

INSTITUTE OF
PSYCHOLOGY

VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR
PSYCHOTRAUMATOLOGY

**ANNUAL REPORT
2019**



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INTRODUCTION

2019 Year in Review

The year 2019 was full of exciting new developments for the Vilnius Center for Psychotraumatology (PTC). Center moved to a new building during summer of 2019. These new facilities provide more room for the increasing number of activities at the Center for Psychotraumatology. Main activities of the Center for Psychotraumatology were focused on research of psychotrauma and stress related disorders while also focusing on development and growth. Several new research projects were started: study of PTSD in cancer clinic, stress and trauma among young adults, stress and resilience in police, CBT for caregivers.

Priority in 2019 was collaborations with other leading trauma research centers across Europe. We collaborated with Norwegian Center of Violence and Trauma (NKVTS), Danish National Center of Center for Psychotraumatology (prof. A. Elklit), Arq National Psychotrauma Center from the Netherlands (prof. M. Olff). We also started collaboration with Trauma research group from Cardiff (prof. J. Bisson and dr. N. Roberts) and Ruhr-Bochum University from Germany group led by prof. J. Margraf. Collaboration with Linköping university and prof G. Andersson from Sweden was renewed and very productive. Long lasting collaboration with Division of Psychopathology and Clinical Intervention, University of Zurich lead by prof. A. Maercker was important for us.

We at Vilnius Center for Psychotraumatology were very happy with new excellent psychologists and researchers who joined us in 2019. Dr. Inga Truskauskaitė-Kunevičienė started working at the Center as postdoctoral research fellow. Two very active PhD students Monika Kvedaraite and Austėja Domarkaitė are our new team members.

Prof. dr. Evaldas Kazlauskas

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR PSYCHOTRAUMATOLOGY

The main activities at the Center include research and training. Research is the main focus of the Vilnius Center for Psychotraumatology. The Center is involved on national level and with international collaborations in research on the resilience and risk factors of the stress-related disorders, development and evaluation of psychosocial interventions. The Center is led by prof. dr. Evaldas Kazlauskas.

Mission

Acknowledgment of the effects of trauma on individuals and society by providing evidence-based knowledge of trauma responses for development of the best care for trauma survivors.

Vision

Leading psychotraumatology research excellence center in the region conducting high quality trauma-related research.

Areas of expertise

Psychotraumatology; stress-related disorders: posttraumatic stress disorder, complex posttraumatic stress disorder, adjustment disorder; prolonged grief; psychological assessment; evaluation of psychosocial interventions; treatment studies; internet-based interventions; resilience; effects of political violence and oppression.

TRAINING AND CLINICAL SERVICES

Training

These trainings for mental health professionals are provided at the Center:

- Assessment of trauma-related disorders;
- Training on trauma-focused treatments.

Clinical services

These outpatient services are available at the Center:

- Assessment of trauma exposure and trauma-related disorders;
- Evidence-based trauma-focused treatments.

STAFF

Core staff members

Prof. dr. Evaldas Kazlauskas is a clinical psychologist, and a leading expert of stress-related disorders in Lithuania. He is the Head of Center for Psychotraumatology at Vilnius University. Evaldas has been involved in psychotraumatology research and clinical practice since 2000. He is a board member of the European Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, and President of the Lithuanian Society for Traumatic Stress Studies.



Dr. Paulina Zelviene is a clinical psychologist and one of the leading new generation psychology researchers in the Baltic region. Paulina is currently a postdoctoral research fellow at the Center for Psychotraumatology, Vilnius University. She is particularly interested in stress and resilience in adolescence.

Dr. Neringa Grigutyte is a clinical psychologist and received her PhD from Vilnius University with a focus on effects of childhood sexual abuse. Neringa participated in a number of national and international research projects.



Dr. Inga Truskauskaite-Kuneviciene is a psychologist and postdoctoral research fellow at the Center for Psychotraumatology, Vilnius University. Her research interests include adolescents and youth development, positive mental health, identity, and stress.

STAFF

PhD students

PhD student Monika Kvedaraite. Research project '**Posttraumatic stress disorders: assessment and risk factors**'. Expected defense in September, 2023. Supervisor prof. dr. E. Kazlauskas.

PhD student Austėja Dumarkaite. Research project '**Mindfulness effects on employees' wellbeing and productivity**'. Expected defense in August, 2023. PhD project is funded via external funding from the Research Council of Lithuania. Supervisor prof. dr. E. Kazlauskas, co-supervisor prof. dr. G.Andersson (Sweden).

PhD student Goda Gegieckaite. Research project '**Complexity of posttraumatic stress reactions: construct validity and predictors**'. Expected defense in October, 2020. Project is funded via external funding from the Research Council of Lithuania. Supervisor prof. dr. E. Kazlauskas.

