



Rīga Stradiņš University
**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT
CONFERENCE 2024**

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Abstract Book

SOCIAL SCIENCES



Rīga, Latvia

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Preface

Dear students!

It is my great honour and pleasure to welcome you all to the 10th “International Student Conference in Health and Social Sciences” on behalf of Rīga Stradiņš University. As the host of this event, we take great pride in the fact that this conference has grown to become the largest student conference in the Baltics.

This year, as we celebrate the conference’s remarkable tenth anniversary, we reflect not only on how much it has grown, but also on the incredible contributions and achievements of the students who have made this event what it is today. The conference stands as a testament to your dedication, intellect, and passion for advancing knowledge in health and social sciences.

There are about 3,000 international students from 75 countries studying medicine and dentistry as well as social sciences and healthcare at RSU. The largest share of our international student community comprises German and Scandinavian students, but our cooperation with our international partners is expanding and developing.

The conference will be opened by two keynote speakers – Prof. Flemming Dela from University of Copenhagen, Denmark, and Mihails Kozlovs member of the European court audithors. We are welcoming lecturers also from UK, Italy, Greece and Germany.

Today, almost 200 students from 17 different countries will present their scientific achievements, from amongst others Germany, UK, Sweden, Lithuania and Ireland. We also welcome participants from Ukraine. More than 360 participants will present their research that will be evaluated by over 180 jury members. Additionally, more than 3,000 passive participants will attend the conference’s diverse programme that includes two plenary sessions, 23 workshops, 10 social programme activities, and various excursions.

As we gather here, united in our pursuit of academic excellence, let us embrace the spirit of collaboration and exploration that defines this conference. I am confident that over the next few days, the exchange of ideas and the presentation of ground-breaking research will inspire us all.

Once again, welcome to the 10th International Student Conference at Rīga Stradiņš University. May this event be a source of inspiration, learning, and meaningful connections.

Thank you,

Professor Aigars Pētersons
RECTOR OF RĪGA STRADIŅŠ UNIVERSITY

Dear friends and esteemed guests of Rīga Stradiņš University,

In Latvian literature and folklore, the symbol of a “castle of light” metaphorically represents regained wisdom, which can be adapted to demonstrate the idea that precise research forms an essential foundation for individuals to progress from the shadows of ignorance towards the illumination of knowledge. This serves as a reminder to every student that knowledge and research are the sources of power that cannot be stripped away from us.

I am delighted to welcome each of you in this scientific gathering, as we collectively commemorate our dedication to science. Our solidarity among students, bound together by our shared passion for scientific inquiry, is truly admirable.

I trust that you will find inspiration in our distinguished keynote speakers, engaging plenary sessions, and enriching workshops, all of which promise to broaden the horizons of knowledge for each participant. Let us embark upon this two-day journey with boundless enthusiasm and an never-ending thirst for discovery! And always remember, just as science knows no bounds, neither do your potential nor your creativity.

Līga Pūsepa

CHAIR OF RSU INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CONFERENCE 2024

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LAW

SECURING PROGRESS: THE GDPR CHALLENGES IN THE INTEGRATION OF AI IN THE ITALIAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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Keywords. Digital Transformation; Legal Tech Evolution; GDPR; Artificial Intelligence (AI); Public Administration; Data Privacy; Italian Legal System

Objectives. This study delves into the transformative journey of Legal Tech in Italy amid the digital age, spotlighting challenges and ethical dimensions, particularly concerning data privacy, security, and the infusion of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the country's Public Administration.

Materials and methods. The research involves a comprehensive review of legal and regulatory documents, like the GDPR, the Legislative Decree no. 51/2018 and the Legislative Decree no. 101/2018. Insights into the potential of AI in optimizing public services through predictive analytics are considered, additionally to case studies, including the municipality of Siena's experience with the "Caterina" chatbot, to illustrate the practical implementation of AI in the Public Administration.

Results. The analysis reveals the multifaceted impact of digital technologies on the legal sector, with Legal Tech advancements bringing both benefits and ethical challenges. The GDPR's introduction underscores a significant shift toward privacy protection and accountability. The integration of AI in the Italian Public Administration demonstrates a pursuit of operational efficiency and improved citizen services, albeit raising concerns related to data privacy and security.

Conclusions. Despite the advancements in Legal Tech and AI integration, it is mandatory for the Italian legal system to address specific challenges. Firstly, there is a need for more explicit regulations regarding the legal validity of algorithmically and AI generated documents. Secondly, ensuring the responsible handling of personal data in the Public Administration requires continuous efforts to comply with GDPR standards and build trust among citizens. Lastly, the potential impact of AI on employment and the importance of non-discriminatory practices must be carefully considered, especially within the public sector. The future success of Legal Tech in Italy hinges on a nuanced approach that integrates technological innovation with robust ethical and legal principles.

