



2020

ANNUAL REPORT

CENTER FOR  
PSYCHOTRAUMATOLOGY

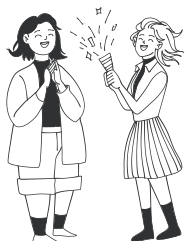
INSTITUTE OF PSYCHOLOGY  
VILNIUS UNIVERSITY





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## 2020 IN NUMBERS



In 2020 PTC welcomed two new postdoctoral research fellows and two new research assistants and now our team consists of

**12** researchers.

We are currently working on **20+** research projects.

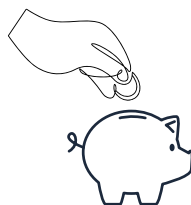


PTC team co-authored

**17** scientific publications in 2020.



**10+** interviews on national media to inform the general population about our activities.



Our team attracted more than

**870,000**  
**EUR**

in external grant funding.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health we offered specialized remote training on how to recognize and treat trauma to

**300+** healthcare specialists.





# 2020 YEAR OVERVIEW

The year 2020 was marked with a global coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic struck the global population and also had a high impact on activities at Center for Psychotraumatology in Vilnius. Fortunately, we managed to adjust to the pandemic fast and were actively working on our ongoing projects, as well as started new initiatives, mostly COVID-19-related.

The growth of our center was ongoing this year. Two brilliant postdocs joined our team. Dr. Odeta Gezelyte is a wise and excellent clinical psychologist and a great researcher with a previous focus on suicide behaviour. Odeta initiated an important project on Complex PTSD assessment in collaboration with Cardiff University group led by prof. J. Bisson at our Center, Odeta also is the national coordinator for the ESTSS COVID impact study. Another bright researcher and psychologist dr. Lina Jovarauskaite joined our team and is now leading our digital health studies, and training projects.

Not surprisingly as the pandemic started our Center was identified by the Lithuanian Ministry of Health as the competence center which has expertise in mitigating psychosocial effects of the pandemic. We were active in proposing actions for the Governmental plan which included competencies building, service delivery development, and research on the impact on COVID. We also developed a series of recommendations for Healthcare, Schools and Universities on how to cope with stressors in difficult coronavirus times based on our research findings.

## 2020 YEAR IN OVERVIEW

We were lucky enough to have a strong collaboration with partners from many countries prior to the pandemic. Even though we had to cancel our travels, we had a lot of online meetings in sharing our ideas on how to deal with the crisis. We also managed to harmonize our research methodologies with several partners to have a more broad understanding of the impact of the pandemic on mental health in Europe.

With the growing team at our Vilnius Center which is supportive and cohesive, we were privileged to celebrate and congratulate our Center team members with memorable moments in their lives, including wedding, childbirth, and other happy moments despite the ongoing chronic stress of the pandemic this year.

*prof. dr. Evaldas Kazlauskas*



## ABOUT THE CENTER

The Center for Psychotraumatology led by prof. E. Kazlauskas at Vilnius University is conducting multidisciplinary research in the field of psychotraumatology and disseminates evidence-based trauma-informed care knowledge to society. The team at the Center has expertise in research of resilience and risk factors of the trauma- and stress-related disorders, development and implementation of psychosocial interventions for stress-related disorders. The Center has a wide network of collaborators nationally and internationally.

### 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.

## TRAINING AND CLINICAL SERVICES

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

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

These outpatient services are available at the Center:

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

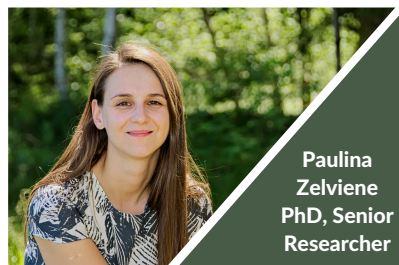
## STAFF



Center for Psychotraumatology is led by a professor of clinical psychology and psychotraumatology **Evaldas Kazlauskas**, who is the leading expert of trauma- and stress-related disorders in Lithuania and the region. Prof. Kazlauskas has been involved in

psychotraumatology research and clinical practice since 2000, president of the Lithuanian Society for Traumatic Stress Studies and newly elected president of the European Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (2021-2022).

