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## Foreword

This issue of “Culture and Society” devotes a particular attention to the annual conference of the Lithuanian Sociological Association that took place on November 26, 2010. The conference entitled “Can Sociology Change the Lithuanian Society?” drew attention to the nature of adequate sociological knowledge and the conditions under which it is possible. Plenary sessions of the conference focused on the current situation of Lithuanian sociology, social injustice and social exclusion, the relationship between sociology and sustainable development, and the influence of synthetic biology on society. Some conference papers are published in this issue.

In her article “Sociotropic Perceptions or Personal Experiences? Political Trust in Lithuania”, Jūratė Imbrasaitė investigates the sources of political trust in Lithuania. Analyzing the data of a representative survey conducted in 2010, she argues that such factors as people’s attitudes towards the country’s current economy and its economy in the future, their pride in the Lithuanian citizenship, their evaluations of procedural justice of local government and their satisfaction with life influence political trust in the country.

Miglė Bartuškaitė and Apolonijus Žilys also focus on a similar topic. Using the qualitative data from 4 focus-group interviews, in their article, they identify the features of political and social trust and participation in Lithuania. According to the authors, Lithuanians have low trust in political institutions; moreover, pragmatic, rational and personal interests along with citizens’ trust in narrow social networks characterize the low level of social trust and limited communal participation in Lithuania.

In her article “What Kind of Society does the Lithuanian Social Support Policy Construct?”, Laimutė Žalimienė examines language used in social policy documents and social service organizations. She argues that the process of categorization in social policy legislation in Lithuania creates a discriminatory environment for social assistance recipients; it also establishes hierarchical power relations between social assistance organizers, providers and assisted individuals and families.

Gedas Malinauskas and Monika Mozerytė analyze teenagers’ experiences after their parents’ leaving for work abroad. A narrative approach used in the article reveals the multiplicity of teenagers’ experiences: on the one hand, their

difficulties related to the change of their role in the family, their sadness and anger due to their parents' emigration and, on the other hand, their happiness about freedom, pride in their independence and their willingness to grow up fast.

In her article "Motives of Intergenerational Support in Lithuania," Margarita Gedvilaitė-Kordušienė uncovers the perceptions and meanings attached to intergenerational support in the country. Although the exchange based on reciprocity is the most common motive found in 42 semi-structured interviews with providers and receivers of intergenerational support, exchange as an investment and as a social debt are also prominent.

Ilona Tamutienė, Inga Černiauskaitė ir Austė Sruogaitė focus on major barriers to the health care services that the Lithuanian residents encounter in both rural and urban areas. The main economic barriers to the health care services in Lithuania are expensive, partially compensated or not compensated drugs and paid services. Lithuanians living in the rural areas face territorial barriers, such as additional travel costs, problematic and inconvenient routes and schedules of the public transport, and very long distances to the health care centers. Finally, patients encounter long queues at the reception desks, the health care professionals' inconvenient working hours and the medical personnel's unethical behavior.

After conducting a quantitative and qualitative content analysis of the transcripts of the Lithuanian Parliament in 2007–2008, Daumantas Stumbrys, in the last article of this issue, identifies two types of the rhetoric of drugs: control and punishment rhetoric and prevention and treatment rhetoric. The analyzed data also demonstrate that the control and punishment rhetoric is dominant in the transcripts.

As in the previous issues of the journal, scholars from different research fields participate in this issue that encompasses a variety of critical, theoretical and methodological approaches and registers.

The collective of "Culture and Society" is grateful to the Lithuanian Science Council for the financial support of this issue of our journal.

*Artūras Tereškinas*