STUDY OF THE SOCIAL NETWORK PLATFORM TIKTOK USE IN THE CONTEXT OF MARKETING COMMUNICATION, CASE STUDY OF COMPANY RIMI LATVIA

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Keywords. Marketing communication; Social network platforms; TikTok platform

Objectives. Approximately one billion people actively use TikTok daily, and 68% of these consumers perceive the advertisements on this platform as unique and distinct compared to those on other platforms. TikTok's visual appeal and entertaining content enable companies to promote their products and services in an engaging and entertaining manner. This study aims to analyze the marketing communication of "RIMI LATVIA" on the social media platform TikTok and to develop recommendations for its improvement.

Materials and methods. Monographic research method - used to gather information about the various types and functions of social networks, as well as their application in corporate marketing communications. The secondary data analysis method was utilized to review and assess trends in the use of social networks in business marketing communications. Content analysis method was used to analyze and evaluate "RIMI LATVIA" TikTok account. Quantitative research method - used to obtain and collect data on user observations.

Results. Digital marketing is now a crucial aspect of company communication, offering advantages like lower costs, wider audience reach, and two-way consumer interaction compared to traditional methods. "RIMI LATVIA'S" most popular content, quick and affordable recipes, resonates well with its audience, suggesting its relevance and usefulness. To increase the number of followers and the level of engagement, diversifying content with videos from various categories is recommended.

Conclusions. The company should focus on developing recipe and culinary content by collaborating with experts or influencers in nutrition. Such content will attract a new audience and enhance customer loyalty. On TikTok, it's vital to communicate in a simple and understandable manner. Future content should be authentic and relatable, involving employees in its creation to strengthen the connection between the company and its customers, thereby building trust and loyalty.

ANALYSIS OF THE UNIFIED VISUAL IDENTITY: A CASE STUDY OF THE SIGULDA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

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Keywords. Branding; Communication Barriers; Community Building; Municipality

Objectives. Today's competitive market demands that branding not only distinguishes a company but also supports its sustained growth. OECD states that by adopting communication strategies to encourage interactive dialogue, organizations can deepen public engagement and cultivate trust within the community. The Municipality of Sigulda opts for a wide range of communication channels for online presence and a distinguishable brand message. This approach is aimed at enhancing community involvement and establishing a robust presence for its brand.

Materials and methods. The monographic was applied to perform an in-depth examination of the marketing communication concepts and to outline the role of social networks in marketing communication. Secondary data analysis was conducted for the assessment of the operational principles of the Sigulda district municipality. Content analysis was utilized to analyze the social network content of the Sigulda district municipality. The qualitative research method, specifically expert interviews, was employed to gather insights and recommendations from industry specialists.

Results. The visual identity of the municipality of Sigulda – the color palette, logo, and slogan “Sigulda excites!” – has been developed considering the cultural and historical values of the municipality. Overall, Sigulda's visual identity is strong, consistent with municipal communication, and promotes the reputation of the municipality, but it requires modernization, in line with modern trends.

Conclusions. The municipality of Sigulda must establish guidelines for marketing communication strategies and a unified visual identity, after which the municipality of Sigulda County and related institutions would communicate. Communication should be made in a content-oriented and planned manner, by dividing the main communication channel, for example, the local government website, which concentrates and aggregates all current information regarding the activities of the municipality of Sigulda, thus reducing the communication barriers and the number of secondary communication channels.

POLITICAL SCIENCE (INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, EUROPEAN STUDIES)

THE ACCESSIBILITY AND UTILIZATION OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES FOR ENGLISH INSTRUCTION IN GHANA

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Keywords. Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs); English language education; Ghanaian schools

Introduction. This section introduces the study's focus on the role of teaching and learning materials (TLMs) in English language education. It mentions the diverse nature of TLMs, their impact on teaching quality, and the specific case study in Ghanaian schools.

Case Description. The case study in Ghanaian schools, particularly focusing on the "Eduqas" platform, is detailed in this section. It highlights the positive outcomes of using interactive digital platforms, such as improved language acquisition and engagement among students.

Summary. A summary of the study's key findings, including the importance of diverse TLMs, the impact of TLMs on academic performance, and the link between instructional resources and educational achievements.

Conclusions. The study concludes by emphasizing the critical role of TLMs, encompassing material resources, physical facilities, and human resources, in determining the efficiency and success of the educational system. It also mentions the significance of TLMs in fostering better academic outcomes and reviews various theoretical frameworks supporting the importance of diverse and interactive materials in language education. Finally, the study expresses its goal of guiding teachers and policymakers in optimizing available resources for enhanced learning outcomes.