**Paulina Zelviene** is a clinical psychologist and is one of the core members of the Center. Paulina Zelviene is a vice-president of Lithuanian Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (LSTSS), president of EMDR Lithuania Association and a member of



EMDR Europe research committee. In 2020 Paulina was elected as a member of the Young Academy of Lithuanian Academy of Sciences. Her scientific interests are psychotraumatology, evidence-based treatment, stress and resilience in adolescence.



**Inga Truskauskaite-Kuneviciene** is a developmental psychologist, a post-doctoral research fellow and the leader of BOOM-LT project at the Center for Psychotraumatology. Her research interests include adolescents and youth development, positive mental

health, identity, and stress. She is experienced in intervention development, implementation, and evaluation, including face-to-face and internet-based interventions for the promotion of positive developmental and mental health outcomes.

## STAFF

**Odeta Gelezelyte** is a clinical psychologist. Her main research interests are in the field of complex trauma and suicidality. Odeta Gelezelyte is currently one of the main researchers in a study focused on exploring the impact of COVID-19 related crises on the wellbeing of the general population in Lithuania, that is a part of the pan-European project launched by ESTSS.



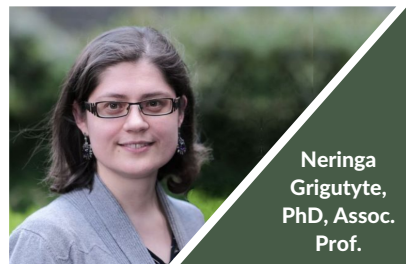
**Odeta  
Gelezelyte,  
PhD, Research  
Fellow**



**Lina  
Jovarauskaite,  
PhD, Research  
Fellow**

**Lina Jovarauskaite** is a clinical psychologist. Her scientific interests cover stress and traumatic stress evaluation and management as well as stress related to climate change. Lina is one of the main researchers of STAMP project at the Center for Psychotraumatology.

**Neringa Grigutyte**, Ph.D, Associate Professor, is a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist. Neringa Grigutyte is the leader of POLSTRES project at the Center for Psychotraumatology. Her research interests are in the field of clinical and trauma psychology, psychological assessment, child abuse and professional help system.



**Neringa  
Grigutyte,  
PhD, Assoc.  
Prof.**

# 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. Co-supervisor dr. Odetta Gelezelyte.

PhD student **Austeja Dumarkaite**. Research project '**Mindfulness based internet intervention for PTSD 'Still me'**'. 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 dr. Inga Truskauskaite-Kuneviciene and prof. dr. G.Andersson (Sweden).

PhD student **Ieva Daniunaite**. Research project '**Abuse and trauma in adolescents**'. Expected defense in October, 2022. Project is funded via external funding from the Research Council of Lithuania. Supervisor prof. dr. E. Kazlauskas, co-supervisor dr. Paulina Zelviene and prof. dr. S.Thoresen (Norway).

PhD student **Goda Gegieckaite**. Research project '**Risk factors of prolonged grief after the loss of a loved one**'. Expected defense in January, 2021. Project is funded via external funding from the Research Council of Lithuania. Supervisor prof. dr. E. Kazlauskas.

