



Marking the Twentieth Anniversary of *Parliamentary Studies*

This year marks an anniversary of the journal *Parlamento Studijos* (*Parliament Studies*). The journal was launched twenty years ago by the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, which saw a great need of coherent research of politics, sociology, communication, parliamentary studies in the history of Lithuania, and productive links with scholars. The decision to establish the journal was made on May 14, 2004 between the Institute of the Lithuanian Language, Lithuanian Institute of History, the University of Law (now Mykolas Romeris University), the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania and Vilnius Pedagogical University (now Vytautas Magnus University Education Academy). The editorial board was approved, with the National Library of Lithuania acting as its publisher.

From 2004 to 2013, fifteen issues of *Parliamentary Studies* were published, dominated by history (40 articles), politics (19), law (16), and language (14). This provides the foundational pillars for the current and future editorial boards of the scientific journal at the National Library.

On October 18, 2024, the Director General of the National Library of Lithuania, Aušrinė Žilinskienė, approved the Rules of Procedure of the Editorial Board of *Parliamentary Studies*. The editorial board was also renewed, by including more independent members from foreign research centers, to continue the publishing process efficiently and to return to the former frequency of publication, i.e., two issues per year. The staff of the Strategic Forecasting Unit of the National Library of Lithuania (headed by Prof. Dr. Lauras Bielinis) was put in charge of the journal: Prof. Alfonsas Eidintas was appointed Editor-in-Chief and Gediminas Kašėta, PhD was appointed Editorial Secretary. They will guide the authors in an academic dialogue on the present and future of our society and the state of the Republic of Lithuania.

The renewed editorial board hopes to continue the cooperation with the members of the previous editorial board, and invites to submit articles for the upcoming issues of the journal. Time will tell whether the journal will be worthy of inclusion in the ranks of the well-known databases, but we are obliged to do our best to make sure that this happens. The Science and Encyclopedia Publishing Center of the National Library of Lithuania, which has been contributing to the Library's mission to become the knowledge space of Lithuania that creates value for the society, would take care of the electronic (and, if feasible, physical) publishing of the journal.

The historical development of *Parliament Studies* as an academic publication has already been analyzed. Here, I would like to express my gratitude to all the authors and editors, especially Regina Varnienė-Janssen, Andrius Vaišnys, Aivas Ragauskas, Darius Žiemelis and many others. They have been searching for the relevant look and place of this journal among the Lithuanian academic periodicals for many years, and developing it in terms of its subject matter, as well as advancing it in terms of the modern technologies and the availability.

For some time, the journal's priority was the parliamentary studies. However, time has been suggesting a much broader understanding of the term—as the study of democracy in the broadest sense that would cover not only the activities of the democratically elected representation of the people, but also the efforts to maintain the principles of democracy in society and the state from the times of the Grand

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Duchy of Lithuania to the present. It is for this reason that the scope of *Parliamentary Studies* has been expanded to include the subheading “The Workings of Democracy in Society and the State.”

The fierce struggle between democracy and dictatorships, between dictatorship and freedom of choice in all spheres of life, is still ongoing; therefore, it will continue to be important. Living in a global world, we plan not to limit ourselves to the Lithuanian history and academic achievements in various branches of the humanities, because the struggle for democracy is taking place all over the world, in all spheres, and the phenomena are extremely interconnected, affecting many countries. For that reason, we plan to publish articles in English, if the author’s interests require it, and especially if they are written by foreign authors or by the members of the editorial board of the journal who work at foreign academic institutions.

It is important not only to retain the old authors of the journal but also to find new ones, especially among young scholars, provided that their works meet the requirements of an academic periodical. Authors have faced dilemmas in the preparation of their first publications. New names will emerge if they are not excluded from the preparation and publication of their texts for one reason or another. Our journal should do the same, since the National Library of Lithuania is a place where the younger generation of researchers: BAs, MAs and PhD students, are gathering material and analyzing it. They are hopeful to publish their findings and to receive advice and comments from experienced editorial board members and reviewers.

Interdisciplinary links broaden the scope of the journal’s topics, and the new sections should help to expand the pool of potential authors. In addition to **regular themes** that have dominated the journal (history, law, domestic political issues, international relations, language and education, communication, and high technology), we plan **new** ones, such as theoretical and discussion articles; publications on the genesis of the wars caused by dictatorial states (for example, Russia’s aggression in Ukraine) as well as the conflicts and the search for peace; research on demographics and migration and the new problems that have emerged in recent years (for example, the demographic and migration issues that have become existential for Lithuania).

Everything is connected and interrelated. It would seem that separate demographic problems, the decline in Lithuania’s population also raise economic problems related to the labor market and productivity, finances, social policy and the coexistence of the majority of the population and ethnic groups, and its needs, and also determine international relations, with the sudden increase in international migration. Strengthening the labor market potential requires attention to demographic policy and its links with other key strategic issues, such as the impact of technological progress, digitalization and the Green Deal, socio-economic transformation, and educational and scientific reforms. Already from this one example, one can see that the time has come to comprehensively raise questions about the integration of new citizens in multicultural contexts, the aspirations of stopping emigration, and the implementation of a return policy, while preserving the country’s core national identity and the historical continuity of the Lithuanian state.

Issues of interest include the local and parliamentary elections, their results and the competitive struggles between programs of political parties, as well as the activities of parliamentary committees, reviews of major conferences and forums, reports, academic and political polemics and debates. After all, this is also the subject of democratic development.

We also consider the preservation of historical memory, the publication of important documents of the past, memoirs and testimonies of prominent personalities, who have influenced the democratic development of the country, of the struggle for freedom and democracy, and the marking of important historical dates to be of relevance to the future. The journal is open to the publication and polemic of the statements and aspirations of the Parliament, the Presidential Palace, the Government, and the parliamentary political parties on issues of relevance to Lithuania’s domestic and foreign policy.

We invite you to contribute to *Parliamentary Studies*, which is the only way to keep it alive, analytical and instrumental, on the widest possible range of topics, dictated not only by your academic interests but also by life itself, and by the unexpected, and often even existential, challenges.

Alfonsas Eidintas
Editor-in-Chief