 4. novembra Eiropas Cilvēka tiesību un pamatbrīvību aizsardzības konvenciju un tās 1., 2., 4., 7. un 11. protokolu" 2. pants,

LR Civillikums,

Valsts zemes dienesta data base.

Results

Improving the legislation and issuing new legislation governing the separation of shared ownership procedures will contribute to the effectiveness of the shared ownership winding-up process, in terms of:

- 1) owners of privatised apartments in multi-apartment residential houses;
- 2) residential houses belonging to individuals separately;
- 3) non-residential buildings and buildings;
- 4) as well as for landowners.

Forced lease affect approximately 3300 multi-apartment residential houses, with approximately 100 000 apartments. Forced lease on which multi-apartment houses are located affect about 3000 units of land. The majority forced lease problem are in Riga. Of all of them, approximately 30% are located in Riga. Following that are Jurmala, Daugavpils, Jelgava and Ogre. Forced Lease Relations forms in urban districts developed during the Soviet times without respecting historic land borders.

Conclusions

The issues of shared ownership as a transitional solution have lasted over 20 years in our country. The legislation excluded certain legal provisions governing the existence of shared property as an "exceptional situation", both in relation to apartment owners in residential houses and residential owners and owners of non-residential buildings and structures on the one hand and landowners on the other. At present, the Civil Law governs building rights from 1 January 2017 and only for non-residential buildings and buildings. There is a need for legal provisions that will determine a fair winding-up of property shared by real estate.

Covergence of the Concept of Public Danger in the Medical Treatment Law and Criminal Procedure Law for Persons Subject to Compulsory Treatment

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Objectives

The objective is to analyse the legal framework in the Republic of Latvia regarding the treatment of persons against their will, in conformity with the objectives laid down in the Criminal Procedure Law, Medical Treatment Law and the Law on Patients' Rights, to establish the interdiction of these laws, the duration of treatment of regulated persons and the mechanisms for control of forced treatment, with the aim of synchronizing the application of laws and preventing contradictions.

Methods

The analytical, comparison and historical methods of the system, doctrine research, as well as the method of interpretation of the teleological legal norms were used in the analysis of the methodology in the study.

Results

The Law on Medical Treatment and Patients' Rights includes nowadays mandatory human rights principles, which are not systemically synchronized with the legal framework for the application of compulsory measures of medical nature provided for in the Criminal Procedure Law, so that it is to be improved in accordance with the understanding of modern human rights. In keeping with the similar legal bases laid down in the Medical Treatment Law and Criminal Procedure Law for the treatment of persons against their will, it is necessary to determine the duration of similar compulsory treatment and its control mechanisms. On the basis of the above, amendments to the Criminal Procedure Law, which comply with the purpose of the law, would provide the necessary treatment of persons with mental health problems and a later determination of punishment.

Conclusions

Amendments to the Medical Treatment Law were amended on 8 November 2007. In accordance with the amendments, the court has jurisdiction to approve or refuse to approve a psychiatrist consensual decision on the provision of psychiatric assistance without the consent of the patient. The medical treatment law respects the human rights of patients with regard to the duration of treatment and the control of treatment. Similarly, the Criminal Procedure Law provides for the competence of the court for persons who commit crimes, to determine forced treatment, that is, to determine compulsory means of medical nature. Thus, the court must decide, both within the framework of the Criminal Procedure Law and the Medical Treatment Law, on the treatment of persons against their will. In both laws, as one of the main prerequisites for the treatment of persons with mental health disorders, there is a public danger of these persons, but there is a significant difference in the mechanisms and duration of treatment control.

Graphical Annex – One of Constituent Elements of Road Easement Establishment

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Objectives

Court judgement, agreement or will, and in rare cases also a law is set as the basis for establishment of a road easement. The graphical annex with a marked location of road easement is an integral part of registration of the road easement in the land register and State Cadastre Information System of Immovable Property of the State Land Service. As the graphical annex usually is used land boundary plan or Cadastre map with marked road easement line, or encumbrance plan.

Aim of the research is to make conclusions by analysing the legal status of the graphical annex and legal framework within the road easement establishment and registration process and to provide possible suggestions for improvement of the regulatory framework.

Methods

Conventional research methods (descriptive, analytical, indicative, deductive, graphical) and legal norm interpretation methods (grammatical, systematic, teleological).

Results

As a result of the research, the author gained insights that regulatory enactments do not:

- 1) define the concept of the “graphical annex” in the context of establishing road easements;
- 2) define a form for preparation of the graphical annex;
- 3) regulate who and in accordance with which principles develops the graphical annex.

Conclusions

On the basis of insights made by the author, it may be concluded that the regulatory framework in relation of development of the graphical annexes is incomplete and to be improved. When defining the concept of the graphical annex and specifying its form, the legislator should make a decision regarding a subject who will be entitled to develop this graphical annex – owner of the subject or governing immovable property or a certified specialist of the respective sector – a surveyor. On the basis of above-mentioned, the author in her research provides a more enhanced description of the problems related to the mentioned shortcoming and offers her vision for elimination of the existing problems.

Applicability to Aims of Regulation of Term “Incite” in Operational Activity Law Article 4

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Objectives

The aim of the study is to conclude, whether the concept “incite” ensures that the regulatory objective defined in Article 4 paragraph two of Operational activity law (hereafter – ODL) is achieved. In the case of concluding that the wording is inadequate, the author aims to provide science-based proposals to improve studied regulation.

Methods

General scientific and juridical research methods will be used to achieve the objective.

General scientific research methods: analysis and method of deduction.

Juridical research methods: the systemic and linguistic method of juridical norms interpretation.

Results

The author concludes that the wording of the article does not ensure that the aim of the rule is fully achieved. The linguistic message of the concept of “inciting” does not cover all illegal forms which may be manifested in the execution of the operational experiment.

The author concludes that the linguistic interpretation of the concept “provoke” is consistent with the nature of the infringement expressed during the preparation and execution of the operational experiment. The author concluded that the use of the concept “provoke” would achieve studied rule objective more precisely.

Conclusions

In the light of the conclusions of the article, the author considers that the concept “incite” in the framework of Article 4 paragraph two of ODL should be replaced by the concept “provoke”.

How Formally Implemented Restructuring Affects Efficiency of Public Capital Company

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Objectives

The research has been made with the aim to identify the most significant shortcomings in the completed restructuring process of the public capital company, as well as to make proposals for the improvement of the restructuring processes in future.

Methods

Modeling method, expert survey and document analysis has been used as a methods of this research.

Results

As the result of a comprehensive analysis it has been found out that the first implemented restructuring process did not correspond to the restructuring models proposed in the theory, nor did it generally contribute to the efficiency of the restructured institution. The main reasons of such an unconformity is lack of regulatory framework, unprofessionality of personnel involved in restructuring process, lack of knowledge about restructuring models, lack of financial resources and wrong understanding of efficiency principles as well. Restructuring which has been made in wrong way, can't improve efficiency of restructured institution. Moreover, such a restructuring can create significant obstacles to the functioning of the institution.

Conclusions

Suggestions can be grouped into three directions: improvement of restructuring processes, strengthening of efficiency and limitation of barriers, caused by wrong restructuring processes. Unconformities can be eliminated if the future restructuring processes will correspond to the restructuring model offered by authoress, as well as the future restructuring processes will be carried out in accordance with strategical, analytical, professional, responsible and sustainable approach. Efficiency must be the main goal of the restructuring of the public capital company.

Right of Unborn Child to Life

Zane Rinmane

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Objectives

To find out, when an unborn child gets the right to life and to explain its legal status.

Methods

Analytical method – analysis of legal norms, case-law, opinions and conclusions of some authors on subject framework.

Comparative method – comparing different international legal norms and some foreign law norms.

Results

1. Clarify the terms corresponding to the generally accepted life-development phases in medicine.
2. To analyse when a person's right to life begins from a legal point of view.
3. To find out whether abortion should be prohibited by law within the scope of the researched subject.

Conclusions

1. Terminology, corresponding to the generally accepted life development stages in medicine, should be synchronized.
2. Although a person's right to life does not begin only from the time of his or her birth, speaking about a person in the wider sense immediately after the fertilization of an ovum, would not be appropriate. In the course of progressive development of an individual, it gains full moral status.
3. Legal abortion should not be prohibited by law, otherwise it can lead to situations when woman's interests could come into conflict with her unborn child interests. The right to life of the unborn child is to be seen in substance on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the specific circumstances. This is how ECHR examines complaints and delivers a judgment. It is recognised by ECHR that matters relating to the right to life of an unborn child clearly take into account the specificities of the national regulatory framework on the issue, unless the decisions of the national authorities are manifestly contrary to the limits of reasonability.

Court's Role in Proof in Criminal Proceedings

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Objectives

The paper aim is to research legal aspects of court's role in the proof in criminal proceedings.

Methods

In criminal proceeding, the public prosecutor is required to prove, beyond reasonable doubt. But the role of the court in proof is limited.

The research methods have included descriptive, analytical and deduction-induction ones. By applying these methods, legal acts and opinions of law scientists were analyzed, which was followed by drawing conclusions and drafting recommendations.

Results

In criminal cases the law of evidence has further important purpose, that is, the protection given to the accused in respect to his right to a fair trial.

But the function of a control of restrictions of human rights in a pre-trial proceedings, and the function of prosecution, defence, and court judgment in criminal proceedings shall be separate.

The Court cannot implement the principle of objective investigation in criminal proceedings, as provided for in the administrative procedure.

Conclusions

The following findings were discovered:

- 1) a court is entitled to acquire evidence on the basis of the initiative thereof, and to examine such evidence in a court session, only in the case where the accused performs defence himself or herself, and justified doubts arise for the court regarding his or her mental capacity or possible guilt in the prosecution;
- 2) a court may recognise as proved factual circumstances of a criminal case which are different from prosecution, if thereby the state of an accused is not deteriorated and his or her rights to defence are not infringed.

Using Concept of Fraud Triangle to Prove Subjective Side of Bankruptcy Fraud: Case Study

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Objectives

According to statistics on the investigation of bankruptcy fraud in Latvia, the results of convictions are close to zero, while losses of such crime are measured in billions. The most difficult reason for such crime detection is to prove the subjective side of bankruptcy fraud from the viewpoint of Latvian investigators. In turn, the various foreign studies are aimed at identifying the motives of criminals using the fraud triangle model. Fraud triangle helps to explain the factors that cause an offender to commit fraud, the model consists of three components: pressure/incentive, opportunity and attitude/rationalization. Furthermore, the analysis of cases of fraud is a frequent practice of foreign researchers.

The objective of this study is to analyze a case of fraudulent bankruptcy in order to identify factors that characterize the subjective side of the crime, using the concept of fraud triangle.

Methods

Methodology of this article is based on the background researches of the fraud triangle. Based on the judgment of a case of fraudulent bankruptcy and other publicly available information on the case, the authors determine the factors of the fraud triangle and assess their importance for evidence in Latvia.

The research methods that were used by the authors for fraud factors identification and valuation, are: literature review, conceptual analysis, comparison, financial analysis, Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) method.

Results

The authors found no significant differences in the proof of the subjective side of the crime between the Latvian and foreign legal systems. The authors offer recommendations on the use of the fraud triangle to detect and qualify crimes.

Conclusions

The authors first tested the possibility of applying the concept of fraud triangle in Latvia.

The results of the research may be applicable for investigation of bankruptcy fraud and other economic crimes by investigators and prosecutors.

Comprehensive National Defence: Legal Overhaul

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Objectives

European and regional security context has rapidly changed due to numerous conflicts and tensions. Comprehensive approach to national defence is considered to be the most efficient response to current security challenges. A comprehensive strategy identifying the role of the whole society, including individual responsibility to defend against an aggressor.

Methods

Most recent amendments to the National Security Law defining the approach to comprehensive defence were adopted at the end of 2018. The purpose of the thesis is to explore the new legislation and identify potential future challenges in the implementation of comprehensive national defence concept. Methodology involves legislative analysis of current legal acts, inductive and deductive reasoning or assumptions and propositions.

Results

Over the last three years, National Security Law has been changed five times. These changes have strengthened the national defence system and, more importantly, set out integrated approach towards sectors crucial for functioning society. Amendments specify civic engagement or key responsibilities, such as duty to actively defend against aggressor, of which became significant after the restoration of independence. Moreover, comprehensive national defence is a concept embedded in the Constitution, which compels Latvian people to protect the sovereignty. In 2018 Latvia became one of the few NATO member states that have reached the 2% of GDP defence spending target. Many countries have already decided to go beyond the 2% defence spending target and Latvia will most likely be another member state to consider such step. Comprehensive defence strategy is based on an integrated approach where each element is faced with specific challenges. Broadly speaking, it requires training, infrastructure upgrades, educators, curricula, maintenance, ammunition, equipment, tactical planning etc.

Conclusions

Changes in the National Security Law are only a part of comprehensive national defence system. Efficient defence policy requires further efforts in educating and preparing the society, industries and NGOs for crisis.

Tactics and Methods Used by Defenders to Prevent Judicial Mistakes in First Instance Court

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Objectives

A specific condition for the activities of the defense counsel in the process of proving during the trial is his awareness of the entire system of evidence presented by the prosecution and the arguments of the prosecution in controversial qualification situations.

Methods

Therefore, the defender must proceed from the fact that the judicial investigation takes place in the context of direct examination of evidence, orality, publicity, immutability of the composition of the court and it involves both the court and representatives of the parties. Relatively short terms of the judicial investigation oblige to work in conditions of the need to make decisions under extreme conditions and to use such techniques and methods that would allow the most effective investigation of all the evidence.

Results

In our opinion, among the methods capable of predetermining the objectivity of the investigation of the circumstances of the criminal case, how to prevent judicial errors, it may be the written expression of the attitude of the defense to the accusation, which it is advisable to announce after the statement of charges, and file a petition to attach the text to the court record. The essence of this document can be defensive objections to the indictment, containing in themselves justified by the necessary justification evidence the defense position opposite to the accusation.

Conclusions

When discussing the procedure for examining evidence, the defense has quite limited opportunities to influence its change. In accordance with the law, the prosecution first presents evidence. However, with the consent of the defendant, he can testify first, which, in our opinion, will set the tone for the forthcoming investigation and, to some extent, impose on the prosecution the order of the investigation of its evidence.

Principles of Processing Personal Data in the Recruitment Process

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Objectives

Rapid technological development and globalisation have created new challenges in the field of personal data protection. The volume of personal data collection and exchange has increased significantly. With the new Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (hereinafter – Data Protection Regulation), has been led a new process of processing personal data, which ensures joint principles of processing personal data in the European Union.

A large amount of personal data from different categories is processed directly in the workplace. Processing of personal data at the workplace is already starting in the recruitment process, in which continues to increase the amount of data requested from the employer.

Methods

The employer has obtained different categories of personal data during the recruitment process, but not with all the persons involved in the selection process, will be concluded a contract of employment.

Results

Therefore it is necessary to analyse the legal framework of the processing of personal data in the employment relationship, to investigate the principles for the processing of personal data in the recruitment process, before establishing a legal relationship and to identify problems.

Conclusions

The person participating in the recruitment process must be informed of the processing of his personal data, both, in the event of a contract of employment with that person and in the absence of a contract of employment. Employers who organize recruitment through outsourcing companies mostly satisfy the requirements of the Data Protection Regulation regarding the processing of personal data, but do not play a role in meeting the requirements of the Data Protection Regulation for small companies that organize the recruitment themselves.