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

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

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

## INTERNS

<b>Gintare Astrauskaite</b>	November, 2019 - June, 2020
<b>Auguste Nomeikaite</b>	November, 2020 - June, 2021
<b>Gabija Petrauskaite</b>	November, 2020 - June, 2021
<b>Julija Mingaudaite</b>	November, 2020 - June, 2021
<b>Agnete Kairyte</b>	November, 2020 - June, 2021

## STAFF

### STUDENTS

Greta Rakleviciute	Arina Ivanova	Ruta Ostreikaite-Jurevice
Nerile Kopcikaite	Deimantas Zinkevicius	Emilija Zalieckaite
Austeja Jaruseviciute	Giedre Dautartaite	Karolina Kanciauskyte
Julija Anuzyte	Jurate Valackaite	Sigita Tindziulyte
Justa Kazukaускаite	Lina Juozapaviciute	Vitalija Rogovska
Milda Baronaite	Margarita Juodsnukyte	Irma Sabonyte
Rasa Jokubauskaite	Ieva Dovidauskaite-Bastiene	

### STAFF EXCHANGE

March 27-30, 2020 | PhD student Austeja Dumarkaite was on a scientific visit to Linköping University, Sweden.

February 14, 2020 | PhD student Austeja Dumarkaite was on a short-term scientific visit to ARQ Nationaal Psychotrauma Centrum, The Netherlands.

January 13, 2020 | PhD student Austeja Dumarkaite was on a short-term scientific visit to Jaume I University, LabPsiTec, Spain.

January 9 - 23 | Dr. Inga Truskauskaite-Kuneviciene was on a scientific visit to Ilia State University, Georgia.

### VISITING RESEARCHERS

July 14, 2020 | PhD student Ieva Biliunaite (Linköping University, Sweden) visited Vilnius Center for Psychotraumatology.

March 3-7, 2020 | Dr. Neil Roberts (Cardiff University, UK) visited Vilnius Center for Psychotraumatology.

March 6-7, 2020 | ESTSS President prof. Jana Javakhishvili visited Vilnius Center for Psychotraumatology.

## RESEARCH PROJECTS

Complex posttraumatic stress: assessment and risk factors | 2020-2024

Experience of healthcare professionals working with trauma-exposed patients | 2020-2021

PTSD assessment in young children „Happy childhood: recognition of stress in structured play (HACHI)“ | 2020-2022

Psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (part of ESTSS COVID study) | 2020-2021

Occupational stress and coping of healthcare staff (MEDSTRESS) | 2020-2021

Mindfulness-based internet intervention for PTSD „Still Me“ | 2019-2023

Internet-based psychosocial intervention for caregivers “Lithuanian Informal care Giver Intervention (LINGI)“ | 2019-2023

Effects of childhood trauma and resilience in adolescence (STAR-A) | 2019-2022

Posttraumatic stress and quality of life after heart surgery | 2018-2023

Stress reactions following early cancer diagnosis (ANDI-ON) | 2019-2021

PTSD and resilience in police officers (POLSTRESS) | 2019-2022

## RESEARCH GRANTS

Research project **‘Development of innovative stress analysis and management platform (STAMPY)’** (2020-2023). Co-funded from the EU Structural Funds. Grant nr. Nr. 01.2.2-LMT-K-718-03-0072, Budget 696 178 EUR. PI prof. dr. Evaldas Kazlauskas.

Research project **‘Psychosocial stress reactions to the COVID-19 pandemic and research-based coping recommendations’** (2020). Funded by Research Council of Lithuania. Grant number P-COV-20-10, Budget 33 566 EUR.

COST action **‘Multi-Sectoral Responses to Child Abuse and Neglect in Europe: Incidence and Trends’** (Nr. CA19106) (2020-2024). Main coordinator: Andreas Jud, Ulm University, Germany.



# RESEARCH PROJECTS

## RESEARCH GRANTS

Research project **‘Stress and resilience among adolescents and young adults: Cross-cultural study’** (2020–2022). Bilateral Lithuanian – Japan research project co-funded by Research Council of Lithuania and Japan Research Foundation. Project partner Hiroshima University, Japan. Grant number S-LJB-20-2, Budget of the Lithuanian study part 78 174 EUR.