PhD student Ieva Daniunaite. Research project '**Risk factors and changes of adjustment disorder symptoms**'. Expected defense in October, 2022. Project is funded via external funding from the Research Council of Lithuania. Supervisor prof. dr. E. Kazlauskas, co-supervisor prof. dr. S.Thoresen (Norway).

Prof. dr. Evaldas Kazlauskas is a co-supervisor for 2 PhD students:

PhD student I. Biliunaite, Linköping university (Sweden) supervisor prof. dr. Gerhard Andersson;

PhD student D. Grazulyte, Vilnius University Faculty of Medicine, supervisor prof. J. Sipylaite.

Interns

Migle Rudyte,
March-June, 2019

Gintarė Astrauskaitė
November, 2019 - June, 2020

Volunteers

Greta Raklevičiūtė
March-June, 2019

Nerilė Kopcikaitė
November, 2019 - June, 2020

STAFF

Students

Agnietė Kairytė	Irma Sabonytė	Nerilė Kopcikaitė
Augustė Nomeikaitė	Julija Mingaudaitė	Rūta Budreckytė
Emilija Zalieckaitė	Karolina Jocytė	Rūta Ostrauskaitė-Jurevičė
Gabija Petrauskaitė	Karolina Kančiauskytė	Sigita Tindžiulytė
Greta Raklevičiūtė	Lukas Juozapavičius	Vaiva Milašiūnaitė
Ieva Stonytė	Miglė Rudytė	Vitalija Rogovska

STAFF EXCHANGE

- August 27-30, 2019 Prof. dr. E. Kazlauskas was on a scientific visit to Rurh-Bohum University, Germany.
- August 26-30, 2019 Dr. I. Truskauskaite-Kuneviciene was on a scientific visit to Rurh-Bochum University, Germany.
- September 15-30, 2019. Dr. P. Zelviene was on a scientific visit to Norwegian Center for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS), University of Oslo.
- April 22 - May 19, 2019. Prof. dr. E. Kazlauskas was on a scientific visit to AMC, Amsterdam University, Netherlands.

Visiting researchers

- April 11-12, 2019 PhD student I. Biliunaite, Linköping university (Sweden) visited Vilnius Center for Psychotraumatology.
- September 19, 2019 PhD student I. Biliunaite, Linköping university (Sweden) visited Vilnius Center for Psychotraumatology.
- October 24-25, 2019 Prof. Siri Thoresen from Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies visited Vilnius Center for Psychotraumatology.
- December 16-17, 2019 dr. G.Andersson, Linköping university (Sweden), visited Vilnius Center for Psychotraumatology.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

- Internet-based psychosocial intervention for caregivers “Lithuanian Informal care Giver Intervention (LINGI)”
- Stress reactions following early cancer diagnosis (ANDI-ON)
- Complex posttraumatic stress: assessment and risk factors (T-REC)
- Positive mental health and stress in emerging adulthood (BOOM-LT)
- Assessment of posttraumatic stress in young children
- Stress and coping of novice and experienced police officers’ (POLSTRESS)
- The structure of ICD-11 trauma syndroms and psychometric properties of the International Trauma Questionnaire (ITQ) in Lithuanian population
- Long-term effects on health-related quality of life and stress-related disorders after heart surgery
- Effects of childhood trauma and resilience in adolescence (STAR-A)
- Vilnius ICD-11 Adjustment Disorder Study (VADS)
- Vilnius prolonged grief study

RESEARCH GRANTS

PostDoc research project **‘Positive mental health of young people and links with stress’**. This research is funded by Vilnius university. PI Inga Truskauskaitė-Kunevičienė, PhD), scientific advisor prof. dr. E.Kazlauskas. Project budget is 45,000 Eur.

PostDoc research project **‘Effects of Childhood Trauma: Stress and Resilience’** (STAR-A) (2017–2019). This research was funded by the European Social Fund under the No 09.3.3-LMT-K-712-02-0096. PI dr. P. Zelviene, scientific advisor prof. dr. E. Kazlauskas. Project budget 42,502 EUR.

RESEARCH GRANTS

Student internship research project **‘Mediating effects of resilience on traumatic stress in adolescence’**(2019-2020). This research is funded by the European Social Fund under the No 09.3.3- LMT-K-712 ‘Development of Competences of Scientists, other Researchers and Students through Practical Research Activities’ measure. Student G. Astrauskaite, supervisors dr. P. Zelviene and prof. dr. E.Kazlauskas.

Student internship research project **‘Traumatic stress and oncology disease’**(2019). This research was funded by the European Social Fund under the No 09.3.3- LMT-K-712 ‘Development of Competences of Scientists, other Researchers and Students through Practical Research Activities’ measure. Student M. Rudyte, supervisor prof. dr. E. Kazlauskas.