Comparison of Relational Bond of Adolescents from Complete Nuclear Family, Single-Parent Family and Children's Homes in Postmodern Society

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Objectives

The contribution deals with the relational bond issues of adolescents who grow up in a complete nuclear family or in a single-parent family and in a children's home. Elements of attachment theory have been embraced by the practitioners endeavouring to assist foster and adopted children and their parents. Attachment theory articulates the potential risks of experiencing multiple caregivers; emphasizes the importance of close social relationships to development; and recognizes that substitute parents may not always have close relationships with children who have experienced adversities before joining them.

Methods

The E.M.B.U Questionnaire is used as a methodological tool that assesses perceived parental rearing style, comprising 3 subscales (Emotional Warmth, Rejection, Over-protection). The survey sample consisted of the total of 110 respondents; 35.5% of the respondents from a complete nuclear family, 18.2% of the respondents being raised in a single-parent family and 46.2% of the respondents who have grown up in a children's home. The data were processed in a statistical program IBM SPSS 22 by non-parametric tests.

Results

The primary results show that the respondents from the complete families perceive the mother and father as emotionally warm-hearted, less rejecting and overprotective. On the contrary, children from the children's homes perceive the parents as more rejecting, less emotional warm-hearted and less overprotective. The respondents from the single-parent families perceive the mother as a less rejecting, emotionally warm-hearted and overprotective, on the other hand, the father is perceived as a more rejecting, less emotionally warm-hearted and less overprotective.

Conclusions

Professionals who approach their work from the paradigm of attachment theories may incorporate ideas from earlier work to integrate an understanding of the attachment between family members and behavioural interventions that help to modify parent – child relationships (Greenberg & Speltz, 1988; Speltz, 1990; Scott, 2003). More recently, a rigorous clinical trial has been implemented in the USA to assess the effectiveness of the integration of attachment-focused interventions and social learning theory for caregivers and young children in foster care (Dozier et al., 2002). This innovation offers promise for the development of science-based interventions that address children's social behaviour and parents' concerns.

Psychological Help in Latvia: Groups and Identities

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Objectives

The purpose of this research was to explore and reflect on the content of psychological help and similarities and differences between various professional groups in this field.

Methods

In the present study we analyse the content of psychological help and understanding regarding professional groups working in the field of psychological help through content analysis of relevant documents (legal acts, documentation of professional associations, practice descriptions).

Results

Document analysis shows that content of psychological help in Latvia is unclear, different terminology is used for its description. There were identified 4 professional groups with several subgroups working in the field of psychological help. Document analysis indicates an ambiguous professional boundaries – in terms of duties and tasks – between the professional groups, which makes it difficult to clarify and position the professional identities of these groups and those belonging to each group.

Conclusions

The ambiguity found determines that future research should investigate collective identities of professional groups. Understanding of the collective professional identities of these groups will help to clarify the content of the concept of psychological help and boundaries of various professional groups. This will also help to particularize professional terminology in the field of psychological help in Latvia.

This research was supported by the project Challenges and solutions of Latvian State and Society in an International Framework (INTERFRAME-LV).

Individual and Collective Factors of Latvian Arts Therapists

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Objectives

The purpose of this research was to examine the relationships between personality traits, self-esteem and collective self-esteem of Latvian arts therapists. Arts therapists as professionals of one occupation can describe themselves by using “I” or “We” title, therefore question arises to what extent these titles are related. Self-esteem is one of the phenomena related to the “I” concept, for example, to personality traits, as well as to “We” or the collective identity, but there is a lack of research studying the relationships between all these concepts.

Methods

Participants of this study were 61 Latvian arts therapists who completed Latvian Personality Inventory (LPI; Perepjolkina, Reņģe, 2013), Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSC; Rosenberg, 1965) and Collective Self-Esteem Scale (CSS; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between personality traits, self-esteem and collective self-esteem of Latvian art therapists.

Results

Results indicated negative correlation between self-esteem and LPI scales anxiety ($r = -0.483$, $p < 0.00$), vulnerability ($r = -0.426$, $p < 0.00$), depression ($r = -0.582$, $p < 0.00$), diffidence ($r = -0.586$, $p < 0.00$) and neuroticism ($r = -0.643$, $p < 0.00$); positive relationship between self-esteem and CSS scale membership self-esteem ($r = 0.458$, $p < 0.00$) and negative relationship between CSS scale membership self-esteem and LPI scale vulnerability ($r = -0.524$, $p < 0.00$) and neuroticism ($r = -0.434$, $p < 0.00$).

Conclusions

Finding propose that Latvian arts therapist membership to the professional group is influenced more by collective rather than individual factors with an exception of neuroticism. This might suggest that emotional stability and higher self-esteem could predict one's ability to identify as a member of social group. Overall results of this study are important for further development of art therapist profession and education in Latvia to strengthen professional and collective identity.

Psychological and Demographic Characteristics of Students Participating in MePlusMe Project

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Objectives

Psychological and study skill difficulties experienced by students in higher education can lead to poor academic performance, mental health problems, unhealthy lifestyle and risk behaviors, as well as reduced study satisfaction and drop out from university. Students are limited in seeking help from professionals. As university students are highly connected to digital technologies web-based interventions could be used to improve students' mental health. The aim of this study was to investigate the characteristics of Rīga Stradiņš University students who participated in MePlusMe project to try out a web-based support system offering individually tailored packages with psychological and study skill techniques according to person's needs.

Methods

Rīga Stradiņš University students were recruited to participate in MePlusMe feasibility study project via University's information channels. 151 students (71% female, mean age – 22.6) filled in socio-demographic questionnaire and self-report measures of depression (PHQ-9) and anxiety symptoms (GAD-7), mental well-being (Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being scale), academic self-efficacy (Academic Self-Efficacy scale) before they started to use MePlusMe web-based system.

Results

Data analysis showed that 19.9% of study participants experienced low anxiety symptoms, 42.4% – mild anxiety symptoms and 10.6% – severe anxiety symptoms ($M = 8.36$; $SD = 4.55$). 23.8% revealed minimal symptoms of depression, 61.3% – mild to moderate symptoms of depression, 14.3% – severe symptoms of depression ($M = 8.77$; $SD = 5.15$). Both depression and anxiety rating were significantly negatively correlated with rating of mental well-being ($r = -0.48$; $r = -0.66$, $p < 0.0001$) and academic self-efficacy ($r = -0.36$; $r = -0.56$, $p < 0.0001$).

Conclusions

The research results allow describing the main symptoms that help-seeking students are experiencing as well as identify the main difficulties that should be addressed by Student Support Services. MePlusMe web-based system, which was developed to support students during their time at university, addresses mild to moderate psychological difficulties, as well as study skill difficulties experienced by higher education students and therefore could be an appropriate solution.

Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ) Validation in Latvia

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Keywords: self-regulation; adaptation of SRQ; exploratory factor analysis (EFA); confirmatory factor analysis (CFA); Cronbach's alpha.

Self-regulation is the process of mental activity in which the individual is able to control their thinking, intensity of emotional experiences and behavioural responses in association with the pursue of a certain goal.

Self-regulation is the ability to develop, implement, and flexibly maintain planned behavior in order to achieve one's goals (Miller & Brown, 1991). According to the foundational work of the researchers Kanfer, Miller and Brown, there are seven steps which must happen for behavioral self-regulation to occur: receive relevant information, evaluate the information and compare it to norms, trigger change, search for options, formulate a plan, implement the plan and assess the plan's effectiveness (which recycles to steps 1 and 2). Although this model was developed specifically to study addictive behavior, the self-regulatory processes it describes are meant to serve as general principles for behavioral self-control. In this adaptation, the original English version of the questionnaire was first translated into the Latvian language, then the translation was then checked by a fluent English-Latvian speaker.

The aim of this paper is to adopt in Latvia an existing research instrument the Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ), originally developed by Brown et al. (1999). The further aim is to use Self-Regulation Questionnaire as one of the methods in author's doctoral research.

The sample (n = 200) consists participants of woman and men population, Latvian employees in age from 18–68.

The research focuses on confirming the construct validity of Latvian version of the Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ).

Self-Help Practice as Form of Individual Psychological Support

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Objectives

The purpose of this study was to investigate and describe the main psychological motives and perceived benefits for self-help practice among practitioners by answering following research questions: what helps and what hinders the maintenance of regular meditation practice among the members of the group, and what are the main benefits of meditation according to the participants' subjective experience?

Methods

The research uses written responses to open questions from a survey conducted among the participants of the meditation practice group. Fifty-eight (n = 58) participants filled survey – 41 women (71.8%) and 17 men (28.8%), 91% of them with higher education. Average age – 48 years. Of respondents, 40% practiced meditation at least once a week, 28% – several times a week. 42% stated that they practice other spiritual practices, not only meditation. Qualitative content analysis was used to analyze data and develop categories and subcategories of reported helping and hindering factors in adhering to practice, as well as categories for perceived benefits of the practice. Triangulation was performed – two researchers analyzed data, the results were compared.

Results

The following four categories were identified as the most frequently mentioned factors influencing practice: (group) leader, environment (suitable place, space, time), discipline (regularity) and community. Among the perceived benefits, the following categories appear most frequently: self-discipline, (better) attentiveness, (self) exploration, stability.

Conclusions

In order to promote self-help practices, it is crucial to provide an appropriate environment and self-discipline-enhancing factors (impact of the practice leader, support from other group members, regularity). These categories also help to define what self-help practice is. In the preconceptions of practice participants, self-discipline and maintaining the rhythm of life are the main benefits of the self-help practice.

Improvement of Emotion Regulation: Focus of Psychological Care

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Objectives

The purpose of the current study was to investigate correlations between specific facets of emotion regulation. Emotion regulation is a crucial element in most theories of emotion. It explains how people experience, modulate, and organize emotions, and how such emotion management impacts human behavior. Emotion regulation deficits are assumed to trigger and to sustain affective symptoms of mental disorders.

Methods

Fifty-six adults participated in the study (46 female participants (82.1%), and 10 male participants (17.9%), with an average age of 39.4). Emotion regulation was measured based on two self-report questionnaires adapted for the use in Latvia: Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS; Gratz & Roemer, 2004) and Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ; Gross & John, 2003). Correlations were examined between lack of emotional clarity, difficulty engaging in goal-directed behavior, non-acceptance of emotional responses, limited access to emotion regulation strategies and cognitive reappraisal.

Results

The results show statistically significant correlations between non-acceptance of emotional responses and lack of emotional clarity ($r = 0.6$, $p < 0.001$), difficulty engaging in goal-directed behavior ($r = 0.78$, $p < 0.001$), and limited access to emotion regulation strategies ($r = 0.76$, $p < 0.001$). Results indicated negative correlation between lack of emotional clarity and cognitive reappraisal ($r = -0.58$, $p < 0.001$).

Conclusions

The results suggest that different emotion regulation skills and strategies are mutually linked. The overall emotion regulation of an individual can be improved if he or she receives psychological care which targets the acquaintance of such skills (for example, acceptance of emotional responses, emotional clarity).

Subjective Experience and Perceived Benefits of Cancer Patients Participating in Music-Therapy Based Psychosocial Support Programme

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Objectives

To explore the subjective experience and perceived benefits of cancer patients participating in music-therapy based psychosocial support programme.

Methods

60 cancer patients underwent the programme consisting of four group sessions, each 90 minutes long, being held daily. By filling Music therapy evaluation questionnaire developed by the authors, all participants (n = 60) did evaluation of the programme: a) of their overall experience, b) its specific benefits for addressing anxiety as well as social support, emotion regulation and overall quality of life issues, c) its most/least enjoyable/helpful elements. There were also 4 focus group discussions (n = 20) held to explore the specific elements of the programme and to provide the grounds for future amendments.

Results

70% of participants rated their overall experience as “very valuable” or “valuable”, 24% indicated as “neutral”, 6% admitted that their participation has not led to “notable gains”. The top five benefits included: improved mood, reduced stress, received support, improved communication, coping with negative emotions linked with disease or treatment. Among the most enjoyable and helpful elements, patients emphasized the ones that are linked with the acquired ability to face and survive difficult emotions (n = 43), discovering inner strength (n = 58), gaining more confidence by acquiring new skills or experience (n = 29), gaining connectedness with group and music (n = 32), musically beautiful moments and transcendence (n = 58) as well as normalization of their experience (n = 50). Focus group discussion provided with valuable recommendations regarding the inclusion of psycho-education elements, size of the group, format of instructions, pace of the work and necessity for balance between the safety and novelty.

Conclusions

Participation in the programme positively affected psychological and social well-being of the patients. Results of this research provides valuable input for development of the programme – both organisation-wise as well as content-wise.

Critical Action Learning as a Method in Supervisors' Professional Development

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Objectives

The aim of the article is to analyse the advantages and risks of using Critical action learning (CAL) in supervision groups, and to evaluate the potential of CAL as a method of professional development for supervisors.

Methods

The article is based on the critical literature review about CAL, supervision and relevant research methods on CAL in supervision groups.

Results

CAL assumes that any behavior or practice is performed in the discursive understanding of the situation and in the context of the power dynamics of the broader organisational setting. Tensions, conflicts, disagreements and other phenomena of power dynamics that occur among the participants of the supervision groups are important data, that reflect the broader context of the group. Investigation and learning about these power dynamics and the related phenomena becomes the primary task of CAL, while working within the psychodynamic approach in analyzing organisations and group behavior related to both the primary rational task and emotional needs and anxiety of group members.

Conclusions

CAL increases supervisor's understanding about the power dynamics and political context in which supervisions are organised. It trains supervisors and supervisees to better understand their emotional reactions to conflict, tensions, disagreements and other phenomena of power dynamics in the groups. The most important risk associated with using CAL in group supervisions is related to the increased anxiety and emotional tension unleashed when working 'here and now' with the phenomena of power dynamics. CAL requires in-depth reflections about group members' identities and emotions, working on the boundary with the private or therapeutic material, and risks to become a complex and difficult developmental experience.

Consequences of Job Insecurity in Russian Organisational Context

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Russian Federation*

Objectives

This study is conducted in an Russian organizational context. There is little research on job insecurity in Russia. We investigated individual consequences of job insecurity as well as its organizational outcomes.

Methods

We used the following measures: Job Security Index by T. Probst (Russian adaptation of A. N. Demin); IScales of Commitment to Work and Organization (A. N. Demin); Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Russian version); Questionnaire of V. Zung, aimed at measuring depression (adaptation of T. I. Balashova); Scale of Potential Labor Mobility (A. N. Demin). These measures were conducted on the sample consisted of 104 people aged from 20 to 54 years old, 32 of them men and 72 women working in various organizations of a large industrial city in the central part of Russia.

Results

Job insecurity is considered as a stressor with negative consequences for both the individual employee and his or her organization (De Witte et al., 2012). Our results also show evidence for that statement. According to our results job insecurity is positively associated with depression (0.37; $p < 0.001$) – individual variable, intention to quit their current job (0.27; $p < 0.01$) – organizational variable. Also job insecurity is negatively associated with work engagement (–0.25; $p < 0.01$) and commitment to work (–0.21; $p < 0.01$) – both organizational variables.

Conclusions

In our research both types of correlations – job insecurity with individual and organizational variables – were examined. So, the subjective feeling of job insecurity is accompanied by distinct signs of a change in attitude towards work, manifested in a decrease in involvement and commitment to work, as well as an increase in the level of depressive manifestations and the appearance of an intention to move to another job. Undoubtedly, research aimed at studying the psychological mechanisms of coping with job insecurity is extremely in demand.

