



Vilnius
University

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

CENTER FOR PSYCHOTRAUMATOLOGY

INSTITUTE OF PSYCHOLOGY
VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

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2024 IN NUMBERS



OUR TEAM ATTRACTED AROUND **1 MLN.**
EUR IN EXTERNAL GRANT FUNDING



10 MASTER AND BACHELOR
THESES IN PSYCHOLOGY.



PTC TEAM CO-AUTHORED **10** SCIENTIFIC
PUBLICATIONS IN 2024.



WE WERE WORKING ON **6**
RESEARCH PROJECTS.

Year in Review

2024 was another exciting year for the Center of Psychotraumatology (PTC) in Vilnius. Our activities were primarily focused on intervention research in 2024. In collaboration with the Cardiff University team led by Prof. J. Bisson, we are testing the efficacy of SPRING guided digital intervention for PTSD (PI Dr. O. Geleželytė). In collaboration with the WHO, we are testing a novel CBT chatbot intervention for youth with high levels of distress within the Horizon Europe ADVANCE project.

Moreover, the Center was involved in the development and testing of new measures for trauma- and stress-related mental disorders and functional impairment across the lifespan. Dr. Paulina Zelviene, in collaboration with the University of Southern Denmark team led by Prof. A. Elklit, completed data collection for a validation of the Odense Child Trauma Screen (OCTS) measure for small children aged 4 to 8 years. Dr. Geleželytė took leadership in development of the website dedicated to the International Trauma Interview for the assessment of ICD-11 PTSD and Complex PTSD <https://www.iti-cptsd.com/group>.

With more and more projects and activities the PTC team is expanding. Amazing new team members joined us in 2024. Dr. Dumarkaitė joined our team in a Postdoc position in the ADVANCE project; two new PhD students, Livija and Fadzai, will work on intervention projects. Two new bright students, Ramunė and Adomas, have joined the team as research assistants, and Jaunius joined us in a new position as an IT developer.

The year was marked with interesting events, inspiring staff exchanges and multiple achievements by the Team. The PTC team was active in communicating psychotraumatology knowledge to society on national media and commenting on events this year. The PTC team is actively contributing to capacity building in training students and professionals in the assessment and treatment of trauma-related disorders in the country. In collaboration with PTC, new secondary-level mental health services, which include specialised psychotraumatological support, were launched in 2024 by the government, which is a significant milestone in Lithuanian healthcare.

PROF. DR. EVALDAS KAZLAUSKAS
HEAD OF CENTER FOR PSYCHOTRAUMATOLOGY
VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

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 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 and stress on individuals and society by providing evidence-based knowledge for the advancement of trauma-informed care.

VISION

The leading psychotraumatology excellence center in the region.



Meet Our Team

Evaldas Kazlauskas, PhD, Prof., Team Leader

Center of Psychotraumatology is led by Professor of Clinical Psychology and Psychotraumatology Dr. Evaldas Kazlauskas. Prof. Kazlauskas has published over 100 scientific publications on stress and trauma. He is currently a Vice-Dean for Research and the Faculty of Philosophy, a full member of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Board member of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, a Past-President of the European Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (2022-2023), Past-President of the Lithuanian Psychological Association (2010-2016), one of the founders and board member of the Lithuanian Society for

Traumatic Stress. His main professional interests focus on effects of trauma and life stressors on mental health, and development and outcomes of digital psychosocial interventions.

Paulina Želvienė, PhD, Associate Professor, Senior Researcher, Research group leader

Paulina Želvienė is a clinical psychologist, member of the Board of the Lithuanian Trauma Psychology Association (LTPA), President of the EMDR Lithuania Association, a member of the EMDR Europe Scientific Committee, and a member of the office of the Lithuanian Young Academy of Sciences (LMAJA). Her scientific interests are psychotraumatology, evidence-based treatment, stress and resilience in adolescence, traumatization recognition in young children. Paulina Želvienė is currently leading the projects HACHI, STAR-A, PROACT. She is currently involved in the Horizon Europe project ADVANCE.

Odeta Geleželytė, PhD, Associate Professor, Senior Researcher

Odeta Gelezelyte is a clinical psychologist, the president of the Lithuanian Society for Traumatic Stress, and the board member of the European Society for Traumatic Stress Studies. Her main research interests are in the field of posttraumatic stress and complex trauma. Odeta Gelezelyte is currently leading the project SPRING-LT and is one of the main researchers in IN-LIFE, HACHI, and ESTSS ADJUST research projects.