Submitted grants proposals

COST action proposal (submitted). **‘European network on health and social responses to terrorist attacks’** (Respond). Number of partner institutions - 27.

Research Project proposal (submitted). **‘Stress and resilience among adolescents and young adults: Cross-cultural study’** (STAR-A-JP). Research project submitted to the Research Council of Lithuania.

Research Group Initiatives Research Projects Call (submitted). **‘Challenges for psychotrauma recognition: underlying psychosocial mechanisms and potential for change’** (T-REC). Research project submitted to the Research Council of Lithuania.

Research Project proposal (submitted). **‘Stress and Mental Health in Emerging Adulthood’** (STREAM). Research project submitted to the Research Council of Lithuania.

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

- Arq Psychotrauma Expert Group, The Netherlands
- Danish National Centre for Psychotraumatology, University of Southern Denmark
- Department of Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany
- Division of Clinical Psychopathology and Intervention, University of Zurich, Switzerland
- Internet, health and clinical psychology research group, Linköping university, Sweden
- Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies, University of Oslo
- StressLab, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Poland
- European Society for Traumatic Stress Studies

ORGANIZED EVENTS

- 2019 December 2nd. Seminar '**Stress and resilience in adolescence**'. Ieva Daniunaite, a PhD student at the Center for Psychotraumatology, presented the newest data from her research.
- 2019 October 25th. **IX Annual Trauma Psychology conference** in Vilnius. The conference was organized by the Lithuanian Society for Traumatic Stress Studies and Center for Psychotraumatology. Three invited lectures:
 - Prof. Ulrich Schnyder from University of Zurich, Switzerland, who was talking about Psychotherapies for trauma-related disorders.
 - Prof. Siri Thoresen from Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies, who was talking about child and adolescent victimization.
 - Prof. Rachel Dekel from Bar-Ilan University, Israel, who was talking about the effects of PTSD on dyadic relations.
- 2019 June 25th. **Center for Psychotraumatology students scientific conference**. During the conference students presented findings from their own research findings.

PUBLICATIONS

Referred journal articles

Gražulytė, D., Kazlauskas, E., Norkienė, I., Kolevinskaitė, S., Kezytė, G., Urbanavičiūtė, I., ... & Šostakaitė, G. (2019). Long-term quality of life and posttraumatic stress following elective cardiac surgery: preliminary findings of a 5-year follow-up study. *Acta Medica Lituanica*, 26, 87–92. doi:<https://doi.org/10.6001/actamedica.v26i1.3960>

Kvedaraite, M., Zelviene, P., Elklit, A., & Kazlauskas, E. (2019). The role of traumatic experiences and posttraumatic stress on social anxiety in a youth sample in Lithuania. *Psychiatric Quarterly*, 1-10, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11126-019-09684-7>

Knefel, M., Lueger-Schuster, B., Bisson, J., Karatzias, T., Kazlauskas, E., & Neil, P. R. (2019). A cross-cultural comparison of ICD-11 Complex PTSD symptom networks in Austria, Lithuania, and UK. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*. doi: 10.1002/jts.22361

Patasius, A., Kincius, M., Kazlauskas, E., & Smailyte, G. (2019). The role of androgen-deprivation therapy on suicide among patients with advanced prostate cancer: A nationwide population-based cohort study. *Psycho-Oncology*, 28, 2098–2100. doi: 10.1002/pon.5186

Zelviene, P., Kazlauskas, E., & Maercker, A. (in press). Risk factors of ICD-11 adjustment disorder in the Lithuanian general population exposed to life stressors. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*.

Book chapters

Meili, I., Gegieckaite, G., & Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Metaphors of Posttraumatic Growth: A Qualitative Study in Swiss, Lithuanian, and Brazilian Rural Communities. In A. Maercker, E. Heim, & L. J. Kirmayer (Eds.). *Cultural Clinical Psychology and PTSD*. (pp. 137–151). Hogrefe Publishing.

Kazlauskas, E. (in press). Trauma-focused psychotherapy research. *SAGE Research Methods Cases*.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Biliunaite, I., Kazlauskas, E., & Andersson, G. (2019). Development of ICBT for concerned caregivers in Lithuania. *The 6th European Society for Research of Internet-Interventions (ESRII), Copenhagen, September 5-6 2019.*

Daniunaite, I., Lakis-Miciene, V., Zelviene, P., & Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Effects of childhood abuse and violence in Lithuania: a cross-sectional study. *16th European Society of Traumatic Stress Studies Conference. Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 14-16 June, 2019.*

Eimontas, J., & Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Predictors of dropout in modular internet-based self-help intervention for adjustment disorder. *The 6th European Society for Research of Internet-Interventions (ESRII), Copenhagen, 5-6 September, 2019.*

