Institute of European Right

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2025 Annual Report

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For the Institute of European Right, 2025 was a strategically intensive year of producing intellectual content, holding public debates and expanding into the regions. The Institute achieved the goals it had set: it published its third book, built a coherent body of analytical publications and organised more than 20 events aimed at strengthening Lithuanian right of centre political thought and civic resilience in an age of threats.

The book „Ribos ir riboženkliai. Dešinysis mąstymas vakar ir šiandien“ (Boundaries and Boundary Markers: Right Wing Thought Yesterday and Today)

Among its other activities, the Institute devoted 2025 to writing and to bringing its texts to the public. One of the most important achievements of the year was the Institute's third book, the collection of essays „Ribos ir riboženkliai. Dešinysis mąstymas vakar ir šiandien“. Its presentations became a platform for a lively dialogue about the fundamental principles of right of centre politics in the context of today's crises and geopolitical challenges.

The book covers a wide range of topics, from the foundations of right of centre politics to current affairs:

- Simona Merkinaitė (researcher, Vilnius University Institute of International Relations and Political Science), “The Meaning of the Conservative Disposition, or How to Overcome the Limits of (Un)freedom?”
- Federico Ottavio Reho (Senior Research Officer, Wilfried Martens Centre), “Conservatism, Christian Democracy and the Radical Right in Historical Perspective”
- Teodoras Žukas (Director, EDI), “A Stormy Alliance: Crisis as the Norm of Transatlantic Relations”
- Dovydas Skarolskis (member of Vilnius City Council), “Europe between Economic Freedom and Welfare: In Search of Conservative Guidelines for a Liberal Economy”
- Edgaras Bolšakovas (PhD candidate, Vilnius University), “Aesopian Language in the World”
- Justinas Dementavičius (Associate Professor, Vilnius University Institute of International Relations and Political Science), “Understanding Francis: On a Possible Christian Democratic Approach to Russia”

To reach as wide an audience as possible, we organised a series of presentations across Lithuania. These events brought together the Institute's community, the wider public and the authors of the book for a shared discussion. The book was presented:

- in Vilnius, at the EDI office
- in Vilnius, at the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania
- in Prienai, at the Justinas Marcinkevičius Public Library
- in Telšiai, at the parish house of the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

This and the Institute's earlier books are available at the *Humanitas* and *Eureka* bookshops and on the Publications page.

Event series: „Kalbam politiškai“ (Let’s Talk Politics)

Together with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS), the Institute of European Right ran a series of discussions and events across Lithuania called „Kalbam politiškai“. The aim of the series was to speak openly, seriously and politically about the most important issues facing the state, the region and Europe: transatlantic relations, Lithuania’s defence policy, political radicalisation, disinformation, antisemitism, demographic challenges, green policy and other pressing questions. Through these events we encouraged Lithuanian society to take part in debates on the essential questions that shape the present and future of the people of Lithuania.

Kaunas: Ukraine, Europe and the US. Is America Leaving the West?

Speakers:

- Gintautas Mažeikis (Professor, Vytautas Magnus University)
- Paulius Gritėnas (philosopher, political commentator and writer)
- Ignas Kalpokas (Associate Professor, Vytautas Magnus University)

Moderator: Teodoras Žukas (Director, EDI)

Kėdainiai: Wars Past and Present. How to Build Civic Resilience to Propaganda?

Speakers:

- Daiva Ulbinaitė (Member of the Seimas)
- Jurga Bakaitė (journalist, LRT)
- Augustina Zamuškevičiūtė (project manager, CRI)

Moderator: Laurynas Peluritis (lecturer, Vilnius University)

Klaipėda: Klaipėda and Baltic Sea Security. How to Turn Threats into Opportunities?

Speakers:

- Artūras Razbadauskas (Rector, Klaipėda University)
- Laurynas Kasčiūnas (Member of the Seimas)
- Roma Stubrienė (Director, KMTP)
- Maj. Artūras Milkintis (Commander, 3rd Western Riflemen’s Unit)

Moderator: Gabrielė Burbulytė-Tsiskarishvili (lecturer, Klaipėda University)

Kaunas District (Raudondvaris): External and Internal Dangers to Lithuania’s Democracy and Security. How to Withstand Them and Act?