Dance and Movement Therapy for Seniors: Mixed-Methods Systematic Review

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Objectives

To develop a mixed-methods systematic review on dance movement therapy (DMT) for seniors, to analyse structural and content indicators of applied DMT interventions, their effect on physical, cognitive, emotional and social functioning, and experience of seniors gained during DMT.

Methods

Sample of research: Quantitative and qualitative trials. Criteria for inclusion: the average age of participants above 65, without restrictions in respect of diagnosis/its absence for certain illness or place of residence; DMT interventions used; supervision by trained dance movement therapist or DMT student as part of his/her study process.

Research tools: In order to assess the methodological quality of the trials, the JBI critical appraisal tools for various research designs have been used. To synthesize and analyse data meta-analysis and textual narrative synthesis were used.

Results

15 quantitative and qualitative trials with methodological quality varying from high to low have been included in the systematic review. Data acquired by meta-analysis indicate a statistically significant reduction of signs of depression for research (DMT) group in comparison to control group (95% CI -3.74 to -2.52, total effect $Z = 10.05$ ($p < 0.00001$)).

Conclusions

1. Studies vary in methodological quality.
2. Precise treatment plan is needed in order to provide the optimal therapy results.
3. Both quantitative and qualitative data show changes in all four functioning areas.
4. There is little information about the experience of seniors gained during DMT sessions.

Manifestation of Europeanisation in Latvia's Participation in European Union Military Missions

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Objectives

Latvia's defence policy is based on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), but European Union (EU) defence policy has only a secondary role. The EU's defence ambitions are reflected in the progressive development of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and the increasing emphasis on the autonomy of its action, if necessary. Last years have shown that the most important driving forces for EU military ambitions are Russian Federation aggression in Ukraine, Britain's withdrawal from EU, threats of international terrorism, refugee flows and presidency of D. Trump. EU Battle groups and EU military missions are important issue for the EU military capability development. EU military missions are currently the most visible form of EU military power. Latvia has been represented by a small number of soldiers in EU military missions.

The aim of the paper is to study Latvia's involvement in EU military missions and identify whether, and in what way, the Europeanization of Latvia's defence policy has taken place.

Methods

The study is based on the top-down europeanisation approach, analysis of policy planning documents, research on the CSDP historical development, legislation and scientific literature. Top-down europeanisation can cause three degrees of domestic change: Absorbtion (the degree of domestic change is low), accommodation (modest degree of domestic change) and transformation (the degree of domestic change is high). Top-down europeanisation in the area of defence has an insignificant effect.

Results

Top- down europeanisation effect in Latvia's defence policy can be seen in policy planning documents and in the legal acts. Latvia has participated in the six EU military missions – EUFOR Concordia, EUFOR Althea, EU NAVFOR Atalanta, EUTM Mali, EUFOR RCA un EU NAVFOR Med Sophia.

Conclusions

EU plays an important role in improving Latvia's military capabilities. Participation in EU military missions for Latvia is the possibility to express solidarity, to strengthen collective cooperation and to assume responsibility for partnership countries, military personnel experience. The limitations for Latvia to participate more actively in EU military missions are lack of personnel, lack of financial resources and duplication of NATO's functions.

Explaining 25 Years of Latvian Health Reforms: How Politics Shape Policy?

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Objectives

Health care is among the most voluminous budget positions, with distributive implications for various social groups at large. Since regaining independence, Latvia's health care has been subject to a myriad of reforms, regarding both governance and financing. First, it has been massively decentralized and then re-centralized again. Second, it has been financed in an alternating fashion from the general budget, through ear-marked income tax (temporary), as well as increasingly large out-of-pocket payments. During the crisis, Latvia underwent large-scale structural reforms, as part of a particularly harsh consolidation programme. More recently, while suffering from some of the worst health outcomes in the developed world, Latvia has been cruising toward mandatory social insurance – thus running the risk of endangering health outcomes even further. But however hefty and multidimensional these reforms are, apart from singling out fiscal expediency the scientific literature – both domestic and international – remains silent on their political, economic and ideational drivers. This book chapter is a modest attempt to bridge this gap. The basic research question goes as follows: What are the drivers of health policy and how do they vary over time? In other words, what politics does it take to produce these policies?

Methods

The dependent variable is Latvia's health care reforms over the last 25 years (1993–2017). I have selected the more important (~ 50) health reforms concerning health governance, financing and coverage, and aggregated these reforms in a unique collection set of legislative acts. Mostly these are provisions and decrees by the Cabinet of Minister and laws adopted by the Parliament. The data set includes reform title, relevant dates (of enactment and becoming effective), online link, as well as short descriptions. The independent variables (x, z) that explain the outcome are staple comparative political economy (CPE) variables, such as partisanship, political cleavage structure, policy ideas, vested interests and external constraints. Drawing on a vast array of primary and secondary sources, the chapter aims to accomplish two things. First, it chronologically traces the policy process, providing a comprehensive – but parsimonious – account of the most important reform events. Second, it develops an original explanation by linking these reforms to political variables on a correlational and / or causal basis.

Results

The chapter observes that the political economy of past legacy of infrastructural overcapacity of services combined with a complex constellation of vested interests and in-capacious state has failed to produce a satisfactory health care system. Struggling with low health care funding and low administrative capacity, the state has taken the back seat allotting larger roles for private providers and funding.

Conclusions

The chapter argues that Latvian politics is not conducive to redistributive economic change. While suffering from one of the most inaccessible health care systems and, hence, worst health outcomes in the EU, Latvians struggle to raise their concerns through democratic process, because political debates are dominated by “cultural”, rather than “economic” issues. This pattern echoes a more general trade-off intrinsic in Latvia's political economy, where high polarization over identity-related issue-areas such as nationalism, (anti)corruption and EU integration (orientation), comes at the cost of hardly any political polarization over redistributive issue-areas, including health care policy.

Consequently, as the chapter argues, the missing distributional dimension in Latvian politics has allowed radical neoliberal ideas centred on individual responsibility to guide health policy – beyond what international actors, the usual suspects disseminating pro-market ideas, would find acceptable. To increase health care funding and improve health outcomes, domestic policy makers have repeatedly placed their hopes in various market solutions, notably, mandatory health care insurance, which not surprisingly come at the cost of diminishing coverage and access of health care services. Challenging the established tenets in CPE and IPE literatures, the chapter contends that in Latvia, against the backdrop of free-market radicalism of domestic authorities, it is international actors such as the IMF, EC, WHO, OECD which play the role of “social advocate” and call for more health care funding, access and coverage.

Cooperation and Collaboration Impact on Policy Development and Implementation: HIV/AIDS Policy Case in Latvia

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Keywords: governance, health policy implementation.

Objectives

The epidemic of The HIV is a major global public health issue in the whole world, despite the available diagnostic and effective and affordable treatment. In Latvia according to the ECDC report for 2016 is the highest rate of newly diagnosed patients with HIV 18.5 in comparison to average in EU/EEA – 5.7. Although the treatment is available for every patient diagnosed with HIV, only 38% of infected patients are engaged. The problem is multi-dimensional and has impacts on many social aspects, so the solutions should also be made in a cross-sectoral approach. Governance as political process theory has innovative tools that allow the creation of alternative modes or regulation in the private and public sphere, by the steering functions and promotion via information – gathering, rule-making, monitoring, and enforcement.

The aim was according to Governance theory analyze the HIV/AIDS policy development and implementation in Latvia and identify methods and tools that could be used in future to gain better policy outcomes.

Results

There were several significant achievements made: The rise of three different level NGOs for HIV patients, improvements in policy for ART availability for patients, development and confirmation of national action plan on HIV infection prevalence limitation for 2018–2020. The methods used to achieve these goals were – cooperation and collaboration with state institutions, NGOs, medical specialists, over-national organizations, as well as the involvement of Parliament officials and committees.

Conclusions

The analyse lead to conclusions that most of the tools were used, except the possibility to litigation used as lobbying strategy. Some tools – cooperation and collaboration with state institutions and medical specialists were used considerably, but other – as the involvement of the public in raising concerns, public education campaigns, and involvement of Parliament could be used more intensively in future.

Confucianism in Contemporary Chinese Politics

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Objectives

Research aims at analysing People's Republic of China (PRC's) political agenda and if and how it is connected to PRC's actual and preferred ideological basis. The main aim of this research is to find out whether Confucianism is the most important tool for legitimizing their political agenda in People's Republic of China since 1989.

Hypothesis is as follows: "Confucianism is most important tool in legitimizing political discourse of People's Republic of China after 1989 locally and internationally". Following aspects should be analysed:

- 1) main assumptions of constructivism and how these assumptions helps to explain role of Confucianism in contemporary Chinese politics;
- 2) discourse analysis as a method of this research;
- 3) main principles and identity forming elements of Confucianism;
- 4) historical background of Confucianism's role in political discourse;
- 5) come-back of Confucianism in political discourse after 1989 (historical background, causality, further development);
- 6) confucianism as main tool of legitimising PRC political agenda;
- 7) other tools of legitimising PRC political agenda;
- 8) deviations from values of Confucianism in PRC political agenda.

Methods

In this research constructivism has been chosen as an underlying theory because instead of focusing on facts and events in particular, it aims at creating an understanding about value systems, social structures that dominates in the society, interconnections, however the main focus is on causality. As a method has been chosen discourse analysis. It has been chosen mainly because it emphasises the importance of using the "right" language – in other words, rhetorics is an attempt to legitimise political agenda. For that reason, the chosen method is one that is very focused on lexicon and language.

Results

Hypothesis is proved to be partly accurate.

Conclusions

1. Ideological basis after 1989 is capitalism and elements of marxism / socialism, bet rhetorics differ.
2. On the main drives to re-animate Confucianism was to strengthen legitimacy as locally, as internationally.
3. Return of the Confucianism in PRC political discourse and elsewhere is undeniable.
4. Actual PRC politics does not comply with main principles of Confucianism, which means that regular reference to Confucianism in political rhetorics is intentional contribution for creating certain image.
5. Since 1989 PRC consciously is building certain basis for legitimising its politics and Confucianism is central element.
6. On contrary to rhetorics – Confucianism is not and cannot become de facto ideological basis of PRC's politics.
7. Along with Confucianism, there are other tools of legitimising PRC's politics.
8. Within the country, economical development is far more stronger tool of legitimising politics than Confucianism, as ensures healthy environment, but Confucianism is main and intentionally created tool of legitimising politics internationally.
9. From political perspective main aim of Confucianism is legitimising PRC's politics, but undeniably it de facto exists in other spheres – culture and education for instance.

Assessment of NATO's Extended Deterrence Strategy in Context of Security Dilemma Concept

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Objectives

Russia's strategic ambition to position itself back as a global actor is implemented through comprehensive range of activities. These include, but are not limited to extensive military capability development (including offensive), prepositioning of military forces and infrastructure in close vicinity to NATO countries, particularly Baltic states, as well as covert and overt military actions against its neighboring countries. From NATO perspective these actions are considered as an attempt to establish offensive advantage over NATO and consequently requires response, which would assure its allies, establish credible deterrence posture but at the same time would not trigger security dilemma. The objectives of the research are:

1. To analyse NATO's extended deterrence strategy in the Baltic countries in the context of Russia's strategic ambitions.
2. To assess if NATO-Russia relations has a potential to trigger "spiral of hostility".
3. To develop recommendations for NATO which would allow keeping the security balance in Europe, particularly in the Baltic states.

Methods

The arguments in the presentation will be build using theoretical framework of Security Dilemma. Security Dilemma, founded by Herbert Butterfield, John Herz, and Robert Jervis, is considered as very influential theoretical concept in the international relations applied to explain theory of war and peace. The concept of security dilemma is built around the idea of "spiral of hostility", which is triggered by activities of international actor (state or alliance) aimed to increase its security through military capability development. These actions disturb the security balance as other actors may interpret military capability development as an intent to achieve "offensive advantage". This uncertainty and fear is leading to the arms race or "spiral of hostility". The empirical part of the study will concentrate on the interaction between NATO and Russia in the time period between 2008 (Russia-Georgia war) and 2018.

Results

1. Security Dilemma theory is providing sufficient framework for theoretical discussion addressing global defence and security, as well as establishes a theoretical basis for formulation of defence and security policies and strategies. However Security Dilemma theory heavily relies on a number of ambiguous variables, for example, determinants of deterrence or indicators of actor's intent, which limits possibility of empirical testing of the theory and consequently allows questioning the credibility of the theory, when applied to particular case.
2. NATO's strategic posture through extended command and control elements as well as Enhanced Forward Presence in the Baltic states complemented by various strategic communication activities has created a desired short term deterrence effects against Russia, as well as is gradually building preconditions for long term security stability in the region. Nevertheless, the role of the countries of NATO Eastern flank is not sufficiently appreciated in NATO strategy, thus leaving military capability gaps, which potentially represents significant disadvantage for NATO.

Conclusions

Through the theoretical framework of the Security Dilemma the author will argue that the NATO's extended deterrence strategy, which was selected as a response to Russia's actions, has successfully balanced security situation in Europe. Furthermore, the author will claim that further increase of NATO forces presence in NATO's eastern flank countries potentially would trigger security dilemma, therefore the main effort to stabilize the security situation in the region and establish lasting security balance heavily depends on three Baltic states.

Sub-Regional Defense Synchronisation – What the Baltics Can Offer for a Stronger Alliance?

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Objectives

Purpose of this paper is to outline and discuss origin and sustainability of a modern sub regional security alliance between the small countries – focusing on the Baltic States as a members of NATO. It takes issue of alliance formation outside the realm of the power balancing of the Cold War period, when the main Alliance building theory has been formed. Yet at one hand we have NATO collective security system and from other hand – the challenges, which still face small nations, members of the NATO, bordering with revisionist major power in the region. From one side this paper will outline historical background of defense interoperability between the Baltic countries before the World War II and from the other side it will discuss current issues of the Baltic States security cooperation which were identified and analyzed within the Baltic Security Strategy Project by scholars and government professionals of the Baltic States. The question both for scholars and practitioners is, whether small states altogether can make considerable input within Collective defense system and simultaneously strengthen their defenses and enhance deterrence by synchronizing their security and improving their intra-regional military interoperability within the collective security system.

Methods

Experts of the Baltic Security Strategy Project (BSSP) have researched and drafted the first Baltic Security Strategy Report. The Report is intended as a guide to security decision makers in the Baltics and their Allied states in regard to Baltic defense and deterrence, societal security, economic security and cyber security. A dozen of articles provide an assessment and recommendations using an intraregional and interdisciplinary approach. The main objective is to promote a top level discussion on Baltic security at the relevant Baltic, European and American formats. Historical case study of the Baltic States before the World War II is also used in order to analyze broader historical context of the alliance formation.

Results

Result of this study allows to challenge existing policy implementation of the Baltic Security cooperation as well as current theories of Deterrence and Alliance Formation.

Conclusions

The main findings of this research leads us to conclusion, that not only synchronization of the Baltic defenses are vital within the context of effective military capabilities in the region, but all the spectrum of security issues should be reconsidered, allowing greater emphasis on intraregional and wider Baltic sea regional cooperation.

We may conclude through our research, that enhanced security cooperation and defense integration among the Baltic States is an ultimate instrumental for maintaining and developing regional security. It complements NATO's collective security and Europeans Security and Defense Policy instruments, especially in the field of military mobility.