PostDoc research project **‘Advancement of assessment in psychotraumatology: A study of survivors of complex trauma’** (2020–2022). This research was funded by the European Social Fund under the No 09.3.3-LMT-K-712-19-0048. PI dr. O. Gelezelyte, scientific advisor prof. dr. E. Kazlauskas. Project budget 42 502 EUR.

PostDoc research project **‘Positive mental health of young people and links with stress’** (2019-2021). This research is funded by Vilnius University. PI Inga Truskauskaite-Kuneviciene, PhD, scientific advisor prof. dr. E. Kazlauskas. Project budget is 66,499 Eur.

Student internship research project **‘Effects of internet-based psychosocial intervention for students experiencing post-traumatic stress on mental well-being’** (2020-2021). 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 J. Mingaudaite, supervisor prof. dr. E. Kazlauskas.

Student internship research project **‘Psychological stress reactions during the COVID-19 pandemic’** (2020-2021). 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 A. Nomeikaite, supervisor dr. O. Gelezelyte.

# RESEARCH PROJECTS

## RESEARCH GRANTS

Student internship research project **'Links between post-traumatic stress, positive mental health and identity in emerging adulthood.'** (2020-2021). 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. Petrauskaite, supervisor dr. I. Truskauskaite-Kuneviciene.

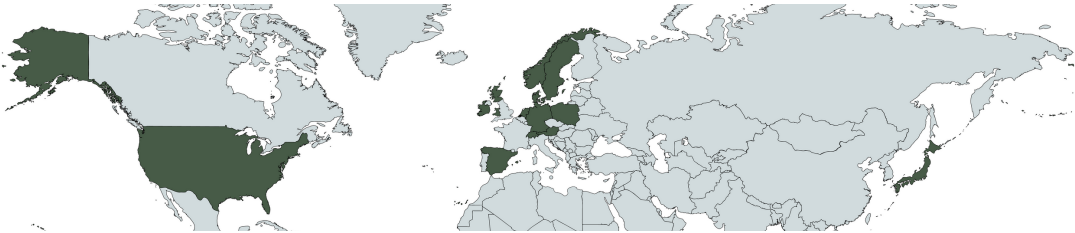
Student internship research project **'Mediating effects of resilience on traumatic stress in adolescence'** (2019-2020). This research is funded by the European Social Fund under the No 09.3.3- LMT-K-712 'Development of Competences of Scientists, other Researchers and Students through Practical Research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

## SUBMITTED GRANTS PROPOSALS

COST action proposal (submitted) **'Scalable EvidenCe-based Open Digital Health' (SECOND)**. No. OC-2020-1-24667. Main proposer: dr. Dominika Kwasnicka, School of Psychology, Poland. Secondary proposer: Vilnius University [Center for Psychotraumatology], dr. I.Truskauskaite-Kuneviciene

Horizon 2020 call **'Promoting psychological adjustment to the behavioural, social and economic impacts of the pandemic outbreak response' (ADJUST)**. Call: H2020-SC1-PHE-CORONAVIRUS-2020-2 (Advancing knowledge for the clinical and public health response to the 2019-nCoV epidemic). Proposal number: 101016002. Proposal budget: 4895572,50. | *proposal rejected*

# INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS



PTC is a member of **ARQ Collaborative Europe Psychotrauma Centers Concorcium** and **The International Trauma Consortium**. PTC also collaborates with:

- **Internet, health and clinical psychology research group**, Linköping University, Sweden
- **Department of Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy**, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany
- **ARQ Nationaal Psychotrauma Centre**, The Netherlands
- **Institute of Psychological Medicine and Clinical Neurosciences**, Cardiff University School of Medicine, UK
- **Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies**, University of Oslo
- **Danish National Centre for Psychotraumatology**, University of Southern Denmark
- **Division of Clinical Psychopathology and Intervention**, University of Zurich, Switzerland
- **National Center for PTSD**, USA
- **University of Vienna**, Austria
- **Maynooth University**, Ireland
- **Edinburgh Napier University**, Scotland
- **Hiroshima University**, Japan
- **University of Warsaw**, Poland
- **Jaumes I University**, Spain

# ORGANIZED EVENTS

2020 June 22nd. | **Center for Psychotraumatology students scientific conference.** During the conference students presented findings from their own research findings.

