

Nordic and Baltic States Studies // IIRPS, Vilnius University

Lecturer: Dr. Liutauras Gudžinskas

Syllabus of the course

The aim of this course is to discuss political, economic and social processes in the Nordic (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden) and the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania). All these countries belong to the same geographic region (Northern Europe), as designed by the United Nations, and have extensively interacted with each other throughout history. During the Cold War, however, the Iron Curtain divided this region and crucially induced differentiation between these two groups of countries, which has still been widely felt nowadays. Yet, on the same time, both the Nordic and the Baltic states have been distinguished for their success vis-à-vis other countries of similar background. The Nordic countries are reckoned to be examples of the most successful development of Western capitalism, where economic competitiveness and technological innovativeness is combined with social solidarity and extensive welfare state. Meanwhile, the Baltic states have come a long way during the last quarter of century – from being occupied territories of largely dysfunctional Soviet Union to full-fledged democracies integrated into the transatlantic community of advanced market economies. To surprise of many early transition theorists, they have managed to carry out radical political and economic reforms in short period of time enabling robust economic growth and democratic consolidation in the long-term. Arguably, they represent ones of the most successful cases of transformation in the post-communist space and beyond it.

The core premise of this course is emphasis on state-building as a fundamental process conducive to overall achievement of main developmental goals. Against this background, one will in turn analyse certain traits of governance, economy and welfare as key aspects informing both current politics and historical trends of these countries. It should be noted, however, that the Nordic and Baltic countries will be separately analysed in in discussion of most topics of this course. This will help better perception of important variation among countries of each of these two groups, which is essential for understanding of complexity of development of all analysed states. Nevertheless, certain historic parallels between both groups will be drawn. One will also pay considerable attention for relationships between these groups of countries. Ultimately, one will look how such supranational and exterritorial processes as European integration and movement of people affect political and societal development in the overall region.

Requirements of the course and structure of final evaluation: perusal of assigned literature and participation in seminars (50%) and final exam (50%).

Course is taught in English. Students may consult with lecturer before/after seminars or via e-mail (liutauras.gudzinskas@tspmi.vu.lt; liutaurasg@gmail.com).

Content of seminars

1. Introductory seminar
2. Nordic and Baltic political systems: what similarities, what differences? (Hilson 2008, 25-56; Aylott 2014, 219-240)
3. Evolution of the Nordic party systems (Arter 2016, 41-63; 85-112)
4. Post-independence evolution of democracy and party politics in the Baltics (Duvold 2014, 39-76; Auers 2015, 78-119)
5. Nordic welfare: institutional approach (Andersen et al. 2007, 31-61; Rothstein & Steinmo 2013, 87-105)
6. Nordic welfare: evolutionary approach (Witoszek & Sørensen 2018, 36-58)
7. Economic development in the Baltics (Bohle & Greskovits 2012, 96-137; Avlijaš 2020)
8. Lessons of Great Recession for small states (Thorhallsson & Kattel 2013; Kuokštis 2015)
9. Civil society and ethnic relations in the Baltic countries (Auers 2015, 120-153; Cianetti 2018)
10. Ethnicity and multiculturalism in the Nordic societies (Hilson 2008, 148-176; Meret & Siim 2013, 125-139)
11. Regional cooperation of the Nordic countries (Borring Olesen & Strang 2016, pp. 27-48; Götz, Haggrén & Hilson 2016, pp. 49-68)
12. Security politics of the Baltic states (Mole 2012, 143-164; Auers 2015, 195-228)
13. The Nordic attitude towards Europe: past and present (Arter 2016, 397-431)
14. The Nordic-Baltic cooperation (Bergman 2006; Jakniūnaitė & Vaicekauskaitė 2017, 103-124)
15. Future challenges for the region and beyond (Midttun 2018, 139-159).

Literature

1. Andersen et al. (2007), *The Nordic Model: Embracing globalization and sharing risks*. ETLA.
2. Árnason, Vilhjálmur (2018), "Have Icelanders Learned Their Lesson? The Investigation of the Icelandic Collapse and its Aftermath", In: Sigurjonsson, Throstur Olaf; Schwarzkopf, David L.; Bryant, Murray. *The Return of Trust? Institutions and the Public after the Icelandic Financial Crisis*. Emerald Publishing Limited.
3. Arter, David (2016), *Scandinavian Politics Today*, 3rd edition. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
4. Auers, Daunis (2015), *Comparative Politics and Government of the Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the 21st Century*, Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
5. Avlijaš, Sonja (2020): Beyond Neoliberalism? Revisiting the Welfare State in the Baltic States, *Europe-Asia Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/09668136.2019.1709622
6. Aylott, Nicholas, ed. (2014), *Models of democracy in Nordic and Baltic Europe: Political institutions and discourse*. Farnham ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company.
7. Bergman, Annika (2006), "Adjacent Internationalism: The Concept of Solidarity and Post-Cold War Nordic-Baltic Relations", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 41 (1).