Eimontas, J. & Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Applying Principles of CBT to Internet-Based Modular Self-Help Intervention for Adjustment Disorder: Deconstruction of User Engagement. *9th World Congress of Behavioural and Cognitive Therapies. Berlin, Germany.,17-20 July, 2019*

Gegieckaite, G. & Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Association between difficulties in emotion regulation and prolonged grief disorder symptoms in bereaved adults. *First official European Congress on Clinical Psychology and Psychological Treatment of EACLIP. Dresden, Germany, 31 October – 2 November, 2019.*

Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Psychotraumatology: traumatic stress and effective psychosocial treatments. *Lithuanian Criminology Association conference [„Nusikaltimų baimė: prigimtis, padariniai, sprendimai“]. Vilnius, Lithuania, 5 April, 2019.*

Kazlauskas, E. (2019). A Qualitative Study of Trauma-Related Metaphors in Lithuania. *16th European Society of Traumatic Stress Studies Conference. Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 14-16 June, 2019.*

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Intergenerational Effects of Political Oppression: Survivor and Second-Generation Study. *35th ISTSS annual meeting ,Trauma, Recovery, and Resilience: Charting a Course Forward'. Boston Massachusetts, USA, 14-16 November, 2019.*

Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Posttraumatic stress and posttraumatic growth: A qualitative study. *First official European Congress on Clinical Psychology and Psychological Treatment of EACLIPT. Dresden, Germany, 31 October – 2 November, 2019.*

Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Prevalence of ICD-11 Posttraumatic Stress Disorders in Lithuanian Population. *35th ISTSS annual meeting ,Trauma, Recovery, and Resilience: Charting a Course Forward'. Boston Massachusetts, USA, 14-16 November, 2019.*

Kazlauskas, E., Kvedaraitė, M., Zelviene, P. (2019). Association between social anxiety disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder among a youth sample in Lithuania. *27th European Congress of Psychiatry (EPA2019). Warsaw, Poland, 6-9 April, 2019.*

Kazlauskas, E., Zelviene, P. (2019). Assessment of traumatic symptoms in psychotraumatology. *Annual Clinical and health psychology conference of the Lithuanian psychological association , Birštonas, Lithuania, 7 October, 2019.*

Kvedaraitė, M. (2019). Trauma and posttraumatic stress in a development context. *Conference for Young Scientists in Psychology. [XVI Jaunujų mokslininkų psichologų konferencija], Vilnius, Lithuania, 26 April, 2019*

Kvedaraitė, M., Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Prevalence of trauma and posttraumatic stress disorder among women in Lithuania. *16th Conference of the European Society of Traumatic Stress Studies, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 14-16 June, 2019.*

Kvedaraitė, M., Zelviene, P., Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Violence against woman: posttraumatic stress risk factors. *Lithuanian Congress of Psychology, Vilnius, Lithuania, 24-25 May, 2019.*

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Szczepaniak, M., Eimontas, J., Kazlauskas, E., & Cieślak, R., The longitudinal relationships between PTSD symptom clusters: final results of a meta-analysis. *16th European Society of Traumatic Stress Studies Conference. Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 14-16 June, 2019.*

Zelviene, P., Kazlauskas, E. (2019). A moderating effect of abuse in childhood on mental health: findings from Lithuanian adult general population. *16th Conference of the European Society of Traumatic Stress Studies, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 14-16 June, 2019*

Zelviene, P., Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Predictors of ICD-11 adjustment disorder in general population. *27th European Congress of Psychiatry (EPA2019). Warsaw, Poland, 6-9 April, 2019.*

INVITED SYMPOSIA AND INVITED LECTURES

Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Long-term Effects of Political Oppressive Regime on Survivors and Society in Lithuania. *ESTSS Workshop dedicated to the 10-year anniversary of EJPT. Tbilisi, Georgia, 13-14 October, 2019.*

Javakhishvili, J., Armour, C., Rees, G., Mooren, T., Olf, M. & Kazlauskas, E. (2019). INVITED PANEL: The *Changing* Face of Political Violence in Europe: Identifying and Responding to New Challenges. *35th ISTSS annual meeting 'Trauma, Recovery, and Resilience: Charting a Course Forward'. Boston Massachusetts, USA, 14-16 November, 2019.*

Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Psychotraumatology today: science and practice. Lithuanian Congress of Psychology, Vilnius, Lithuania, 24 May, 2019.

Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Current trends in stress- and trauma-related disorders: Research findings from Vilnius Center for Psychotraumatology. *Ruhr-Bochum Universitaat. Bochum. 28 August, 2019.*

Kazlauskas, E. (2019). Long-term effects of political oppressive regime on survivors and society in Lithuania. INVITED PANEL: Addressing political oppressions: how past, present and future connect. *16th European Society of Traumatic Stress Studies Conference. Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 14-16 June, 2019.*



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