2020 March 6th. | Invited lecture '**Developing new ways to assess and treat PTSD**' by dr. Neil Roberts.



2020 November 25th. | Online seminar '**Psychosocial stress reactions to the COVID-19 pandemic and research-based coping recommendations**'.

The seminar was watched live by more than **600** people and has since been watched online by almost **1000** people.

During the seminar, the PTC team presented research results on the psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and shared **evidence-based recommendations** for the **general population, children, students and medical personnel** on how to overcome stress during the COVID-19 pandemic.

You can find the English version of these recommendations here:

**RECOMMENDATIONS**



# PUBLICATIONS

## REFERRED JOURNAL ARTICLES

Cloitre, M., Brewin, C.R., Kazlauskas, E., Lueger-Schuster, B., Karatzias, T., Hyland, P. and Shevlin, M. (2020). Commentary: The need for research on PTSD in Children and adolescents – a commentary on Elliot et al. (2020). *The Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcpp.13361>

Gegieckaitė, G., & Kazlauskas, E. (2020). Do emotion regulation difficulties mediate association between neuroticism, insecure attachment, and prolonged grief? *Death Studies*, 1–9. doi:10.1080/07481187.2020.1788667

Gegieckaitė, G., & Kazlauskas, E. (2020). Fear of death and death acceptance among bereaved adults: associations with prolonged grief. *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying*, 1–15. doi:10.1177/0030222820921045

Gersons, B., Smid, G., Smit, A., Kazlauskas, E., & McFarlane, A. (2020). Can a 'secondary disaster' during and after the COVID-19 pandemic be mitigated? *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 11, 1815283. doi:10.1080/20008198.2020.1815283

Javakhishvili, J., Ardino, V., Bragesjö, M., Kazlauskas, E., Olf, O., Schäfer, I. (2020). Trauma-informed responses in addressing public mental health consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic: Position paper of the European Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ESTSS). *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 11, 1780782. doi:10.1080/20008198.2020.1780782

Kazlauskas, E., & Quero, S. (2020). Adjustment and coronavirus: How to prepare for COVID-19 pandemic-related adjustment disorder worldwide? *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 12, S22–S24. doi:10.1037/tra0000706

Kazlauskas, E., Eimontas, J., Olf, M., Zelviene, P., & Andersson, G. (2020). Adherence predictors in internet-delivered self-help intervention for life stressors-related adjustment disorder. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 11, 137. doi: 10.3389/fpsyt.2020.00137

# PUBLICATIONS

## REFERRED JOURNAL ARTICLES

Kazlauskas, E., & Grigutyte, N. (2020). Clinical psychology in Lithuania: Current developments in training and legislation. *Clinical Psychology in Europe*, 2, 1–10, doi: 10.32872/cpe.v2i1.2835

Kazlauskas, E., Zelviene, P., Daniunaite, I., Hyland, P., Kvedaraite, M., Shevlin, M., & Cloitre, M. (2020). The structure of ICD-11 PTSD and Complex PTSD in adolescents exposed to potentially traumatic experiences. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 265, 169–174. doi:10.1016/j.jad.2020.01.061

Knefel, M., Lueger-Schuster, B., Bisson, J., Karatzias, T., Kazlauskas, E., & Neil, P. R. (2020). A Cross-Cultural Comparison of ICD-11 Complex Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Symptom Networks in Austria, the United Kingdom, and Lithuania. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 33, 41–51. doi:10.1002/jts.22361

Kvedaraite, M., Zelviene, P., Elklit, A., & Kazlauskas, E. (2020). The role of traumatic experiences and posttraumatic stress on social anxiety in a youth sample in Lithuania. *Psychiatric Quarterly*, 91, 103–112. doi: 10.1007/s11126-019-09684-7