Meet Our Team



Austėja Dumarkaitė, Ph.D., Researcher

Austėja Dumarkaitė is a clinical psychologist with a Ph.D. in social sciences (psychology). Her research interests include clinical psychology, psychotraumatology, and the efficacy of modern technology-based psychological interventions. She is currently involved in the Horizon Europe project [ADVANCE](#).

Augustė Nomeikaitė, PhD student

Augustė Nomeikaitė is a clinical psychologist and a PhD student at Institute of Psychology, Vilnius University. Her areas of interest include clinical psychology, psychotraumatology, and internet-delivered interventions. Augustė is currently involved in the [SPRING-LT](#) and [FOREST](#) projects.



Agnietė Kairytė, PhD student

Agnietė Kairytė is a clinical psychologist and a PhD student at the Institute of Psychology, Vilnius University. Her areas of interest are developmental psychotraumatology, stress and resilience in adolescence, and complex posttraumatic stress. Her main research projects are [STAR-A](#), [HACHI](#) and Horizon Europe project [ADVANCE](#).



Meet Our Team



Greta Guogaitė, PhD student

Greta Guogaitė is a clinical psychologist and PhD student at the Institute of Psychology, Vilnius University. Her research interests include clinical psychology, post-traumatic stress and the effectiveness of internet-based interventions. Greta's main research project is SPRING-LT.

Livija Žiemienė, PhD student

Livija Žiemienė is a health psychologist and PhD student at the Institute of Psychology, Vilnius University. Her research interests include health psychology and the effectiveness of Internet-delivered interventions. Currently, Livija Žiemienė is involved in the Horizon Europe project ADVANCE.



Fadzai Munyuki, PhD student

Fadzai Munyuki is a clinical psychologist and a PhD student at the Institute of Psychology, Vilnius University. Her research focuses on clinical psychology and evaluating the effectiveness of digital mental health interventions for populations in low- and middle-income countries.



Meet Our Team



Adomas Gražinis, Research assistant

Adomas Gražinis is a student in Master's in Clinical Psychology Program at Vilnius University. His research interests include clinical psychology, psychotraumatology, suicidology and the effectiveness of online interventions. Adomas Gražinis is currently involved in the Horizon Europe project [ADVANCE](#).

Ramunė Serapinė, Research assistant

Ramunė Serapinė is an undergraduate student in psychology at Vilnius University. Her research interests include clinical psychology, psychotraumatology, and the efficacy of modern technology-based psychological interventions. She is currently involved in the Horizon Europe project [ADVANCE](#).



Jaunius Pisaravičius, IT specialist

Jaunius Pisaravičius is a software systems developer with a Master's degree from Vilnius University, a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy from KU Leuven, Belgium, and a graduate of psychological counselling from the New School of Psychotherapy and Counselling in London, UK. He is currently involved in the Horizon Europe project [ADVANCE](#).



Meet Our Team

INTERNS

Adomas Gražinis July, 2024 – May, 2025
Greta Jackūnaitė October, 2023 – April, 2024
Kornelija Dovydaitytė October, 2023 – May, 2024
Melissa Kennepohl October, 2023 – January, 2024
Jorigė Mazūraitė July, 2024 – August, 2024
Dominykas Mierkys March, 2024 – April, 2024
Ramunė Serapinė February, 2024 – March, 2024
Beata Tiškevič February, 2024 – March, 2024

STUDENTS

Currently there are **20** bachelor and master students supervised by our team engaged in various research projects at the Center for Psychotraumatology.

Adomas Gražinis
Aistė Tunaitytė
Danielė Grigaliūnaitė
Dovilė Stabrauskaitė
Eglė Samuchovaitė
Elzė Redecki
Ema Pakeltytė
Emilija Kasperavičiūtė
Gabrielė Ciganaitė
Gaila Matulytė

Guoda Germanavičiūtė
Greta Jackūnaitė
Julija Anužytė
Julija Voinė
Kornelija Dovydaitytė
Kotryna Kiudulaitė
Laura Stanevičiūtė
Ramunė Serapinė
Renata Klevickienė
Rūta Povilonytė

In 2024, **10 students** supervised by the PTC team defended their bachelor or master theses in psychology at Vilnius University.

Staff Exchange



1 long-term research visit by team member

6 short-term research visits by team members to various academic and non-academic centers across Europe

5 visits to training or summer schools for young researchers



VISITING RESEARCHERS AT CENTER FOR PSYCHOTRAUMATOLOGY IN VILNIUS



2024 September | Dr. **Anton Käll**, Linköping University

2024 November | Asst. prof. dr. **Sille Scandorph Løkkegaard**, University of Southern Denmark

2024 November | Asst. prof. dr. **Oxana Bayer**, Alfred Nobel University, Dnipro, Ukraine

Achievements

The Lithuanian Science Award in the field of Social Sciences for the body of work titled 'Research on Psychological Stress: Diagnosis, Prevalence, Coping, and Effectiveness of Psychological Interventions' awarded to **Evaldas Kazlauskas**.