EVOLUTION OF RUSSIA'S DEFENCE POLICY IN THE POST-SOVIET ERA: THE BALANCE OF OFFENCE AND DEFENCE

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Keywords. Russia; NATO; Defence policy; Military doctrine; Post-Soviet era.

Objectives. In the post-Soviet era Russia's defence policy has gone through a transformation over the years as Russia balances its offence and defence strategies. Various factors and events have influenced Russia's defence policy. The aim of this Article is to evaluate the historical context of how Russia's defence policy evolved after the collapse of the Soviet Union, its transformation in military strategy and the main influencing factors.

To analyse literature and documents relating to the historical context of Russia's defence policy after the collapse of the Soviet Union. To evaluate the influencing factors of Russia's defence policy.

Materials and methods. Document and scientific literature analysis.

Conclusion. Several historical events have shaped Russia's military doctrine: the collapse of the USSR, NATO expansion, conflicts in Yugoslavia, Chechnya, Syria, Georgia and Ukraine. The collapse of the USSR led to Russia losing its satellite states and aiming to regain their influence in those said states. In the Post Soviet era Russia established their Military Doctrine in 1993, upgraded their Military Doctrine in 2000 and 2010, and have been following their most recent Military Doctrine established in 2014. Russia is heavily militarised and prioritises the use of nuclear weapons even in case of conventional attacks. Arguably a part of the historic context that has influenced Russia's military doctrine are the results of conflicts started by Russia. With advancing technology over the years Russia has made attempts to improve its military. When dealing with neighbouring countries Russia uses hybrid war tactics, Russia uses violence as well as other means of repression to achieve its goals.

COMPARISON OF THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE LATVIAN STATE AND THE UN REGARDING THE RIGHTS OF ETHNIC MINORITIES TO RECEIVE EDUCATION IN THE MINORITY LANGUAGE

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On September 29, 2022, Saeima adopted amendments to the law, which, starting from September 2023, provide for a gradual transition to education only in the State language in educational institutions until 2025. The Minister of Education at that time, Anita Muižniece, argued in an interview that such changes are necessary to create a like-minded society in Latvia, whose members understand each other and speak the same language. The Ministry of Education states that the benefits of the decision are various: students' "opportunities to participate as effectively as possible in social, cultural and economic life," to obtain further education, as well as to acquire language and historical understanding in accordance with the Constitution and international law. However, on February 8, 2023, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights published the opinion of UN experts, which stated that the adopted amendments and efforts to restrict education in minority languages are against human rights standards and could indicate signs of discrimination.

Such a strong difference of opinion between an institution that monitors international law and a country that has historically positioned itself as a country that respects international law, creates confusion about the different understanding of minority rights, the status of minorities, as well as applicable mechanisms for the protection of minorities. In this work, explanations will be sought for the different understanding of minorities' right to education in the minority language, using the example of Latvia's transition to education in the Latvian language as a case analysis.

BRAZIL'S FOREIGN POLICY POSITION IN THE BRICS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR (2022-2024)

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Keywords. Brazil; BRICS; foreign policy; Russia-Ukraine war

Objectives. At the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war on 24 February 2022, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro announced that Brazil would remain neutral in the context of the war and would not condemn Russia's aggression in Ukraine. However, this position of neutrality is not to be considered as completely neutral. Brazilian authorities have indicated that Brazil would oppose the unilateral imposition of sanctions on Russia and the supply of arms and ammunition to Ukraine. Within BRICS, Brazil does not condemn Russia and does not want to take a hard line against its BRICS partner, nor does it believe that Russia should be expelled from multilateral structures. Therefore, the objective of the research is to identify and analyse the external and internal factors in Brazil's foreign policy position within the BRICS in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war from 2022 to 2024.

Methods. The qualitative research method – document analysis. Documents included in the sample of analysis were Brazilian government press releases, BRICS summit declarations, Brazilian presidential speeches and media reports, statistics about trade for the period 2022-2024.

Results. It was concluded that Brazil's foreign policy position is shaped by both internal and external factors. Internally, Brazil's leaders are concerned about maintaining their power, as well as being influenced by the country's biggest multinational enterprises. Externally, Brazil's objectives are to benefit itself from the war by building up its economy, however the economic cooperation with The People's Republic of China is the key factor.

Conclusions. The identified factors indicate that external factors are stronger in shaping Brazil's foreign policy within BRICS. Brazil's declared policy of neutrality is only a pretext for driving its foreign policy. Brazil stresses the importance of the BRICS and hopes that peace negotiations will be achieved within this format.