Lotzin, A., Aakvaag, H.F., Acqarini, E., Ajdukovic, D., Ardino, V., Böttche, M., Bondjers, K., Bragesjö, M., Dragan, M., Grajewski, P., Figueiredo-Braga, M., Gelezelyte, O., Javakhishvili, J., Kazlauskas, E., Knefel, M., Lueger-Schuster, B., Makhashvili, N., Mooren, T., Sales, L., Stevanovic, A., & Schäfer, I. (2020). Stressors, coping and symptoms of adjustment disorder in the course of COVID-19 pandemic – Study protocol of the European Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ESTSS) pan-European study. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 11, 1780832. doi:10.1080/20008198.2020.1780832

Truskauskaite-Kuneviciene, I., Brailovskaia, J., Kamite, Y., Petrauskaite, G., Margraf, J., & Kazlauskas, E. (2020). Does trauma shape identity? Exploring the links between lifetime trauma exposure and identity status in emerging adulthood. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 576044. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2020.570644

## PUBLICATIONS

### REFERRED JOURNAL ARTICLES

Truskauskaite-Kuneviciene, I., Kazlauskas, E., Ostreikaite-Jurevice, R., Brailovskaia, J., & Margraf, J. (2020). Positive mental health and adjustment following life-stressors among young adults. *Current Psychology*, 1–6. doi:10.1007/s12144-020-00714-3

Zelviene, P., Daniunaite, I., Hafstad, G.S., Thoresen, S., Truskauskaite-Kuneviciene, I., & Kazlauskas, E. (2020). Patterns of abuse exposure and effects of abuse on psychosocial functioning among Lithuanian adolescents: A latent class analysis approach. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 108, 104684. doi:10.1016/j.chiabu.2020.104684

Zelviene, P., Kazlauskas, E., & Maercker, A. (2020). Risk factors of ICD-11 adjustment disorder in the Lithuanian general population exposed to life stressors. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 11, 1708617. doi:10.1080/20008198.2019.1708617

## BOOK CHAPTERS

Kazlauskas, E. (2020). Trauma-focused psychotherapy research: A study of the Brief Eclectic Psychotherapy for PTSD outcomes. SAGE Research Methods Cases: Medicine and Health Cases. SAGE Publications Ltd. doi:10.4135/9781529734881. ISBN: 9781529734881 (Online).



# CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Kazlauskas, E. (2020). Stressors, coping and symptoms of adjustment disorder in the course of COVID-19 pandemic. ESTSS COVID-19 RESPONSE WEBINAR SERIES: ESTSS Recommendations on Mental Health and Psychosocial Care during Pandemics. ESTSS Webinar I, November 18, 2020.

Kazlauskas, E., Biliunaite, I., Dumarkaite, A., Truskauskaite-Kuneviciene, I., Sanderman, R., Andersson, G. (2020). Effects of Internet-based CBT on Caregiver Burden and Social Relationships. SYMPOSIUM: Forging Social Bonds Among Minority and Underserved Populations via Technology. Virtual ISTSS 36th Annual Meeting. November 4–14, 2020.

Biliunaite, I., Kazlauskas, E., Sanderman, R., Truskauskaite-Kuneviciene, I., Dumarkaite, A., Andersson, G. (2020). Internet-based treatment for informal caregivers in Lithuania: feasibility and effectiveness. *Supporting Health by Technology Conference*, Netherlands, June 2020.

Gegieckaitė, G., Kazlauskas, E. (2020) Loss related risk factors of prolonged grief symptoms. The Shared Heritage of European Psychiatry: The 28th European Congress of Psychiatry, Virtual Congress, July 4-7, 2020, European Psychiatry, 63(S1), S45–S282.

**There were also more than 20 presentations by PTC members  
in various national conferences in the year 2020.**







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