Award for the **best publication in the field of social sciences and humanities at Vilnius University in 2023.**

Dumarkaitė, A., Truskauskaitė, I., Andersson, G., Jovarauskaite, L., Jovaisiene, I., Nomeikaite, A., Kazlauskas, E. (2023). The efficacy of internet-based stress recovery intervention FOREST for healthcare staff amid COVID-19 pandemic: Randomized controlled trial. International Journal of Nursing Studies. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2022.104408>).

Research projects

- **ADVANCE**, Addressing mental health vulnerabilities from adolescence to older age: innovating prevention science for times of change | 2023-2028
- **HACHI**, Happy childhood: assessing traumatic stress in young children in a structured game | 2022-2025
- **IN-LIFE**, Psychotraumatology study in a psychiatric inpatient unit "Difficult life experiences and psychological well-being" | 2023-2024
- **STAR-A**, Stress and Resilience in Adolescence | 2019-2025
- **SPRING-LT**, Efficacy of a guided internet-based intervention for posttraumatic stress | 2023-2026
- **PROACT-CH**, Psychological well-being of social workers: risk and protective factors | 2024-2029

Research grants

Research and innovation project "**Addressing mental health vulnerabilities from adolescence to older age: innovating prevention science for times of change (ADVANCE)**" (2023-2028). Funded by Horizon Europe. Project No.: 101080323. Main coordinator: University of Copenhagen. Total budget: 6,842,447 Eur. Vilnius University budget: 631,862 EUR. Team leader of the WP2 on Psychosocial interventions for Youth is Prof. Evaldas Kazlauskas.

Research project "**Digital technologies in psychotraumatology: the effectiveness of an innovative web-based intervention for post-traumatic stress (SPRING-LT)**" (2023-2026). Funded by Research Council of Lithuania, No. S-MIP-23-14. Budget 148,645 EUR. Principal investigator (PI) Assoc. Prof. O. Geleželytė.

Research project "**Happy Childhood: Assessment of Traumatic Stress in Young Children in a Structured Game (HACHI)**" (2022-2025). Funded by Research Council of Lithuania, No. S-MIP-22-22. Budget 147,916 EUR. Principal investigator (PI) Assoc. Prof. P. Želvienė.

Student internship grants

Student internship research project "**Associations between complex post-traumatic stress disorder and psychoactive substance use**" (2023-2024). Funded by Research Council of Lithuania No. P-ST-23-134. Student G. Jackūnaitė, supervisor Dr. O. Geleželytė.

Student internship research project "**Opportunities of the modern technology usage providing psychosocial support for youth**" (2024-2025). Funded by Research Council of Lithuania No. P-ST-24-157. Student A. Gražinis, supervisor Prof. Evaldas Kazlauskas

International Collaborations

PTC is a member of the ARQ Collaborative Europe Psychotrauma Centers Consortium.

PTC core collaborators in 2024 were:

- [Traumatic Stress Research Group](#), Cardiff University, UK
- [Internet, health and clinical psychology research group](#), Linköping University, Sweden
- [Department of Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy](#), Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany
- [Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies](#), University of Oslo
- [ARQ Nationaal Psychotrauma Centre](#), The Netherlands
- [Danish National Centre for Psychotraumatology](#), University of Southern Denmark
- [Division of Clinical Psychopathology and Intervention](#), University of Zurich, Switzerland
- [European Society for Traumatic Stress Studies](#)



Other partners included collaborations with researchers from: University of Bern, (Switzerland), World Health Organization (Switzerland), Macquarie University, (Australia), Edinburgh Napier University, (Scotland), Copenhagen University, (Denmark), Uppsala University (Sweden), University of Vienna (Austria), University of Oslo (Norway), Catholic University of Eichstaett-Ingolstadt (Germany), Jaume I University (Spain).