This process not only should strengthen the defenses and security of the Baltic States but also to make a credible deterrence policy towards Russia even more successful concept.

The need of further development of the security cooperation between the Baltic States in the fields of energy security, cyber security, financial and societal security and resilience, relates to the consolidation of the common positions of the Baltic Countries in their relations with the strategic partners of the EU and NATO, as well as with Russia and other parties, improved cross-border cooperation, synchronization of public and private cooperation, synchronization and coordination of the activities among the security and controlling authorities over common peacetime security challenges, exchange of classified and unclassified information on threat prevention experience and daily routine activities, including measures countering Hybrid incidents.

Role of Strategic Culture in Process of Creating Regional Formats: Poland's Case

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Objectives

The aim of this article is to determine the role of strategic culture in the process of creating regional formats.

Methods

The main tasks of the article are

- 1) to define strategic culture concept and find out elements which have impact on creating regional formats;
- 2) to analyse regional cooperation formats from Polish perspective.

Results

Strategic culture is understood as inherited conceptions and shared beliefs that shape a nation's collective identity, the values that color how a country evaluates its interests, and the norms that influence a state's understanding of the means by which it can best realize its destiny in a competitive international system (Tellis, 2016). Political elite plays the key role in strategic culture. Elite actors are portrayed as "users of culture" or "norm entrepreneurs", able to "choose when and where to consciously move beyond previous boundaries of acceptability in foreign policy behavior" (Pirani, 2016).

Pillars on which strategic culture of Poland is built remains unchanged, they are Polish national interests: independence, sovereignty and security. Strategic culture has its roots in historical experience, partition of Poland in 18th century and World War II. Not only historical experience, but also geopolitical situation, location between Germany and Russia, formed its strategic culture. It explains Polish need for reliable security guarantees and interest in security issues. Political changes in Poland after parliamentary elections in 2015 makes transformation on basic aims of foreign policy. The two main political camps (Civil Platform previously and now governing party Law and Justice) significantly differed in their attitude toward the EU and other issues, mostly about the role and influence of Poland in the EU. Jerzy Giedroyc, Roman Dmowski, Jozef Pilsudski are the main personalities whose views on Polish foreign and security policy can influence the Polish strategic culture. Law and Justice government changed the importance of some foreign policy vectors, regional cooperation became as one of the main foreign policy issues. Whereas the current government is skeptical towards EU and Germany, cooperation in the context of the Weimar triangle is no longer a priority, instead of it the Visegrad Group and Three Seas Initiative are the main regional cooperation formats in foreign policy of Poland.

Conclusions

Strategic culture plays an important role in Poland's foreign policy choices. Prioritization of these regional formats comes from Poland's strategic culture and from the views and assumptions of ruling party.

Dynamics of Regional Security Complexes in Gulf Region

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Objectives

The primary aim of this study is to examine the factors constructing the regional security complex in the Gulf region.

Methods

The study has been developed under the qualitative research methods. Theoretical literature, scientific materials, expert interviews, and other empirical materials have been used for information analysis.

Results

The study is undertaken within the framework of Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT). Using the analytical instruments given in the theory initially developed by Buzan, this study provides an analysis of the security dynamics in the Gulf region – a sub-complex in the Middle Eastern regional security complex. The RSCT is an analytical tool meant to cover the entire world, categorizing states and territories according to the theoretical model. This study examines how the nations of the Gulf region acknowledge their regional conditions of insecurity and the measures they take to respond to them. These concerns are subjects of processes of securitization and desecuritization which are conducted primarily internally within the region.

Conclusions

Nowadays, one RSCT of the Gulf region is based on the resilience of security between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Historical contradictions between Sunni and Shiites today are reflected in the dynamics of regional and international politics, which in turn defines defense alignment policies and military readiness. A second dominant factor constructing a regional security complex in the region is the role of external players such as the US. Can we consider the U.S. as a part of Gulf's regional security complex even without being a physical part of the region? And what about the other international players? Nevertheless, in both scenarios, in the region, there is a mutual dependency as a part of the security complex. For example, the security competition between the Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia triangle makes it impossible for smaller states such as Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar or United Arab Emirates to significantly influence the structure of the regional security complex. Meanwhile, competition between the external great powers tends to increase the existing regional competition in the security pattern of the Gulf region.

Visual Art and Its Political Message During 2018 Saeima Elections

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Objectives

On 6 October 2018, when elections to the 13th Saeima of Latvia were held, the premises of the Latvian Academy of Art were not only a place for the debate on Cultural Policy, but the candidates for the prime minister from the political parties also met there to discuss the basic concepts, without which neither state nor policy exists. This encourages the assessment of the possibility for a reciprocal relationship and interaction between art and politics nowadays.

The aim of the work is to find out the possible political message of visual art during the period before the elections to the 13th Saeima.

Methods

The study uses the concept of the art field by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and its connection with the field of power. The work uses materials from the exhibition of the Latvian National Museum of Art and its exhibition hall Arsenāls from January to October 2018, as well as publications on the internet culture and art portals Satori.lv and Arteritortory.lv.

Results

The study shows that artists are never 'outside' society, even when they form different subcultures or identify themselves as separated from society.

Conclusions

There is a perception both inside and outside the art field that the artist is unique and talented, but the work of art is only a product of individual inspiration. On the contrary, sociologists believe that works of art are a product influenced by certain historical, social and cultural events.

State Educational Policy in Sphere of Social Sciences: Document Analysis

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Objectives

The Article 1 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia indicates that Latvia is an independent and a democratic republic. Thereby maintaining independence, strengthening democracy and its succession are the purposes of utter importance. At the same time the tasks of social sciences are to examine society, analyse ongoing processes, promote critical thinking, enhance social dialogue and development of civil society.

Methods

The aim of the research is to examine the country's long-term and medium-term planning documents. Using Text Analysis method, the interrelation of national development documents in the context of long-term planning and promotion of democratic values are studied.

Results

The research covers the Sustainable Development Strategy (2030), The National Development Plan (NDP), the Educational Guidelines developed by the Ministry of Education and Science for the period 2014–2020 and Guidelines for National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy 2012–2018. The role of social sciences, understanding social and political processes, and the development of critical thinking skills is only mentioned in Latvia's Sustainable Development Strategy 2030. NDP defines "Latvian economic breakthrough" as a medium-term priority. In NDP the idea of competence-based education is outlined, which is a complex approach to educational content to let the child understand the existing regularities between exact, social and humanitarian sciences.

Conclusions

1. The state's educational policy in the field of social sciences is an important factor in the development of an active and educated civil society.
2. The state's focus on exact sciences in higher education increase the importance of the social sciences in general education.
3. The increasing importance of exact sciences and information technologies is reflected in the reduction of state-funded study places for social sciences.

Attending to Changing Logics of Policy Making: Multidisciplinary Approach to European Energy Markets

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Objectives

1. Gain insight into how the concept of energy moved from one that was defined initially as a social good, then that of an economic commodity, to one which is currently perceived as a security concern within a post-war to post-crisis European historical context.
2. Further investigate the causal alchemy which characterises research into the implications as a result of the interaction among actors (here operationalised through the use of logics and associated drivers) and structures (physical infrastructure, commercial mechanisms, political policies, & social norms) under increasingly uncertain circumstances.
3. Compare and contrast the ability of various social science based approaches (governance analytical framework, actor agency model, complex systems analysis) to produce causal and descriptive inference when it comes to the sources as well as observed implications of strategic choice in Europe's energy evolving markets.

Methods

1. The paper will build a substantive historically accurate yet widely sourced evidence chain, which will trace well documented modifications to the hydrocarbon resource base, physical infrastructure, commercial mechanisms, contractual forms, and the particulars of consumer behaviour relevant to the European case over the indicated time span of approximately 70 years.
2. Since the paper seeks to provide additional insight into the causal relationships as well as the descriptive depth and scope this paper adopts a hypothesis generating case study method to advance its stated objectives.

Results

The paper expects the following results:

1. The changing concept of energy within the European context is driven by a set of particular logics (energy as a social good, as an economic commodity & a securitised good) which themselves are composed of various drivers (stability, profit & expediency).
2. While drivers are all present within all the logics associated with a particular historical period, emphasis shifts from one driver to another depending upon how actors fashion responses to changes within the structural context.
3. Shifts in emphasis are not path dependent, and thus may produce implications which have far reaching and unseen effects beyond initial intentions.
4. Such knock-ons may force paradigmatic changes not only in energy sector structures, but within the logics which actors use to conceptualise energy moving forward.
5. Results derived from the application of various social scientific approaches may provide increased understanding of the processes in question when compared and contrasted side by side within this particular policy context.

Conclusions

1. Particular logics were useful in framing the evolving concept of and structures associated with energy within the European context.
2. However, logics alone do not account for paradigmatic changes neither in actor agency nor modifications to the commercial, physical, political or social structures themselves.
3. That having been said, the relationship among actor agency and structures still remains underdetermined and warrants closer investigation from wider substantive and theoretical perspectives.

China's 2018 Policy Paper on the European Union – Implications for Latvia

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Objectives

For the first time, China has included its cooperation with CEE Countries in its Policy Paper on the EU. The cooperation is mentioned in Part One, under the heading “The Guiding Principles of China-EU Relations”, signalling that China views its cooperation with the CEE as an integral part of its dialogue with the EU, regardless of the uneasiness expressed by Brussels over the “16+1” cooperation platform. As Latvia is a member of the “16+1” cooperation platform, this presentation sets to explore the implications of the Paper for Latvia.

Methods

Discourse analysis. Text analysis. Full text of China's Policy Paper on the European Union.

Results

The inclusion of China-CEE cooperation in China's 2018 Policy Paper demonstrates that China is not backing out of its “16+1” cooperation platform and is ready to counter the criticisms coming from Brussels on acting as a decisive force within the EU.

Interestingly, the statement joins together the cooperation with the EU member states and “other European states”, meaning that China refuses to see the external border of the EU as a factor in its multilateral formats.

Conclusions

China's stress on CEE cooperation is both good and bad news at the same time. On one hand, this statement demonstrates China's commitment to pursue further cooperation with the region. This means China will continue to devote resources that can be used to the benefit of the increase of exchanges in transport, logistics, tourism. On the other hand, being seen as a member of a specific group of countries that are associated with a lower GDP per capita, some form of “socialist past”, and not a lot of clout, contributes to the “centre vs periphery” narrative, ultimately playing in the hands of the European political forces that advocate the acceptance of a multi-speed Europe.

Hedging as Foreign Policy Strategy in Arab Spring: Comparing Cases of Qatar and Oman

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Objectives

This paper seeks to compare hedging strategies employed by Qatar and Oman in the Arab Spring (2010–2017). Drawing on the existing literature on hedging and realist theoretical underpinnings, this research introduces distinction between revisionist and “Status Quo” hedging and analyses them in the context of the regional politics of the Persian Gulf regional security complex which is embedded in the wider international system of the MENA region. It aims to evaluate whether Qatar’s (which is termed revisionist) or Oman’s (which is termed “Status Quo”) approach to hedging has been more successful when managing the relations between the two great powers of the Persian Gulf system – Iran and Saudi Arabia. The paper seeks to test the hypothesis: Oman’s hedging strategy during the Arab spring has been more successful than Qatar’s within the Persian Gulf regional security complex.

Methods

The paper mostly focuses on secondary source (research papers, think-tank publications, media articles) research, however primary sources – speeches of the leaders of the states (Qatar and Oman) are also analysed.

Results

Research shows, that contrary to Oman, Qatar made significant mistakes regarding its hedging in both Syria and Yemen (two case studies used to illustrate Qatar’s and Oman’s approach to hedging in the Arab spring), which backfired in terms of its ability to maneuver between the two great powers of the Persian Gulf regional security complex and not force to choose sides.

Conclusions

The research concludes that Oman’s “Status Quo” hedging has been more successful, than Qatar’s revisionist one. The hypothesis that Oman’s hedging strategy during the Arab Spring has been more successful than Qatar’s within the Persian Gulf regional security complex proves.

Double Standards and Human Rights in Latvian Foreign Policy: Example of Relations between Latvia and Central Asian Countries

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Objectives

The main objective of the research is to explore how double standards manifest themselves within the foreign policy of Latvia as a prominent feature of the relations between Latvia and the Central Asian countries. Alongside the historical development of the International Relations, human rights have gradually become one of the main indicators of politically and socially developed society. Inevitably, human rights as democratic value have become remarkable motive of Latvia's bilateral and multilateral relations with its partners, which at the same time distinguishes Latvia as a full – fledged member of the international community. However, despite the growing heat around the human rights violations in the Central Asian countries, Latvia insists on maintaining exclusive relations and economic partnership with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan – a decision which questions actual hierarchy of political choices and values within foreign policy of Latvia.

Methods

The research is based upon the analysis of the diffusion and adaption of norms within the foreign policy of Latvia, while estimating the leading criteria and hierarchy of the political interests in terms of relations with its partners in the Central Asian region. Therefore, the research has been conducted within the theoretical framework of the social constructivism, mainly focusing on scientific literature dedicated to the diffusion and adaption of norms as well as scientific literature dedicated to the socialization of the countries and semi-structured expert interviews.

Results

The research work is still in the process and will be continued in the near future, therefore the research results are still vague. Preliminary results confirm the initial hypothesis of the research.

Conclusions

The study on how the diffusion of norms affects the foreign policy of Latvia and the main causes of the double standards provides the opportunity to re-evaluate Latvia's foreign policy choices and exclusive partnership with the Central Asian countries.

Consolidation of the EU's Soft-Power Vision during the Refugee Crisis: Case of EU – Turkey Refugee Deal

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Objectives

This paper bases on the research related to the effect of EU – Turkey refugee deal, signed in 2016, for consolidation of EU's soft power vision in the contemporary period. Recent analyses clarify that the refugee crisis in the post-2011 had an impact in Europe for the emergence of eurosceptic populist political ideologies that question the open border policy of the EU for the refugees mainly coming from Syria and alternatively aimed for creating an alternative way for their own countries. Important cases in this regard were the emergence of PEGIDA in some Western European countries, Alternative for Germany (AFD) and Chemnitz Protests in 2018 in Germany. Indeed, these internal conflicts have affected the EU for diminishing the soft-power image that had aimed gradually turning into a super power throughout time. In this regard, the EU – Turkey refugee deal provided an important ground for rescuing from the negative effect of the refugee crisis and alternatively managing the crisis with a planned refugee settlement.

Methods

As this is clear in the contemporary situation of the EU, there is a lack of analysis of what is the effect of the EU – Turkey refugee deal for consolidating the soft-power vision of the EU in the post-2016? So, this paper aims to show the effect of EU – Turkey refugee deal for consolidation of EU's soft power vision. Based on the qualitative data collection, the case of EU – Turkey refugee deal in 2016 and its impact of the EU's soft power image will be analyzed.

Results

The case study will offer major evidences of the impact of EU – Turkey refugee deal for EU's managing refugee crisis and securing its soft-power vision in the post-2016.

Concept of Development in Foreign Strategy of the People's Republic of China: From Strategy to Tactics in Global Governance Narrative

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Objectives

The objective of article is to deconstruct narrative of development in perception of the PRC foreign policy agents – how development of global order and international system should sustain, and what is the role of the PRC in particular sustainability. Time frame of research is 10 year period – from 2004 (announcement of “Peaceful Development” concept as a proposition to international society by Hu Jintao, previous president of the PRC) to 2014 (formulation of “China Dream” and “China’s Global Strategy” under administration of Xi Jinping, acting president of the PRC).