UNVEILING THE DIGITAL MIGRAINE CHRONICLES: A THEMATIC NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF BLOGS

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Keywords. Migraine; Blogging; Social media; Barriers

Objectives. To explore the experience of Chronic migraine sufferers as expressed through online blog articles. Migraine causes more disability than all other neurologic disorders together but has received relatively little attention as a major public health issue despite the daily disease burden it presents for sufferers. To date no studies have been done on how migraine has been portrayed in online blogs. Experience shared through blogs gives an in-depth insight of how migraine is experienced by migraine sufferers.

Materials and methods. Thematic analysis of qualitative blog data was conducted to explore how those suffering from migraine express their experiences in blogs. Blogs were coded to sort data into themes and followed an inductive coding of line by line into major themes and subthemes. The data collection and analysis phases of the project proceed at the same time. Sampling was stopped when data saturation was reached.

Results. The major themes found included the impact on daily life, inability to make plans, negative impact on employment, mental health implications, co-morbidity and perception of migraine by others. Bloggers reported frustration with barriers to care; access to online support networks was reported as beneficial.

Conclusions. Chronic migraine sufferers expressing their experience through blogs may use the medium to overcome feelings of isolation common to migraine sufferers. The call for more awareness reflected participants collective advocacy for recognition by both medical professionals, family members and the general public. Addressing barriers to effective treatment for migraine and understanding the financial and emotional burden of migraine is important to those living with this chronic disease.

THE INCREASE OF CHINA'S INFLUENCE IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS: IMPLICATIONS OF RUSSIA

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Objectives. The Master's thesis "The Increase of China's Influence in the South Caucasus: Implications for Russia" examines how China's influence in the South Caucasus affects Russia's regional presence. Using an offensive realism theoretical framework as a base, the thesis attempts to innovate by analysing China's policies in the South Caucasus from the perspective of regional balancing and power maximisation with the following hypothesis: "China's presence in the South Caucasus is undermining Russia's influence in the region".

Materials and methods. To test the hypothesis provided by the theoretical framework, a qualitative research method is used - document content analysis. China's and Russia's strategic documents and regional activities are analysed to evaluate both actors' objectives in the region. This is followed by a comparative analysis to examine if China's objectives and regional activities are undermining Russia's presence in the South Caucasus.

Conclusions. It is concluded that the hypothesis is partially correct. China's influence in the South Caucasus is advancing from economic to military and political fields. These fields of Chinese engagement are undermining Russian regional objectives and presence in the South Caucasus. However, despite these advancements, China's increased military and political footprint is at its early stage. Furthermore, China's political engagement within the South Caucasus has also complimented Russia's regional objectives in some fields, for example, Beijing has amplified Moscow's anti-democratic narratives within the region.

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTITUDES TOWARDS AGING AND DEPRESSION INDICATORS OF OLDER ADULTS

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Objective. In the light of the annual increase in depression indicators among older adults, there is a critical need to develop strategies that promote a positive attitude towards aging, potentially reducing depression rates. In Latvia, the prevalence of adults experiencing or having experienced symptoms of depression rises by an average of 2% each year (Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, 2022). This study aims to investigate the relationship between attitudes towards aging and depression indicators in older adults.

Materials and methods. This cross-sectional correlation study analyzed data from 47 ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 1.383$) physically and socially active adults aged 55 and above, as well as less active or inactive individuals aged 75 or older. The questionnaire included socio-demographic indicators, the GDS-15 Geriatric Depression Scale – 15 (GDS-15, Geriatric Depression Scale – short, Sheikh & Yesavage, 1986), and a five-point Attitude Toward Own Aging (Attitude toward own aging, ATOA; Lawton, 1975) scale. All data were analyzed using the IBM SPSS 29 software.

Results. Spearman's rank correlation analysis was conducted, indicating a statistically significant, negative, and moderately strong correlation between the attitude towards aging and depression indicators ($r_s = -.549$, $p = .01$).

Conclusions. Study results suggest that individuals with a more positive attitude towards aging could tend to exhibit lower depression indicators, while those with higher depression indicators often hold a more negative attitude towards aging. In future studies, a larger sample size and broader regional coverage in Latvia would be beneficial. Promoting positive attitudes and facilitating communication between younger and older generations could potentially contribute to a positive shift in depression indicators.

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largest herbal remedies manufacturers in the Baltics “Rīgas farmaceitiskā fabrika” and drug wholesaler “Recipe Plus”. The “Veselības centru apvienība” (VCA) is the basis for study and practice in outpatient medicine at Rīga Stradiņš University. Latvia’s “Mēness aptieka” several years in a row have been recognized as the “Favorite Brand” of the Latvian pharmaceutical industry. Corporate group professionals work at all stages of health care with the conviction that available health care means a healthier society.



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