Our Centre has been involved in the activities of the International Trauma Interview (ITI) Collaboration Group. Dr. Odetta Geleželytė and Prof. Evaldas Kazlauskas are members of the group. In collaboration with Lithuanian Society for Traumatic Stress, an **ITI website www.iti-cptsd.com was published in November 2024.**

Organized Events

- 2024 March 1 | **XIIth Vilnius Trauma Psychology Conference**. Annual national psychotraumatology conference with a broad overview of historic and new insights into the field. In collaboration with the Lithuanian Society for Traumatic Stress (LSTS)
- 2024 June 18 | **Scientific Conference of Students conducting research in Psychotraumatology**. During the conference, students presented findings from their own research theses.
- 2024 November 21 | Open seminar **Children's traumatic experiences: how to recognise difficulties and help?** Seminar and discussion on child psychotraumatology led by Dr. Silje Schandorph Løkkegaard (University of Southern Denmark) and Dr. Paulina Želvienė (Vilnius University)
- 2024 November 29 | Conference **Psychology and the war in Ukraine**. The conference focused on psychological research related to the ongoing war in Ukraine and the application of psychotraumatology research in the provision of psychological care. In collaboration with the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences (LAS) and the Lithuanian Society for Traumatic Stress (LSTS)



Publications

Fernandez-Buendia, S., Miguel, C., Dumarkaite, A., Kazlauskas, E., Cuijpers, P., Quero, S. (2024). Technology-supported treatments for adjustment disorder: A systematic review and preliminary meta-analysis. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 347, 29-38. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2023.11.059>

Gelezelyte, O., Guogaite, G., Nomeikaite, A., Bisson, J.I., Lewis, C. and Kazlauskas, E. (2024). Efficacy of an internet-based guided trauma-focused intervention in reducing ICD-11 posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms: study protocol of a randomized controlled trial. *BMC Psychiatry*, 24(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-024-06097-0>

Kavaliauskas, P., Kazlauskas, E. & Smailyte, G. (in press). Psychological distress, suicidality and resilience of Lithuanian nurses. *BMC Nursing*.

Kavaliauskas, P., Kazlauskas, E. & Smailyte, G. (in press). Suicide risk factors among Lithuanian medical doctors and residents. *Archives in Public Health*.

Kavaliauskas, P., Nomeikaite, A., Gelezelyte, O., Kazlauskas, E., & Smailyte, G. (2024). Work-related stressors and psychological distress predict career change ideation among Lithuanian healthcare workers. *International Journal of Occupational Medicine and Environmental Health*, 37(3), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.13075/ijomeh.1896.02350>

Lotzin, A., Stahlmann, K., Acquarini, E., Ajdukovic, D., Ajdukovic, M., Anastassiou-Hadjicharalambous, X., Ardino, V., Bondjers, K., Bragesjö, M., Böttche, M., Dragan, M., Figueiredo-Braga, M., Gelezelyte, O., Grajewski, P., Darejan Javakhishvili, J., Kazlauskas, E., Lenferink, L., Lioupi, C., Lueger-Schuster, B., Mooren, T., Sales, L., Tsiskarishvili, L., Zrnica Novakovic, I., Schäfer, I., & ADJUST Study Consortium. (2024). A longitudinal study of risk and protective factors for symptoms of adjustment disorder during the COVID-19 pandemic. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 15(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/20008066.2024.2318944>

Publications

Nomeikaite, A., Gelezelyte, O., Böttche, M., Andersson, G., & Kazlauskas, E. (in press). The Role of Tailored Timing and Frequency Prompts on the Efficacy of an Internet-Delivered Stress Recovery Intervention for Healthcare Workers: A Randomized Controlled Trial. *JMIR Mental Health*. 26/11/2024:62782 DOI: 10.2196/62782

Truskauskaite, I., Dumarkaite, A., Nomeikaite, A., Andersson, G., Kazlauskas, E. (2024). Longitudinal Interplay Between Subjective Stress, Anxiety, Depression, and Well-being in Internet-Based Stress Recovery Intervention for Nurses. *Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapy*.

Truskauskaite, I., Sugimura, K., Abe, K., Hihara, S., Haramaki, Y., Jovarauskaite, L., Kamite, Y. & Kazlauskas E. (2024). Exploring trauma exposure and post-traumatic stress in university students of different identity statuses in Lithuania and Japan. *Development and Psychopathology*, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S095457942300161X>

Zelviene, P., Daniunaite, I., Elklit, A., Kazlauskas, E., Løkkegaard, S. S., & Gelezelyte, O. (2024). Recognizing Traumatization in Children Aged 4 to 8: A Pilot Validation Study of the Odense Child Trauma Screening (OCTS) Measure in Lithuania. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 33(6), 743–757. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2024.2332599>



Conference presentations

11 international and national invited talks

9 presentations in international conferences

5 presentations in national conferences



Vilnius University
Faculty of Philosophy

Center for Psychotraumatology
Institute of Psychology

2024 Annual Report

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