Methods

In the centre of analysis are writings of Chinese interprets of foreign policy or, as they frame themselves – “constructivists” – writings by Li Junru, Jiang Xiyan, Shi Yinghong, Liu Yongtao, Yang Jiemian – on China’s understanding of development in/and together with international system, and formulation of “development” in foreign policy documentation. Research method: discourse analysis.

Results

1. Basic concepts of understanding of the PRC on development is included in two strategical visions – “peaceful development road” and “harmonic world”. From constructivism perspective “development notion” under Hu Jintao is delivered through commissive and representative speech acts.
2. “China’s Dream” under Xi Jinping is shifting toward tactical approach – linking together post-modernism of peaceful development road with challenges of “realpolitik” of 21st century. Within the narrative of foreign policy and global governance terms of realism and neo-realism is widely used. Development notion under Xi Jinping is delivered through directive and declarative speech acts.

Conclusions

It is possible conclude that Xi Jinping’s narrative “fills” strategical framework of Hu Jintao with notions of geopolitical interests and “realpolitik”, or tactics how to keep the PRC on peaceful development road (drawing red lines of more directive and declarative type of politics).

Diplomatic Signalling in Foreign Policy of Small States

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Objectives

Objective of the study is to analyse the concept of diplomatic signalling in the context of foreign policy of small states in international relations literature.

Methods

Literature review covering literature on diplomatic communication, diplomatic signalling and foreign policy of small and medium states.

Results

Majority of literature on diplomatic signalling builds on the examples of great powers, but limited attention is given to middle powers and small states. In relation to small states, main challenge covered in literature of diplomatic signalling, is related to effectiveness of diplomatic signals. Diplomatic signalling is directly linked to power resources of the state, thus assuming that diplomatic signals of great powers are more effective than signals of small states. However, newer studies find that effectiveness of diplomatic signals can result from the type of signal, the channel used to communicate it and actions used to support it, thus decreasing reliance of power resources.

Conclusions

Although majority of literature on diplomatic studies focuses on the diplomatic signalling of great powers, later studies have given more attention not only to the source of signal, but the type of signal, the channel of communication and supportive actions taken, that can result in more effective signals also in the case of small states.

Latvia's Digital Diplomacy – Approaches and Policies

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Objectives

Changing the habits of information consumption and the presence of digital communication in society necessitates also the national diplomatic services to adapt to the new challenges and use of digital communication channels. The aim of the study is to find out the development of the implementation of digital diplomacy tools in the diplomatic service of Latvia and the influence of institutional factors in the mentioned processes.

Methods

Study of publicly available documents regulating the communications process – the Public Reports of the MFA – were carried out and direct interviews with the management of the MFA Communication Directorate were executed.

The analysis of reports focuses at the MFA communication with the public and use of social networks, foreign policy priorities in the report year and planned ahead. Direct interviews focused on general issues regulating digital communication, execution of communication strategy and institutional issues.

Results

1. Digital diplomacy is regulated by the general procedures of public administration as well as the MFA Communication Strategy, which establishes the general principles of communication and relationship building with stakeholders.
2. MFA is aware of the importance of digital diplomacy and the need to develop this direction, but more exigent activity is limited because of other diplomatic service priorities.
3. Human resources for public communication activities are limited and in line with the institutions staff policy and allocated state budget resources.

Conclusions

The study confirms the MFA understanding of the need to develop the presence of elements of digital diplomacy in pursuit of foreign policy goals. However, the limited institutional capacity and the available financial and human resources limit the implementation of these processes in a short time period, thus possibly losing the competition to the countries with similar historical, political and socio-economic level of development in the battlefield of public diplomacy.

Technocratic Government – EU Experience and Perspectives in Latvia

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Objectives

During the formation and approval of the new government, there are more and more questions in society, which persons and, most importantly, why are chosen for particular positions of Ministers.

Whether the membership in a political party, that has the opportunity to nominate a candidate for a position of Minister, allows a person to become a minister, without any qualification criteria. It would be more appropriate, to leave the recruitment in hand of relevant industry professionals – they are capable chose the most suitable candidates for the particular positions of Ministers.

The aim of the research is to find out – whether such a solution is possible and useful in a democratic society, especially in Latvia.

Methods

In the theory of democratic states management, as well as in practice, cases of government formed by professionals have been and are being called a technocratic government. The study will look at government-building practices in EU member states (1935–2013), by identifying examples of technocracy. As well as the history of government building in Latvia (1990–2019) and signs of technocracy.

Results

Analyzing the situation in Latvia and comparing it with the experience of other EU countries, it is necessary to distinguish between several forms of technocracy: “full technocratic government” – prime minister and the majority of ministers are technocrats – identifying in very few cases; “technocrat-led government” – with partisan/ technocrat members; “party-led government” with partisan/technocrat members.

Conclusions

In all EU member states there are relatively few cases of technocratic governments.

There are several possible causes for this:

- 1) attraction of non-political representatives raises the question of responsibility – who will be responsible for the performance of such ministers;
- 2) practice shows that technocratic governments are increasing the gap between society and political elite and public distrust of politicians, undermining the foundations of a democratic state.

Theories of Political Science as Adaptable Tool for Simulation-Based Education in Secondary School

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Objectives

Objective of particular article: outline political science theories which can be used as a simulation based educational tool in secondary school environment.

Materials

1. Fundamental political science theories.
2. Secondary school strategical guidelines considering educational content and simulation based education modus operandi.

Methods

Comparative interdisciplinary research.

Results

Fundamental political science theories (fields of division) that are adaptable for school environment:

- Comparative politics, including area studies,
- International relations,
- Political philosophy or political theory,
- Public administration,
- Public law, and examples of their adaption.

Conclusions

There is unlimited potential to merge together fundamental political science theories and fields with simulation based education necessity in secondary school environment. Such multidisciplinary approach allows to bridge the gap between secondary school and higher education contents, linking together needs of competence increase and role of interdisciplinary approach.

Russian Interference in Elections in European Countries (2014–2018): Motives and Tools

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Objectives

The objective of this research is to analyze the motives behind Russia's action and tools Russia used to interfere in elections in the European countries from 2014 to 2018. The conceptual objective is to distinguish types of electoral interventions.

Methods

Main research method – qualitative research with focus on specific case studies and their contextualization and broader generalizations.

The primary source of information are reports and analytical papers related to tools and methods of interference published by the government and expert bodies of the European states, experiencing Russia's meddling in their elections. Furthermore, speeches and interviews of senior Russian officials as well as Russian Legal and Governmental Documents, such as foreign policy conception and military doctrine will be analyzed to understand motives behind Russia's actions.

Results

Russia interfered in elections in the European countries. Domestic and international audiences were primary targets. Russia used various tools and methods. Cyberattacks and social engineering in form of fake news, biased social media accounts and pages were used in particular to interfere in elections in the European states. The interference was apparently connected to Russian official authorities and governing bodies, including military and political elite.

Conclusions

Russia interfered in elections in the European countries to legitimize its regime domestically and increase its comparative standing internationally. Russia used a wide range of tools and methods. Russia's interference varied in methods and scope. Hence, variety of electoral interference types can be identified. The conceptualization of previous experience provides tools for the future scenarios in the electoral context.

Ideas for the Baltic States' Advanced Level of Cooperation in the Second Half of the 1990s: Why Didn't They Work?

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Objectives

In the mid-1990s, a number of new ideas emerged on the possible cooperation of the three Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania).

The aim of this article is to analyze the ideas of the Baltic Union and the Baltic Military Union in the period long before their joining of the European Union and the NATO and to identify the reasons why these projects were not implemented.

Methods

As research methods will be used the ideas and their criticism expressed by the Baltic politicians and researchers, and these arguments will be analyzed on the basis of certain criteria for defining international organizations such as the European Union and the NATO.

Results

The results show that historian Edgars Dunsdorfs proposed a target for much higher level of cooperation – to establish a political union of the Baltic States. In such case the proposed project would mean the high level of Baltic integration, not just some level of cooperation. Even the European Union, although it calls for a political union as a future goal, has not been able to establish “ever closer union” so far.

Latvian authors Kārlis Krēslīšs and Māris Ruks were favoring the immense formation of the Baltic Military Alliance by arguing that prospects of NATO membership for the Baltic states are still rather distant future. Estonian analyst Mare Haab puts completely opposite arguments: The creation of a Baltic states Military Alliance would be in contradiction with their main goal – membership in NATO – because NATO does not admit new members as blocks.

Conclusions

Projects on the Baltic Union and the Baltic Military Alliance helped to promote the ideas for the further development of cooperation among the Baltic states, but have not been implemented because they were too much ambitious for that period and therefore, not so realistic.

Estimating the Link between the Anticoagulant Drug Basket Prices with GDP in Eurozone Countries

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Objectives

According to the Eurostat cardiovascular diseases so far are the most important death cause in Europe. Estimated yearly health care costs excluding productivity losses and informal care are 111 billion EUR, which is approx. 8% of all health expenditures in EU. Drugs used in treatment account for 25% i.e. 25 billion EUR; they are various: antinflammatory, anticoagulant etc. Therefore, our team wanted to investigate the link existence between the received drug price of anticoagulant drug basket and GDP.

Methods

Various drugs are available for resale, their prices, producers and healing effect vary widely. Therefore, we were forced to choose a drug class that will be present in all Eurozone countries, not affected by the demand and that the price will be subjective only to pharma producers. This class are anticoagulant drugs (Apixaban, Coumandin). Their price varies 0.2–1.50 EUR per pill; small share of the budget suggests relative price inelasticity, they are available overall in Eurozone. To test the link existence we have plotted the price of anticoagulant drug basket against GDP; afterwards hypothesis testing was assed to evaluate the obtained means, confidence intervals have been calculated.

Results

For countries having GDP < 200 bln EUR with a 95% confidence average price per pill is [0.925; 1.029] EUR, while for GDP > 200 bln EUR average pill price is [0.678; 0.894] EUR. Hypothesis testing showed that the mean value is below 1 EUR for the first group, however mean of 0.8 EUR has been confirmed for the second group.

Conclusions

All countries of the Eurozone fall into two groups: having GDP greater or less 200 bln EUR with specific average anticoagulant prices. Therefore, we conclude the link exists. Increased average price is not associated with the producing plant location: exclusions are Latvia and Slovenia where prices are those consistent with the group GDP < 200 bln EUR which is a basis for a further research.

EU's Assistance Programmes in Support to Sustainable Economic Growth in Central Asia

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Objectives

The aim of a paper is provide an analysis EU's regional assistance programmes for Central Asia aimed at facilitating region's sustainable economic growth. Sustainable and inclusive growth remain a challenge for most of Central Asian countries.

Methods

For this research the author used quantitative research method by applying the hypothesis testing approach. EU's assistance programmes for Central Asia are implemented mostly through the Development and Cooperation Instrument. A big proportion of regional allocations are channeled through a blending mechanism, the Investment Facility for Central Asia by fusing EU's development assistance with loans from European financial institutions.

Results

There are ongoing EU's internal discussions regarding a new Multi-Annual Financial framework. Commission's current budget proposal suggests simplifying the funding architecture for the EU's external actions by creating a new financing instrument in support for external relations. The new Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument would integrate existing financial instruments and would have an overarching geographical scope. Simultaneously, the EU is working on a revised strategy for Central Asia to be finalised by December 2019. In June 2007, the European Union adopted its strategy for Central Asia by enhancing its partnership with Central Asian countries and facilitating regional cooperation in the region. To this end the EU should send an encouraging message to all countries in the region by inviting them to work closer in facilitating political contacts and creating economic and trade links in the region and with neighbouring countries. It provides political guidance for programming new assistance programmes for Central Asia, thus complementing EU's political messaging by practical support.

Conclusions

Against this background, the paper provides recommendations for a next programming period for EU's assistance to Central Asia to continue regional support programmes aimed at sustainable economic growth, putting an emphasis on blending mechanisms.

Impact of Brand Image on Recruitment Companies in B2B Segment

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Objectives

The brand has a great impact on business due to the fact that consumers and organizations are understanding the importance of the brand and the opportunities it can provide. In addition, there is a situation where a strong brand provides greater opportunities for increasing market share, as it creates a competitive advantage over competitors and provide as a guarantee for the quality of the product/ service, resulting in the consumer being able to choose the best known and safer possible alternative. The purpose of this research is to evaluate the impact of brand image in business – business segment in recruitment sector in Latvia.

Methods

1. Monographic method (detailed study of object, researching and summarizing information from diverse literature).
2. Analysis of secondary data. This method will be used to analyze the recruitment sector in Latvia.
3. Expert interviews with both industry representatives and a professors, were conducted in order to evaluate the impact of brand image in recruitment sector.

Results

Both in the B2B segment, as in the B2C segment, there is a significant human factor where purchasing decisions are made not only for rational reasons, but also for emotional impulses, the B2B segment is increasingly focusing on people working in organizations as individuals, not just as official sales representatives.

There is no single determining factor in the recruitment sector, that influences the choice of decision for a particular brand, but it is a set of all factors where the quality of service, professional performance, recommendations and feedback, as well as attitude, are the most important.

Conclusions

The recruitment market in Latvia is very dense and saturated, but without certain information on the specificity of distribution and specialization, which causes problems to perform qualitative analysis of this sector, as well as to provide objectively grounded conclusions and suggestions.

Companies in the recruitment sector in Latvia need to put emphasis on all possible influencing factors, as each of them is very important and can have a positive or negative impact on the client's decision on the selection of the recruitment service provider.

In order to maintain and increase their market shares, companies operating in the B2B segment would need both to provide the highest quality of service and focus on mutual relationship and communication with the customer, which would lead to greater customer loyalty and attraction to the company and its brand.

Opportunities for Business Development in Migration Conditions in Europe, Latvia

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Objectives

The aim of the thesis: to explore migrants' business development opportunities in the context of integration in Europe, Latvia.

Methods

The author uses a mixed method research strategy. Obtaining quantitative data. Cross-sectional study. Comparative study. Data collected in the sample. Questionnaires, interviews. Methods of qualitative research: focus group discussions, document analysis.

Europe is competing with other economies to attract employees with the skills they need. By 2025, it is expected that the number of jobs requiring a highly qualified workforce will increase by 23%. Europe also faces a number of long-term economic and demographic challenges. Its society is ageing, but the economy is increasingly dependent on jobs requiring high qualifications. Moreover, without migration, the working age population in the EU will decline by 17.5 million over the next decade. Migration will become an increasingly important contributor to the sustainability of our social system and the sustainability of the EU economy.

The rise of migration to Europe, the EU makes it necessary to react at several levels. Firstly, they are policies for managing adequate and inappropriate immigration, and secondly, they are EU-wide rules on asylum. The recent migration crisis has also led to the need for additional measures and reforms.

In order for Europe not to lose its attractiveness as a destination for talent and skills, it needs to develop strategies to maximize the opportunities for legal migration through coherent and effective rules, based on dialogue with the business community and social partners. The Union should also support Member States' efforts to develop an active integration policy that promotes social cohesion and economic dynamism.

Results

Member States should make full use of the regulatory flexibility provisions that benefit small and medium-sized enterprises when implementing EU legislation.