Speakers:

- Rita Malinauskienė (Director, Vytautas the Great War Museum)

- Giedrė Balčytytė (Member of the Seimas)
- Laurynas Kasčiūnas (Member of the Seimas)
- Nerijus Maliukevičius (political scientist, Vilnius University Institute of International Relations and Political Science)

Moderator: Teodoras Žukas (Director, EDI)

Events with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS)

We also ran other initiatives with our long standing partner, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. In 2025 we jointly organised the following events:

International conference: *Not Only Putin: Russian Culture and Imperialism*

Together with KAS we organised an international conference that set out to critically assess the links between Russian culture, intellectual traditions and imperial ideology that shape the country's expansionist policy. The conference examined how literature, art and philosophy have historically justified and reinforced the narratives that ensure the imperial continuity of tsarist, Soviet and present day Russia.

Session I. The Continuity of Russian Imperialism
This session discussed the persistence of the imperial idea in Russian intellectual life and culture as a field of "myth design" that shapes the public imagination. Speakers:

- Donnacha Ó Beacháin (Professor, Dublin City University)
- Nataliia Kryvda (Professor, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv)
- Gintautas Mažeikis (Professor, Vytautas Magnus University)
- Moderator: Vykintas Pugačiauskas (foreign news editor, LRT)

Session II. The Empire in Our Heads
This session focused on postcolonial identity and the long term consequences of the totalitarian regime for society's mental health and consciousness. Speakers:

- Edgaras Bolšakovas (PhD candidate, Vilnius University)
- Danutė Gailienė (Professor, Vilnius University)
- Nikolai Klimeniouk (journalist, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*)
- Moderator: Laurynas Peluritis (lecturer, Vilnius University)

Session III. Misperception

The closing session examined the West's systemic mistakes in assessing the true nature of Russia and the divide in values between Russia and the democratic world. Speaker:

- Gabrielius Landsbergis (Visiting Scholar, Stanford University)
- Moderator: Teodoras Žukas (Director, EDI)

Training: Projects against Russian Imperialism

We initiated a practical training programme to help civically active members of the Chechen diaspora develop projects and initiatives that strengthen civic resilience. Representatives of the Chechen diaspora from across Europe took part and met Lithuanian policymakers, media and NGO experts.

Discussion with Prof. Carlo Masala: NATO Defence Scenarios

We hosted Professor Carlo Masala of the Bundeswehr University Munich, visiting Vilnius, for a discussion on NATO defence scenarios. The conversation centred on his latest book *Wenn Russland gewinnt. Ein Szenario* (If Russia Wins: A Scenario), which explores a scenario of a small scale Russian attack on NATO territory and the Western response.

Events with the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies (WMCES)

In cooperation with the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies (WMCES), we organised the following events in Vilnius in 2025:

International conference *Never Again: Preventing the Rise of Radicalism, Antisemitism, and Hate in Europe*

This three part conference discussed manifestations of antisemitism at the local, regional and global level, examining the myths that circulate in public discourse and the geopolitical aspects of the phenomenon. The event was organised in cooperation with WMCES, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) and the Vilna Gaon Museum of Jewish History.

Opening discussion. Public Intellectuals on the Challenges of Today
In the opening discussion, experts considered the state of antisemitism in contemporary society and the role of intellectuals in responding to the radicalisation of public discourse. Speakers:

- Dr Simona Merkinaitė (lecturer, Vilnius University Institute of International Relations and Political Science)
- Dr Simonas Strelcovas (Director, Vilna Gaon Museum of Jewish History)
- Emanuelis Zingeris (Member of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania)

Session I. Jewish Heritage, Historical Memory and European Identity
This session examined the practices of memory politics, the commemoration of Jewish historical heritage in Lithuania and the gaps in Lithuanian and Western education systems in countering antisemitism. Speakers:

- Dr Zigmas Vitkus (researcher, Institute of Baltic Region History and Archaeology, Klaipėda University)
- Dr Akvilė Naudžiūnienė (researcher, Faculty of History, Vilnius University)
- Algirdas Davidavičius (philosopher, teacher at the Vilnius Sholem Aleichem ORT Gymnasium)

Session II. Fighting the Rise of Antisemitism in the West
In the closing session, experts discussed the geopolitical context of antisemitism against the background of Middle East geopolitics and strategies to prevent the spread of hatred in Europe and the US. Speakers:

- Ellie Cohanim (Senior Fellow, Independent Women's Forum, former US Deputy Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism)
- Daniel Flesch (Senior Policy Analyst, Heritage Foundation)
- Peter Hefele (Policy Director, Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies)

Discussion "Navigating Demographic Shifts: Migration, Borders, and the European Workforce"

The discussion analysed today's problems of migration, demography and the labour market in Lithuania and the EU. It addressed the most sensitive questions of security, cultural tensions and integration, and considered what a sensible migration strategy could and should look like: one that responds to economic needs while ensuring cultural integration.