8. Bohle, Dorothee & Béla Greskovits (2012), *Capitalist Diversity on Europe's Periphery*, New York: Cornell University Press.
9. Borring Olesen, Thorsten, and Johan Strang (2016), "European challenge to Nordic institutional cooperation: Past, present and future." In: Johan Strang, ed. *Nordic Cooperation: A European region in transition*. London: Routledge, pp. 27-48.
10. Licia Cianetti (2018), "Consolidated technocratic and ethnic hollowness, but no backsliding: reassessing Europeanisation in Estonia and Latvia", *East European Politics*, Vol. 34 (3), 317-336.
11. Dølvik, Jon Erik et al. (2015), *The Nordic Model Towards 2030: A New Chapter?*, FAFO.
12. Duvold, Kjetil (2014), "Between Flawed and Full Democracy: 20 Years of Baltic Independence", In: Aylott, Nicholas, *Models of democracy in Nordic and Baltic Europe: Political institutions and discourse*. Farnham ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company.
13. Götz, Norbert, Heidi Haggren, and Mary Hilson (2016), "Nordic cooperation in the voluntary sector." In: Johan Strang, ed. *Nordic Cooperation: A European region in transition*. London: Routledge, pp. 49-68.
14. Hilson, Mary (2008), *The Nordic Model: Scandinavia since 1945*, London: Reaction Books.
15. Ingebritsen, Christine (2002), "Norm Entrepreneurs: Scandinavia's Role in World Politics", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 37, No. 1, March 2002.
16. Jakniūnaitė, Dovilė, & Živilė Vaicekauskaitė (2017), "Baltic Sea Region-Building: An Impossibility, or an Inability to Finish? In: Makarychev, Andrey, & Alexandra Yatsyk (eds.), *Borders in the Baltic Sea Region: Suturing the Ruptures*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
17. Ketels, Christian & Helge Pedersen (2015), *The Top of Europe – Striving for Direction in a Complex Environment*, Baltic Development Forum.
18. Kuldkepp, Mart (2013), "The Scandinavian Connection in Early Estonian Nationalism", *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 44:3, 313-338
19. Kuokštis, Vytautas (2015), "Baltic States in World Markets: Does Katzenstein's Framework Still Hold?", *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 46:2, 109-126.
20. Meret, Susi, and Birte Siim (2013), "Multiculturalism, Right-Wing Populism, and the Crisis of Democracy". In: Micheal Keating and David McCrone, eds., *The Crisis of European Social Democracy*. Edinburgh University Press, 125-139.
21. Midttun, Atle (2018), "Challenges to the Nordic Work-Life Model in the Age of Globalized Digitalization". In: Nina Witoszek and Atle Midttun, eds., *Sustainable Modernity: The Nordic Model and Beyond*, 139-159.
22. Mole, Richard (2012), *The Baltic States from the Soviet Union to the European Union: Identity, Discourse and Power in the Post-Communist Transition of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*, Abingdon & New York: Routledge.
23. Rothstein, Bo, and Sven Steinmo (2013), "Social Democracy in Crisis? What Crisis?", In Micheal Keating and David McCrone (eds.), *The Crisis of European Social Democracy*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012.
24. Rüse, Ilze (2014), "Nordic-Baltic Interaction in European Union Negotiations: Taking Advantage of Institutionalized Cooperation", *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 45:2, 229-246.

25. Saarts, Tõnis (2011), "Comparative Party System Analysis in Central and Eastern Europe: The Case of The Baltic States", *Studies of Transition States and Societies*, Vol. 3, Issue 3, 2011.
26. Simm, Kadri, & Külliki Seppel (2014), "The Nordic Model and Estonian Political Discourse", In: Aylott, Nicholas, *Models of democracy in Nordic and Baltic Europe: Political institutions and discourse*. Farnham ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company.
27. Steinmo, Sven (2010), *The Evolution of Modern States: Sweden, Japan, the United States of America*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
28. Terk, Erik, Veiko Spolitis & Ramūnas Vilpišauskas (2011), "The Future of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Integration: Three Possible Scenarios", In Estonian Human Development Report, 2011.
29. Thorhallsson, Baldur, and Rainer Kattel (2013) "Neo-Liberal Small States and Economic Crisis: Lessons for Democratic Corporatism", *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 44:1, 83-103
30. Vanags, Alf (2011), "Economic Integration and Cohesion in the Baltic Sea Region: A Critical Perspective From the Baltic States", *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 42:1, 91-102, 2011.
31. Witoszek, Nina, and Øystein Sørensen (2018), "Nordic Humanism as a Driver of the Welfare Society", In: Nina Witoszek and Atle Midttun, eds., *Sustainable Modernity: The Nordic Model and Beyond*, 36-58.