Therefore, the priorities set by the current EU regulatory framework are:

- 1) promoting the business environment and job creation, especially for SMEs, by facilitating access to finance and investment; ensuring a more sustainable financial regulation;
- 2) investing and preparing for the future of the economy by addressing the delayed investment needs in transport, energy and telecommunications infrastructure, as well as in energy efficiency, research, education and innovation; using and developing financial instruments such as European Investment Bank financial instruments, especially for long-term projects; providing the right regulatory framework for long-term investment.

Conclusions

In finally will be to find answers to questions:

1. Who determines and promotes human migration?
2. Do the relocation and integration programs affect the business environment in Europe and Latvia?
3. Is the capacity of migrants to start a business in the context of integration sufficient?
4. Do they have the necessary resources and support for entrepreneurship?
5. What is the admitting country's and / or sending state's support for starting a business in the context of migration?

Public-Private Partnership Efficiency Factors in Healthcare: Qualitative Content Analysis from Research Databases

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Keywords: healthcare, efficiency, public-private partnership, factors.

Objectives

PPP is the contract between public institution and private party whereby a private party takes significant financial, technical and operating risk for performing a public-sector function to specific standards, in which the parties involved are adequately considered and compensated (World Bank Group, 2018). Nowadays PPP in healthcare is a common business model worldwide, however an answer is needed to the question: what are the main factors defining the efficiency of PPP in healthcare?

The aim of the research is to conduct systematic search of literature through major research databases available for RSU students according to the search criteria set.

Methods

The research includes two methodological guidelines:

- 1) qualitative systematic review of the articles for collecting the data that meet the criteria set;
- 2) a qualitative content analysis to synthesize the findings and interpret the results of the research.

Results

Authors organised the data through open coding and category creation following the qualitative content analysis and determine the main factors influencing the efficiency of PPP in healthcare. The given research synthesized the empirical evidence of PPPs, which defines the factors of PPP efficiency in healthcare sector. The results revealed various aspects of PPP efficiency, including main characteristics, objectives, and benefits in partnerships.

Conclusions

The outcomes of the study anticipate issues when public and private partner jointly participate in healthcare sector. Further research is proposed to support consistent approaches to partnership at healthcare sector, given various challenges in achieving a mutual goal of the partnership.

European Political and Economic Guidance: Effect for Latvia

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Objectives

Economic and political guidance are two most important sides of the European integration governance. The economic guidance has turned during last 60 years into socio-economic cooperation among the member states; the latest instrument in this guidance has been a general coordination through the European Semester and budgeting, as well as through controlling micro-economic imbalances and completing EU's economic and monetary union. The EU's political guidance has been really visible and active only since 2014 with a strong dissatisfaction with some states, e.g. leading, in part, to Brexit. For Latvian development both "surveillance instruments" appeared to dominate in the process of newly forming national political economy directions providing for elaborating a new narrative in the country.

Methods

A cross-boundary approach is a basic research methodology, providing insights into an interdisciplinary subject of European and Latvian political economy. Another method concerns applied research, which aims at finding specific correlations among the EU political and economic guidance with that of Latvia. Generally, a deductive method tests new and specific hypotheses of a new Latvian political economy research fields with a corresponding new Latvian narrative.

Results

The research shows that the European political and economic guidance is slowly turning into a new direction in Latvia including a specific political economy analysis within the state's socio-development agendas. Through the history, the EU's economic and political guidance has shown definite positive outcomes for progressive development in the Baltic States and in Latvia. This "cooperative trend" shall be followed in Latvian development programming through closer liaison among economic and political units in national governance, specifically in the creation of an independent think-tank advising various state authorities and government structures. The EU Semester's autumn package for 2019 has shown that all three Baltic States' budgetary plans are "compliant" with the EU growth strategies and guidance. However, one has to remember: neither policy alone nor national governance's tools can resolve the Latvian problems: it has to be an inherent combination of both!

Conclusions

Before the crisis, i.e. about a decade ago, the EU's economic and budgetary policy guidance and planning took have been resolved basically at the national level, with only a limited coordinated among the EU institutions and the member states' authorities. A certain "divide" is still present in the EU "family" of states: there are 19 common currency states and the rest using own currencies; however, sooner or later they will join the euro-zone (except Denmark and Sweden). The 19 member states in the euro-zone area (including three Baltic States) with about 340 million inhabitants have had a collective strategy as common currency's effect on the EU economy is guided by a special Euro-zone committee. Only harmonious growth among the EU states can guarantee both the Union's progress, the single currency's sustainability and closer ties between economic and political priorities.

Availability of Human Resources in Latvia for Needs of Global Business Service Centers and Related Issues

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Objectives

The main objective of the master's thesis is to identify the main problems faced by global business service centers located in Latvia when recruiting the needed talents with the right skills. It is important to understand what are the main challenges that recruiters face to recruit the professionals that they need for serving the current business support activities and also in cases when such companies are willing to expand their range of business functions that they serve from Latvia.

Methods

The quality research method has been used in order to carry out this research. Four interviews have been organized with the leading business service centers located in Latvia – MSC Shared Service Center, Tieto, Circle K Business Center, Cabot Latvia. These companies have been chosen by trying to cover all the business support functions that such companies service from Latvia in order to identify all the issues related to lack of certain competences in each field. Besides also the quantity research method has been used by publishing a survey in Facebook with the goal to analyze people's understanding and emotional posture towards career development in global service centers. There are 219 respondents, who have filled out the survey and they are mainly representatives of millennials generation, which is the main target audience for such companies from the perspective of employees.

Results

The research has led to certain conclusions revealing that there are mainly low and middle complicity level business support functions served from business service centers located in Latvia. This situation allows to recruit also talents with higher education in fields that are not directly connected with responsibilities in the specific position. Potential employee needs to have an overall understanding about the position, English language skills, motivation, ability to fit in the team and the right mindset to quickly learn new computer programs in order to do the job. The situation gets worse when companies need to recruit IT talents or people in customer service centers with specific language skills (French, Czech, Polish, Scandinavian languages). Besides it is more challenging to find high level talents, who could potentially perform high level business support functions such as business analytics, finance control, planning etc.

Conclusions

1. There are more than 50 Global Business Service Centers (hereafter “GBSC”) dislocated in Latvia providing jobs to more than 8000 people.
2. There is a significant shortage of IT talents in Latvia labor market. Specific case in one of the leading GBSC located in Riga has shown that the lack of IT talents directly impacts the development plans and forces the company to expand its business support functions in other country.
3. GBSC located in Latvia mainly provide the following business support functions – IT, finance, customer care, procurement, logistics, human resources and in quite low complexity level (meaning that there is less high-level positions and more junior level specialists).
4. Almost 50% of GBSCs located in Latvia have been originated from Scandinavia (mostly Swedish, Norwegian companies).
5. Due to the fact that many GBSCs located in Latvia have been originating from Scandinavian countries and many of those companies are providing customer care support, there is a substantial need for talents with Scandinavian language skills.
6. There is a shortage of Scandinavian language speakers in Latvia, therefore GBSCs are organizing internal trainings to teach the language for their employees, which is an expensive way to get the right talents.

7. There are several GBSCs located in Latvia that are permanently looking for talents with Scandinavian language skills – EVRY, Visma Labs, Circke K Business Center, Atea Global Services, Cabonline, DnB Bank ASA, Runway.
8. There is a shortage of high-level specialists in finance with extensive previous experience that could be measured in many years (3–5), therefore it might be also challenging to recruit high level specialists with already proven job experience in the sector.
9. The average age of people working in GBSCs located in Latvia is 28–30 years.
10. Employees tend to stay for 2–3 years in one GBSC, afterwards they are seeking for new opportunities outside of the company.
11. There is a lack of understanding in Latvia about the GBSC as a sector which represents a substantial part of employers.
12. Poland is the most popular GBSCs location in Central and Eastern Europe.
13. Latvia could be deemed as an emerging market for locating a GBSC.
14. The newcomers in Latvia's GBSC sector in 2018 were Cognizant (employing more than 300 IT professionals) and CCC, whose biggest clients is Facebook.
15. The GBSC sector grows about 23% in amount of people employed in 2018 compared with 2017 – results in Latvia.
16. GBSC as a sector includes shared service centers, business process outsourcing companies and information technology outsourcing companies. GBSC are companies that export at least 50% of their services.

Impact of Viral Marketing on Latvian Generation Z Decision Making

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Keywords: viral marketing, generation Z, decision making, Latvia.

Objectives

Research the impact of viral marketing on Latvian generation Z decision making and develop recommendations for more effective ways to reach generation Z Audience.

Methods

Quantitative research methods: structured questionnaires.

Qualitative research methods: interviews.

Results

Viral marketing affects Latvian generation Z decision making. The impact of viral marketing may vary depending on juvenile age, monthly income, gender, shopping frequency and shopping habits.

Conclusions

1. Viral marketing affects Latvian generation Z decision making. The impact of viral marketing may vary depending on juvenile age, monthly income, gender, shopping frequency and shopping habits.
2. Viral marketing can be more important than price, if the difference between goods' price is not too big comparing to Latvian generation Z's monthly income.
3. Representatives of Latvian marketing companies lack an in-depth knowledge of Latvia's generation Z and its differences from previous generations. In their marketing activities, none of the companies separate generation Z from other generations.
4. Representatives of Latvian marketing companies lack an in-depth knowledge of viral marketing. They see viral marketing only as widespread video or photography to gauge how successful a marketing campaign has been. Representatives do not see viral marketing as a strategy in which consumers can disseminate the information they want.
5. In social network activities, Latvian generation Z engages more than other generations; therefore, they need interactive entertainment.
6. Viral marketing may have a smaller impact on Latvian generation Z decision making by selecting the goods of first necessity than by selecting the goods of choice.
7. The information available on social networks may influence the decision making of Latvian generation Z by their selection of goods or services. i.e.: 89.2% of respondents chose a hotel recommended on social networks, although it was € 200 more expensive than an e-mailed special offer from another hotel.

Green Interventions in Cities: Value Generation or Segregation?

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Objectives

This study aims at estimating relationships between property prices and different types of urban nature, and illustrates the applicability of the derived value transfer functions. While green interventions contribute to more resilient and sustainable urban environments and bring about multiple benefits to urban populations, some impacts are not well understood, in particular impacts in the social domain such as gentrification. If in a process of green urban renewal property prices and rents increase causing an influx of affluent people displacing poorer residents, potential of green gentrification needs to be considered. Thus a better understanding of how housing prices relate with different types of urban nature is useful.

Methods

This study takes a meta-analysis approach which is based on 36 primary hedonic pricing studies and estimates value transfer functions relating different nature types to property price developments in various urban settings. Besides, we apply the estimated functions to a set of natural interventions in three Dutch cities, and illustrate the obtained effects with maps.

Results

The results show that urban nature has a positive impact on housing prices in the areas surrounding it. This impacts depend on population density, distance to and the type of urban nature. For example, the presence of a park in the city of Amsterdam is estimated to have 2% higher prices of properties located directly at the park side compared with properties 100 m away, translating into the 8900 euro difference for average property prices.

Conclusions

Despite some limitations, the analysis showed that the presence of urban nature has a distinct positive impact on housing prices in the areas surrounding it. This insight is useful to monitor potential societal impacts that green interventions can create, tailor policy and help stakeholders understanding of the environmental, economic, and social impact that green urban interventions can bring.

Establishing of Marketing Strategy for Creative Quarter Green Villa Quarter

Kitija Dadzīte

Latvia

Objectives

The aim of the theses is develop a marketing strategy for the Creative Quarter of the Green Villa Quarter (Zaļās Villās kvartāls) by exploring the marketing strategy development guidelines and analyzing the creative and environmental activities of Creative Quarters.

Methods

Monographic method – Scientific literature as well as publications on the Internet and various other Internet resources in Latvian and English are analyzed. Various works by foreign authors on marketing strategy and research were used to obtain information.

The constructive method of calculation – compiling the financial indicators of the company and based on them calculating the marketing strategy implementation costs.

Multi-factor classification method – content analysis – to study the content of scientific information, documents and media content, to analyze the documents of the creative quarter.

Qualitative research methods – interviews with industry experts and organization representatives for in-depth information.

Results

The paper consists of marketing guidelines analyzes. Also in paper is analyzes of the business environment of creative quarters in Latvia, as well as the creative quarter Green Villa Quarter activity and existing marketing activities. A marketing strategy for the creative quarter Green Villa Quarter for year 2019 was created.

Conclusions

Number of Creative Quarters is growing in Latvia and they promote the development and accessibility of culture and the business environment. The Creative Quarters are able to attract the inhabitants of the city and its visitors. The main problem faced by the Green Villa Quarter is that the Quarter is currently unable to function properly as it is undergoing renovation. After renovation the Quarter has to work on marketing development to promote the recognition and popularity of the Quarter.

Capital Structure and Corporate Governance: Evidence from Eastern European Listed Companies

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Objectives

The goal of our paper is to investigate the relationship between corporate governance quality and capital structure of a firm.

Methods

The original sample includes cross-sectional data from 799 listed companies from Eastern-European countries in 2016. We use ordinary least squares regression method, the dependent variable is leverage, and the independent variable – our own developed corporate governance (CG) index.

Results

We developed 8 regression models. The models with book leverage as dependent variable have little explanatory power and CG index coefficient value is not significantly different from zero. According to F-test, we cannot reject the null hypothesis of model variables being jointly equal to zero. Regression models with market leverage as dependent variable have larger explanatory power. In all of them CG index value is significantly different from zero and the coefficients are negative. We reject H0 regarding all independent variables being jointly equal to zero.

Conclusions

Optimal capital structure theory and its effect on firm value was developed recently. One of its goals is to investigate leverage relation with CG. Other theories (agency, pecking order, static trade-off theory) are interrelated with this issue. Nevertheless, no theory conclusively reveals the evidence regarding the research problem. The results of recent studies reveal different conclusions: companies with poor level of governance are significantly more leveraged; managerial incentive compensation can discourage moving towards optimal level of debt; positive relationship between managerial ownership and capital structure; inconclusive relationship between capital structure and CG. We find that CG affects market leverage negatively in our sample. Thus, better CG gives lower debt level, which is somewhat contrary to existing findings.

There may be other, probably country and firm specific factors that influence relation between CG and capital structure. CG is important, but it is not the only solution for the problem of optimal level of debt and equity.

Challenges in Traditional Project Management and Their Potential Solutions

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Objectives

Traditional project management approach often doesn't allow companies to finish projects successfully. The Standish Group has been reporting annually on the success and failure of IT related projects and their reports show that 2/3 IT projects are not successful. Statistics show that ~ 50% of projects are challenged (i.e. they don't fulfill at least one of main criteria: budget, time estimate and offer fewer features than originally specified), ~ 20% – fail and ~ 30% are successful. The aim of the study is to analyze IT project failures and introduce solutions for successful project implementation.

Methods

Research is based on statistical data, literature and analysis of expert opinion.

Results

Main reasons for IT project failure are:

1. Taking too many projects simultaneously without available resources.
2. Constantly changing project priorities.
3. Constant interruptions for project team.
4. Project team conceal real project progress.
5. Budget and time estimation does not match project scope.
6. Market requires extremely flexible attitude to change.
7. Traditional project management cycle is too long which means that by the time companies get the result, they do not need it in the current situation.

