

Why does it work? Constitutional liability in the Republic of Lithuania

The project aims to examine the mechanisms of constitutional liability (*impeachment*) in Lithuania, and by doing so, to speak to the broader debate on the responsibility of politicians or highest officials for violations of the constitution or laws and ways to protect the democratic system.

This issue is interesting for four reasons. First, it is a mechanism that is used relatively frequently. Second, the mechanism is effective. Third, Lithuania is a post-Soviet country that has managed to implement a constitutional liability mechanism that works in practice. In principle, other countries from the former “Eastern Bloc” have not succeeded. Similarly, countries that have been functioning longer as democracies also show deficits in the effective use of constitutional liability mechanisms. Fourth, the Lithuanian experience on this subject can serve as an inspiration for the introduction of new accountability mechanisms in other countries.

The project, in cooperation with Lithuanian researchers, will reconstruct the legal framework of constitutional liability in Lithuania. The basic research material will be Lithuanian constitutional liability legislation and case law in this area. The analysis of the norms regulating this issue and the practice of their application will help answer the title research question, i.e. “Why does the mechanism of constitutional liability in Lithuania work?”. The ambition of the project is to identify both the legal and extra-legal features of the Lithuanian model that determine its effectiveness.

The project, although essentially part devoted to one country, will allow to describe one of the key mechanisms that protect democracy (the so-called *militant democracy*), as well as to identify the legal and extra-legal requirements of an effective constitutional liability mechanism.