Conclusions

Companies are starting to move away from traditional project approaches to iterative and incremental methods of project management. Benefits of adopting Agile are:

1. Ability to manage changing requirements and priorities during all project development.
2. High project visibility, tasks are planned in detailed way and progress is updated every day.
3. Increased team productivity, team members are focused on one project development.
4. Product delivery speed is higher and allows to better satisfy market needs.
5. Product delivery happens frequently, which allows companies use working solutions faster.

Influence of Management Managerial Style on Personnel Motivation

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Objectives

The topicality of the research is underpinned by the fact that motivation nowadays is one of the most crucial components of any organization functioning effectively and efficiently and it is closely connected with the managerial style characterized by a manager. There is a great number of vacancies at the State Environmental Service (hereinafter SES), which is caused by negative state administration image and low salaries, equally the mistrust and lack of colleagues' support in need to solve work problems.

Methods

The objective of the research is to find out the most crucial shortcomings in the correlation between the management managerial style and motivating factors and develop recommendations for the improvement of internal communication and cooperation at SES based on the adjustments of the SES organizational structure. In order to reach the aim of the Paper, the following scientific research methods have been applied – abstractedly logical, graphic, modelling, mono-graphic, quantitative research and observational methods. The quantitative research has been carried out with the help of a survey method, comprised of data set with 295 respondents from SES.

Results

The main conclusions of the Paper point to the existing problem at SES, which is the lack of communication at all managerial levels, especially with the director-general. Consecutively, there is mistrust among the colleagues and employees are not confident about the consequences of expressing their true opinion. This respectively leads to their choice of holding opinion to themselves and not solving problems. By analyzing the results of the quantitative research, it was concluded that SES employees evaluate the internal motivation higher than external motivating factors.

Conclusions

The gained results during the research confirm the correlation between the management style and motivation, which are based on the analysis of the existing research and completed quantitative research at the SES.

Can Development of Social Competencies Facilitate Employability of Vocational Education Graduates in Digital Age?

Anita Līce

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Objectives

There is a widespread opinion that social competencies are among the most important type of competencies for employability of graduates in changing labour markets. Vocational education has been traditionally concerned with providing graduates with technical knowledge, skills and competencies for specific occupations. Increasing transformation of skills demands for occupations, impacted by rapid technological progress and globalisation, raise the question on whether development of social competencies had been sufficiently addressed in vocational education, comparing to technical skills. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the opinion of employers on importance of social competencies in the labour market, as well as, how successfully these competencies can be developed in vocational education in Latvia, comparing to technical skills. The examples on the methods how social competencies are developed in vocational education institutions are provided as well.

Methods

Total 750 companies participated in this research. A list of social and technical competencies was rated using a four-point Likert scale. Employers rated the relative importance of competencies in the recruitment process and the performance of vocational education in developing them. Additionally, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with managers of 12 vocational education institutions to investigate education methods of developing certain competencies.

Results

The research results show that employers prioritise social competencies, including self-management, co-operation and communication skills, comparing to technical skills. Majority of social competencies are not as well developed in vocational education as technical skills.

Conclusions

The research results indicate towards insufficient attention to development of social competencies in vocational education curriculum in Latvia to ensure employability of graduates.

Autonomous Intelligent Agents (AI): Regulatory Concerns and Challenges

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Objectives

Current research on legal and regulatory governance of artificial intelligence (AI) systems focuses on whether existing legal systems can deal with the consequences of introducing AI systems.

Methods

Yeung, 2015, Koops & Leenes, 2014, Lippe, Katz & Jackson, 2015, Hildebrandt 2017. The paper includes comparative method, norm analysis and methods of socio-economic impact evaluation.

Results

The employment of an autonomous intelligent system is different from other human activities only in the way that the act occurs (and the way that the act conveys the intent of the human individual performing the action). Basically, all autonomous intelligent systems can be described as tools within the context of regulation. Complex and powerful tools have a greater potential for harm, including harm that is unintentional, i.e. harm caused by situations in which the person wielding the tool does not wish to cause harm, or even actively tries to prevent any harm from happening. Because of the inherent risk of using such tools, the concept of strict liability is widely applied in many legal systems (liability for damage caused by major source of danger, product liability).

Conclusions

It can be considered to have a registry of robots operating in a physical world, but not having a robot as a full scale legal personality which could 'take responsibility'.

National insurance fund for autonomous intelligent technologies can be considered with the primary function of coordinating, aggregating and storing statistics of negative events, which allows private insurance companies to step in, scale up and develop relevant and agile products.

Impact of Organisational Environment on Creative Abilities of Employees

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Objectives

Creativity is considered to be one of the main factors influencing the development of society. As creative generation of new ideas and opportunities is the basis for the development of innovative businesses, and as individual creativity helps entrepreneurs discover and exploit the opportunities providing them with an innovative advantage, creativity is developed in companies. Likewise, organisational environment has an impact on people's creativity. The objective of the research was to determine the importance of the impact of organisational environment on creative abilities of employees resulting in innovative behaviour thereof.

Methods

Analysis of scientific publications, statistical analysis and survey method.

Results

Organisational environment and organisational motivation to innovate have a significant influence on creative abilities of employees. Creativity can be trained, so management has a significant impact on the promotion of a creative climate through the provision and management of a working environment in which creative people can work. In a job climate aimed at creative thinking and innovation there is much greater potential to create innovative products since sharing knowledge affects creativity and innovative performance. Training of creativity stimulates both different and coherent thinking. As a wide range of knowledge and information improves creative abilities of employees, social relationships across networks also play a key role in promoting innovation.

Conclusions

In general, Latvian entrepreneurs and employees emphasize the importance of stimulating creativity in companies, but there is no unequivocal position as to the role of coordinating the creative process of employees. It was concluded that there is a correlation between ensuring a creative work environment and sharing creative ideas by employees. Entrepreneurs should particularly work on building a creative work environment since environment is one of the most important factors influencing a new idea, and in a climate facilitating creativity there is much greater potential to create innovative products.

Boundaries and Constraints Implementing Healthcare Innovations in Latvia

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Objectives

Current research was conducted with the aim to identify boundaries and constraints in the processes related to the implementation of healthcare innovations in Latvian public and private healthcare organizations. The main issue is achieving a better understanding of the Latvian healthcare innovation market features and its functioning principles.

The aim was:

- 1) to analyze the nature of the innovation implementation process;
- 2) to identify factors that rise boundaries and constraints in the processes related to the implementation of healthcare innovations in Latvian public and private healthcare organizations;
- 3) to identify perspective research directions and areas in the field of the implementation of healthcare innovations;
- 4) to propose recommendations for further research.

Methods

A series of semi-structured interviews with industry experts and healthcare practitioners (high level managers) were conducted to address the research aim. Received data was analyzed with qualitative content analyses methods using MAXQDA software as an analytical instrument.

Results

Industry experts and healthcare practitioners reported a number of factors, including lack of knowledge about new products and solutions, lack of financing, lack of motivation (etc.), that rise boundaries and constraints in the processes related to the implementation of healthcare innovations in Latvian public and private healthcare organizations. There are significant differences in the opinions of public and private industry experts and healthcare practitioners.

Conclusions

Findings of the research provide a guidance for identifying perspective research directions and areas in the field of the implementation of healthcare innovations, better understanding of the Latvian healthcare innovation market and propose recommendations for future research.

Roll of State in Market Economy: Experience of South Korea

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and Economics, Latvia*

Objectives

The aim of this research is by estimating the experience of economic development of South Korea after the Second World War try to determine the optimal roll of the state with its apparatus of political and economic power which it should play in the market economy processes.

Methods

Monografic method – study and analyses of the special literature and planning documents. Method of analyses of secondary data – summarizing of secondary data and comparable analyses of them.

Results

South Korea is a very interesting case in the modern world and an example showing what impressing economic results a state can achieve leaded by a wise dictator (Park Chung Hee, 1917–1979), who fulfilled “an administrativ democracy” and “state ruled capitalism”.

Conclusions

Summarizing this research about unprecedented rapid and successful economic growth South Korea we can make some following conclusions.

Transformation of Law in Times of Digital Economy

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and Regional Economics, Latvia*

Objectives

Technology brings revolution in the law. The law is constantly changing due to rapid changes in technology development. As a result, globalization of the business law is happening right now. More and more attention in the science of business law is drawn to the law of internet, law of artificial intelligence, law of intellectual property right in digital environment etc. Technology is also the cause of fast changes in law which affects also the local and international businesses. A lot of services are being substituted by technology thus guaranteeing greater efficiency and grows. That leads to transformation of application and interpretation of international business rules, but at the same time it facilitates international business.

The purpose of this research is to analyse doctrinal sources and case study to discover challenges in law arising from the use of technology in international business and design frameworks to approaches of law in digital economy.

Methods

In order to reach the aim of the research, the following scientific research methods have been applied – analytical, abstractedly logical, monographic and case-study method. Most of attention is devoted to controversial case studies in business law where technology interacts with rights of individuals.

Results

In the result the author has designed multiple frameworks on how to approach various issues concerning impact of the use of technology in international business law. The author analyses approach of adapting the existing laws, adapting interpretation of existing laws in the context on developing digital economy and creating new laws that address technology development in international business.

Conclusions

Finally, the author concludes that the future of internet and artificial intelligence regulation in international business law is inter-disciplinary in methodology.

Digitalisation in Regional Context: Case of E-Government Services in Latvia

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Keywords: social investment and innovation, regional cohesion, digital government services, digital literacy.

Objectives

This article examines problems of the digital trends in economies and societies from two perspectives: the extension of a digital economy to social dimensions, and the role of digital government services in regional cohesion perspectives in Latvia.

The contribution aims to offer insight into the concept of social investment and innovation as well as co-creation concept and the impact of digitalisation of public services on regional cohesion. The study observes these implications in relation to the need to expand and adapt the content and approach of the digital services implementation. The further digital development as a precondition for diminishing regional and wellbeing divide, facilitating administrative processes for people and entrepreneurs, as well as e-services availability in Latvia is discussed.

Methods

The methodological approach could serve as a tool for integrating a number of main goals related to the digitalisation trends in the EU, that require support of societies as well as the improvement of social welfare at the regional and national levels.

Results

The study observes these implications in relation to the need to expand and adapt the content and approach of the digital services implementation. The further digital development as a precondition for diminishing regional and wellbeing divide, facilitating administrative processes for people and entrepreneurs, as well as e-services availability in Latvia is discussed.

Conclusions

The article concluded that efficient decision-making related to social investment and innovation for improving social welfare at regional and national levels needs implementation of digitalised services in a wider scale as they inevitably become more important due to the increased digital competitiveness of countries.

Feasibility of Innovative Public Governance Client-Accordance Index in Business and Higher Education

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Objectives

The main goals of the submission of this research idea is to set for the experts' discussion the applicability and challenging aspects of the feasibility of the particular case-based policy client-accordance evaluation model in wider economic and public governance areas, particularly business and higher education. Overall goal is the further development of the policy client-accordance index (PCAX) model to measure the relevance of policy's planned results in relation to its clients intentions.

Methods

The research methods will include scientific literature analyses, content analyses, experts' interviews, and gap-analyses. The literature research and discussions would form the basis of creating the draft typology and structure of public policies, its respective services, client groups, and client-based approaches. Then the case study based client-accordance index methodology model shall be applied to assess the client-accordance level of policies that I will choose for feasibility study.

Results

The main expected outcome of the research will be adjusted feasibility methodology of client-accordance index particularly in areas of business and higher education. The results of this research will substantially contribute to the innovation management and its applicability in the sector of public governance. In particular it will contribute to the development of mutual social awareness between policy makers and their clients. Altogether, these are integral parts of the yet scientifically discussed process of co-production of public services.

Conclusions

The PCAX and its methodology will improve the client-oriented approach in public administration development planning and will also sustain the mutual understanding between policy makers and their clients. In a narrowed focus, the targeted market analyses of PCAX in relation to higher education will allow to assess a higher education institution's (HEI) accordance to the demand and needs this service from the viewpoint of HEI clients – mainly, students, potential students and employers.

Economic and Legal Issues of Climate Change: Business, Labour and Society

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Objectives

1. Effects of climate change: Which impacts does climate change have on society and the economy?
2. Existing adaptation strategies, measures and compensation programmes: Which adaptation strategies are in place so far? Which adaptation measures are being taken by international organisations, the EU, states, regions and/or municipalities regarding individual consequences, in particular to compensate people and business entities whose basic rights to life, health, work or property are affected by climate change?
3. Answers from the legal systems:
 - a) Are there legal bases to demand state or private action, prevent action or to obtain damages from the state or from industries contributing to climate change?
 - b) Do persons affected in their rights have standing before court, i.e. can the farmer, the owner of a house, or the patient suffering from a disease likely to have been caused by climate change, go to court and bring a law suit for failure to act, or an action against specific actions (such as the granting of licences), or an action for damages against the state (whichever level) or against private entities?
 - c) Should environmental protection organisations have standing before court, or what else should their powers be regarding climate change and adaptation?

Methods

Academic research based on statistical data and evaluation, legal and political documents, legal literature.

Results

Establish existing approaches and legal solutions, develop solutions *de lege ferenda*.

Conclusions

Broad framework (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, EU Treaties) and some legal instruments in place, but full implementation still required.

Making of Latvia's Research and Innovation Policy (RIS3) Monitoring System: Fieldnotes from the Office

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Objectives

To present the methodological framework and first results tailored for the analysis of the research landscape of each of the five Latvia's RIS3 specialization areas that is structured around critical preconditions of successful innovation process – research capacity, research excellence, multiple ways of collaboration and entrepreneurial discovery.

In Latvia taking into account the accumulated knowledge and research capacity, competitive advantages and innovation potential five RIS3 specialization areas have been defined embracing fields of information and communication technologies, smart energy, bio-economy, bio-medicine and smart materials.

Methods

Quantitative and qualitative data analysis about public research funding, research outputs (bibliometric data etc.) and, descriptive statistics based on retrieved data sets, comparative analysis with other RIS3 areas, benchmarking with regional, EU and global competitors, policy analysis of Latvian RIS3 in context with other EU countries and regions.

Results

Insight into the initial findings that reveal that RIS3 specialization areas differ in terms of thematic diversity and intensity of research performance or spectrum of stakeholders, as well we will reflect on the challenges and lessons learnt along the process so far.

Initially achieved results between 2014 and 2017 in Ministry of Education and Science and Ministry of Economics research funding instruments show success towards focusing main R&D activities towards these five specialization areas.

Conclusions

RIS3 monitoring system is forming as a tool for better informed policy planning that reaches beyond the common generic and sectorial approach for policy analysis and policy making in Latvia due to its focus on more in-depth understanding about the thematic, financial and institutional dynamics taking place in the national research and innovation ecosystem.

Preliminary results show a need towards even more detailed approach when R&D funding instruments are designed and they should take into account specific needs of the specialization area and its main institutions.

Evaluation of R&D Results in Latvian RIS3 Priority Area: Biomedicine, Biopharmacy, Medical Technologies and Biotechnology Between 2014–2017

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*Ministry of Education and Science,
Department of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Latvia*

Objectives

To evaluate absolute and relative performance of Smart specialization area – “Biomedicine, biopharmacy, medical technologies and biotechnology” (“Biomedicine”) during the first stage of RIS3 implementation (2014–2017).

Methods

Data mining the databases of MoES, Scopus and Web of Science, SciVal. Descriptive statistics based on retrieved data. Comparative analysis with other RIS3 areas, benchmarking with regional, EU, global competitors.

Results

The biomedicine specialization area upon inclusion into RIS3 has been characterized by high quality of scientific research, educational programmes with strong export potential and growing enrollment (in 2017 it had more than 17.8% of total students with share growing). The area initially had a relatively weak industrial base, except in the pharmaceutical sector. Infrastructure was concentrated in two state-wide distributed research centres. Implementation of RIS3 facilitates integration of infrastructure resources with ESFRI platforms BBMRI, INSTRUCT, OPENSREEN, EATRIS and MIRRIS and developing shared use models. Cross-cutting industry of digital health has rapidly progressed in the field, a strong start-up growth area.

Having ca 20% of Latvia's impact publications, the quality is higher with Field-Weighted-Citation-Index for medical sciences in Latvia reaching 3.0 compared to 1.3 for the broad EU-28 in 2017. Returns from H2020 programme 3.3 mill EUR is slightly below the proportionality, significantly better than for Lithuania, but lagging Estonia's achievements (9.1 mill). Biomedicine is exposed to fierce regional competition as both Estonia and Lithuania have very similar specialisation areas, and they have named the very important healthcare services as part of RIS3 ecosystem.

Conclusions

Healthcare services emerge as a growing market and therefore has to be explicitly named as activity area in the next RIS3 upgrade as an integral part of ecosystem. Digital health promotes the healthcare export directly and indirectly facilitating the access to traditional services in another country. Regional cooperation should be improved via building excellent partnerships and knowledge communities.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation Ecosystem in 22 Arab Countries: Status Quo, Impediments and Ways Forward

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Objectives

This research report attempts to gain a holistic understanding of the environment in which entrepreneurs and SMEs operate; the so-called entrepreneurial ecosystem in 22 Arab countries; to gather and collect information related to the needs analysis on promoting innovation culture with the focus on selected countries. It will then formulate guidelines for the acceleration strategy and priority training courses on entrepreneurship and digital skills amongst the young and not so young population to stimulate and enrich the culture of regional innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region.

Methods

The methodology proposed will follow secondary data collection and primary research. The process will be to observe, analyze, visualize the entrepreneurial ecosystem, including surrounding institutions, culture and actors. The above ecosystem is then 'mapped' to enable to see the gaps and constraints in the ecosystem, and to devise the most relevant measures to energize the ecosystem in Arab region.

Results

The availability of the new and affordable digital tools gives unprecedented opportunity to the young people to leapfrog the traditional hurdles and jump start their business in the comfort of their homes. They can tap into foreign markets in the ways which would be unimaginable in the past. Despite their small scale young entrepreneurs can use digital tools and engage into exports as a major activity of their business.

Conclusions

By researching the ecosystems of the Arab region it became evident that starting from the remote village in Djibouti to an advanced city in UEA every place has its own unique ecosystem with its richness and opportunities and of course with its challenges. In most of the cases it takes human ingenuity, a pioneers spirit and a long term vision to exploit the potential fully. It's equally about taking risks and connecting actors to quadruple helix – citizens, businesses, administration and academia.

Global Economic Inequality and Higher Education Imbalance: Role of Universities in India and Latvia

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Objectives

To understand the connect between economic development and higher. To find out systemic efforts in India and Latvia for educational reforms for economic equality and development.

To study the role of universities in enhancing economic development through educational innovation.

Methods

Methods involve economic analysis based on secondary data.

Assessment of material resources and human resources based on secondary data.

Theoretical inquiry and assessment of university roles.

Results

Comparison of universities in India and Latvia in enhancing economic growth through innovative approaches.

Learnings for Indian and Latvian universities in terms of developing material and human resources that would lead to economic development.

Conclusions

A strong connect established between economic development and higher education innovation. Theoretical advancement in the area.

Startup Funding Models' Impact on Startup Growth in Latvia

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Objectives

1. Analyze the essence of startups, their development process and growth indicators.
2. Analyze startup funding models.
3. Estimate Latvian startup funding models, based on research about funding models' organizations in the country.
4. Conduct interviews with Latvian startup experts to identify funding model that enhances startup growth the most in their opinion and growth influencing aspects.
5. Develop survey to identify most important startup actions that need to be supported and support types. As well to analyze 3F model, most often used model and startup marketing in Latvia.
6. Create rationale for the most growth-enhancing funding model in Latvia for startups functioning.

Methods

The study covers 109 sources, that aren't older than 5 years, including scientific books and periodical issues, internet resources and legislation acts. The study includes – monographic method – to analyze theory, synthesis method – to determinate regularities between theory and Latvian funding models' impact on startup growth. Qualitative and quantitative method – to acquire experts, nascent and experienced entrepreneurs' opinions about startup growth and funding models. As well constructive method of calculation.

Results

The results show that startup growth is influenced by the number of new and active clients, as well as income, whom increase is affected by funding models' support which provides growth indicators promoters: marketing, networking, competence, product or service improvement and scalability. Main activities for startup growth are marketing, networking, and prototype creation, but main support types are financial, networking and mentoring.

Conclusions

Accelerator is the most growth-enhancing funding model in Latvia. Because its support, both in terms of number of organizations and provided services most actively promotes startup growth indicators promoters by ensuring main activities and support types for startup growth. In the result promoting client attraction, retention and revenue generation in a relatively short period.

Cultural and Creative Industries: Driving Force of Innovation and Entrepreneurship in European Union

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Cultural and creative industries (CCIs) in many European regions are considered as an important driver of socio-economic development and innovation as well as one of the major sources of innovative ideas and talent. The promotion of CCIs can effectively increase regional competitiveness and job creation capacity as underlined in strategic policy documents of many European regions, such as Smart Specialization Strategies (RIS3), National Development Plans and others. However, despite a growing awareness of the social and economic value of the CCIs, their encounter various difficulties in the EU, such as accessing financing and resources to enhance their competitiveness on the global market, building effective partnerships and extending their activity to other countries.

Thereof, the aim of the paper is to provide an overview of CCIs trends (enterprises, employment and others) as well as common prospects and challenges faced by eight EU regions that represent such countries as Italy, Romania, Hungary, Latvia, Spain, Slovenia and Portugal. The research work is based on the results of the project “Policies for Cultural CREative Industries: the HUB for Innovative Regional Development” (CRE:HUB), implemented under the EU Interreg Europe programme.

It represents a comparative analysis elaborated based on the review of literature, previous studies, reports and official documents; analysis of statistical data; interviews and discussions with experts as well as unpublished materials collected in the project framework.

The research results demonstrate that the common challenges in the presented regions are mostly related to such issues as limited export performance, lack of managerial skills and experience to commercialise creative ideas, lack of financial resources that support CCIs enterprises' growth (e.g. from self-employed unit to SMEs) and poor cooperation between various CCIs stakeholders.

Market Environment Role in Bancassurance

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Objectives

Since the late 20th century banks and insurance companies are going through transformation of financial service industry by blending their activities under the business concept of bancassurance. However, an important question is what are the key factors businesses should consider in bancassurance development processes? Scholars in many countries analyze market-based and from company dependable factors determining more successful or less successful performance within the chosen bancassurance model.

The aim of the paper is to analyze – how market environment influences the development of bancassurance in Latvia. The following tasks have to be defined:

- 1) analyze scientific findings in scientific publications and previous conducted research;
- 2) investigate factors influencing bancassurance development in Latvia;
- 3) compare differences of representatives of financial market experts and representatives of banks on factors influencing the bancassurance in Latvia.

Methods

The research methods used: analysis of scientific publications, analysis of previous conducted research, expert survey, case studies analysis. Two types of units have been analyzed: total system units – 4 representatives from financial institutions, regulatory agencies, financial market experts; and intermediate units – 4 management representatives of three largest banks in Latvia. The primary data collection type was semi-structured interviews to collect qualitative information on bancassurance development factors.

Results

The research confirms that there is one market factor favors the bancassurance in Latvia – it is technological improvement. Therefore the stated proposition has been approved.

Conclusions

For retail banks in Latvia, it is important to acknowledge the given economic and demographic situation, which negatively influences the growth of market and scale of local businesses. At the same time common legislative framework for all EU countries, open economy and high speed of technological improvements give the possibility to establish common bancassurance processes not only for Baltic region but also Scandinavia, therefore making bancassurance in the region more costs efficient.

Development of Academic Entrepreneurship within Selected Projects Conducted at the University of Warsaw through the European Social Fund

Ph.D. Przemysław Dubel

Warsaw University, Poland

Currently, academic entrepreneurship is directly related to the development of the micro-economic activities sector whose share in the structure of all Polish enterprises is about 96%. It is this sector of our economy that is characterized by the largest share in generating GDP out of all enterprise groups at 31%, and, assuming the value of GDP generated by the enterprise sector is 100%, it is 41%.

The aim of this article is to present the projects supported by the University of Warsaw Management Department supporting the development of entrepreneurial attitudes and to discuss the results obtained in the process of fostering new business activities.

At present, microenterprises of natural persons constitute the largest increase in the number of registered entities which, on the one hand, showed the highest profitability in comparison to the entire SME sector and, on the other, the lowest period of survival. In the first year of business activity, approximately 30% of newly registered micro-enterprises close down. The main determinant of this part of our economy is the high efficiency of operations, which consists of low costs related to the lack of extensive administration, use of services and experts, and the ready ability to adapt to new economic and administrative conditions which have created the perception of micro-companies as being a key link of dynamic development in our regions.

After Poland's accession to the European Union as part of the National Development Plan for 2004–2006 and the National Strategic Reference Framework for the years 2007–2013, operational programs were created whose main goal was to support the development of the entrepreneurship of young people along with the development of initiatives and solutions aimed at creating new jobs and building creative attitudes to foster entrepreneurship and self-employment.

The Faculty of Management at the University of Warsaw, being one of the beneficiaries of these programs, has created projects aimed at students and graduates of the University of Warsaw, thanks to which it has been possible to incubate new business activities by people wishing to run their own micro-enterprises.

The article has been divided into two parts. In the first part, the author presents a brief description of the micro enterprise sector in Poland and the European Social Fund as a source of financing for newly-opened business operations. The second discusses the prepared projects and the presented results of a survey on the impact of the ESF on the development of the professional activity of people who have received financial support as part of the implemented activities.

Scientific Careers and Mobility of European Researchers

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Objectives

International scientific mobility and research careers are two concepts that are intimately related. Yet, it has been very difficult for scholarship to pinpoint exactly how international mobility impacts on research careers. This paper contributes to this question by investigating links between international mobility, research career stage progression and job changes.

Methods

It does so using a large-scale survey (MORE) which targets researchers based in European universities.

Results

The results establish that the profile of international mobility varies by academic research career stage. They also show that for researchers in the established mid-career phase who are working internationally, there are career advancements benefits associated with return mobility to their home country. However, these benefits may reduce if the timing of return is too delayed.

Conclusions

The paper concludes by discussing the implications of these results for researcher mobility policy in the European Research Area.

Studying Mobility of Scientific Workforce Anthropologically: Tales of Hopes, Moves and Hopeful Moves

Ph.D. Ieva Puzo

Rīga Stradiņš University, Faculty of Communication, Latvia

Objectives

The presentation has two main objectives. First, it aims to call attention to and critically examine the hopes and aspirations early career scientists invest in transnational research mobility in two starkly different contexts – Japan and Montenegro – focusing on the institutional aspects enabling and disabling such affects. The second goal of the paper is to highlight the advantages and also the challenges of the ethnographic approach in studying transnational mobility of the scientific workforce.

Methods

The presentation is based on ethnographic data collected in Japan (2012–2014) and Montenegro (2017). While in Japan, the author conducted an anthropological study (semi-structured interviews and participant observation) of foreign researchers in the country. The data from the author's research in Montenegro is based on semi-structured interviews with young Montenegrin researchers who have embarked on study or work abroad.

Results

The presentation intends to bring forth two main arguments: 1) that global and national level institutional frameworks and research policies shape the ways research mobility and decisions related to it (including the choice to eschew mobility) are experienced as affect-filled and hope-oriented processes; and 2) that the anthropological approach is crucial in noticing, pinpointing and investigating the intersection of research policies and the affects they enable.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the presentation calls for a reorientation of the study of research mobility toward accounting for young scholars' hopes and aspirations in the current climate of increasing precarity among science workers.

Cultural Capital and Faculty Careers in Science and Engineering

Ph.D. Julia Melkers

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Objectives

To examine the role of cultural capital in faculty careers in science and engineering. What does it take to succeed in science and engineering academic careers? Science and engineering in many countries has struggled with gaining equitable representation, including attracting individuals from disadvantaged communities. Faculty from less represented communities, including economic ones, may experience different challenges to their academic careers than others. A vast literature exists on productivity and career advancement in faculty careers in general. While these studies highlight a number of critical factors that enhance career success, they do not address the issue of cultural capital. “Cultural capital” (Bourdieu, 1986) refers to the knowledge and know-how that is embodied in an individual as a result of their place in a stratified society or profession. While the importance of cultural capital in the post-secondary environment has been widely applied in studies of student achievement, persistence, and even the selection of science and mathematically-based studies, it has not been addressed in regard to faculty careers. Yet, the know-how based in cultural capital may have implications for strategically building one’s career and productivity. We focus on three alternative forms of familial cultural capital – being a first generation college graduate (low cultural capital) and having an academic parent and or spouse (high social capital).

Methods

Descriptive and regression-based analysis of cultural capital effects on faculty work. Survey is based on a large national survey in the United States.

Results

Variations in cultural capital are evident among faculty in science and engineering disciplines. Family-based cultural capital is found to be a limiting factor in some aspects of faculty work, while affiliation-based social capital behaves differently.

Conclusions

Cultural capital plays a role in the capacity of faculty in science and engineering to success, but also in factors important in retention and advancement.

Global Networks of Latvian Scientists: Collaborative Interest and Ties with Latvia

Ph.D. Baiba Bela¹; Dr. Julia Melkers²

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² *Georgia Institute of Technology, United States*

Objectives

Science is a globalized profession. Latvia has been experiencing outmigration in ways that threaten the innovation system, creating risks for future growth and development. Yet, with this mobility also presents opportunities for leveraging the global scientific networks of Latvian scientists, including those in the diaspora community. The objective of this paper is to examine the characteristics of Latvian scientific networks. We examine the motivation, interests, and conditions in which scientists of Latvian descent collaborate with researchers in Latvian institutions. The core of our research involves analysis of the professional social capital of Latvian scientists' diaspora relevant to knowledge transfer and research collaboration.

Methods

This research is based on a global internet survey of Latvian scientists, commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Science. The primary focus of the survey entailed detailed social network items that used a system of name generators and interpreters to capture a range of collaborative and other professional networks relevant to careers and research engagement with Latvia. The survey addresses personal ties, citizenship, educational background, Latvian language proficiency and other demographic factors, as well as experience in visiting Latvia. From a population frame of 600 Latvian diaspora researchers, respondents included 350 scientists (234 complete responses) from 30 countries.

Results

Results reveal a globally dispersed Latvian diaspora with interests in building collaborative ties with Latvian institutions. Descriptively, respondents are young and mobile, the majority born in Latvia but educated abroad. Networks results show diaspora have cultivated worldwide professional and collaborative networks, with the majority of ties with Latvia. Analysis of these data are underway, with additional findings to be presented.

Conclusions

Preliminary conclusions show diaspora scientists develop global ties through scientific mobility but retain interest and professional linkages to Latvia, offering opportunities to enhance Latvia's innovation system.

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