Speakers:

- George Dimakos (Project Officer, Wilfried Martens Centre)
- Vytautas Šilinskas (Head, Investors' Forum)
- Eglė Verseckaitė-Grzeskowiak (lecturer, ISM)

Moderator:

- Laurynas Peluritis (lecturer, Vilnius University)

Roundtable "US and EU Relations at a Crossroads: How to Preserve the Transatlantic Bond?"

A roundtable on the state of transatlantic relations and the challenges they face. The conversation considered how to preserve the transatlantic bond and what role the NATO alliance plays.

Speakers:

- Christian Leuprecht (Professor, Royal Military College of Canada and Queen's University, WMCES analyst)
- Linas Kojala (Director, Geopolitics and Security Studies Center)

Publications: expert analyses

In 2025 the Institute of European Right prepared and published 8 analyses and policy briefs in Lithuanian and English. The aim of our research is to provide an intellectual foundation for decision makers, to deconstruct hybrid threats and to offer value based responses to the most complex challenges of our time.

Geopolitics, security and deterrence

- **The New Ice Curtain: Geopolitical Competition, Russo-Chinese Convergence, and Western Deterrence in the Arctic**
  An analysis of geopolitical competition in the Arctic. It examines the growing convergence of Russia and China in the Arctic and the need for a Western deterrence strategy in this strategically important region.
- **Policy Brief: Russia's Wartime Economy. Current State and Outlook**
  The brief analyses the current state of Russia's macroeconomy (as of spring 2025), the impact of sanctions, the country's attempts to adapt to isolation and the structural problems facing the aggressor's industry.
- **Debates on the Use of Russia's Frozen Assets and the Possible Path Forward**
  The paper presents expert assessments of the legal and political options for using frozen Russian funds for the reconstruction of Ukraine and proposes guidelines for further Western action.

European political processes and integration

- **Rebuilding and Integrating: Charting Ukraine's Post-War Path**
  Prepared in cooperation with international partners, this analysis reviews the prospects for Ukraine's reconstruction, the institutional reforms it requires and the geopolitical dimension of the country's integration into Western structures.
- **German Bundestag Elections: Possible Scenarios and Potential Policy Shifts**
  We set out possible coalition scenarios and analysed how the election results would affect Berlin's policy towards Lithuania, Ukraine and transatlantic relations.
- **Moldova's Struggle for a European Future: An Election Analysis**
  An election analysis discussing Moldova's achievements and challenges on the road to EU membership and its fight against external disinformation campaigns.

Social transformation and the economy

- **Navigating Demographic Shifts: Migration, Borders, and the European Workforce**
  A study on managing the labour market, border protection and cultural tensions. The analysis stresses the importance of a sensible migration strategy that responds to economic needs without neglecting security and integration.
- **Green Horizons: Environmental Stewardship and Decarbonisation**
  An analysis of environmental protection and decarbonisation. Here we assess environmental policy from a right of centre perspective, seeking a balance between ecological goals, economic competitiveness and energy independence.

Our analyses, reports and research reviews are published regularly and are freely available on our website edi.lt, where you will find the latest information about our work and research.

Institute events

Throughout 2025 the Institute of European Right (EDI) worked as a think tank, organising dedicated training, seminars and strategic discussions in the Seimas and other public venues.

Half day training for the Kaunas TS-LKD community
The training focused on clarifying political identity, analysing the contemporary divide between left and right and the principles of Catholic social teaching. Among other things, the discussions sought answers to how a free market can be reconciled with Christian responsibility.

Discussion on the Ottawa Convention
A discussion in the Seimas on revisiting the restrictions of the Ottawa Convention in the changing security architecture of the Baltic states. At the event, which featured a presentation by Marko Mihkelson (Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Estonian Parliament), speakers stressed the importance of land mines as an effective means of deterrence in strengthening regional defence.

Review of the German Bundestag elections
A strategic session analysing the most important election in Europe that year. The discussion assessed possible coalition scenarios in Berlin and their potential impact on Lithuania's security, on continued support for Ukraine and on the stability of the transatlantic bond. Speakers:

- Ramūnas Vilpišauskas (Professor, Vilnius University Institute of International Relations and Political Science)
- Fausta Šimaitytė (Head of the KAS office in Lithuania)

Turning Point: Germany, Ukraine and the "Zeitenwende" in Europe
The presentation of Benjamin Tallis's book was an opportunity to take a closer look at the ongoing shift in German policy. The event examined whether the declared "Zeitenwende" (turning of the times) is enough to meet the Russian threat to Europe.

Speakers:

- Dr Benjamin Tallis (author of the book, Senior Research Fellow, German Council on Foreign Relations)
- Edward Lucas (Senior Adviser, CEPA)
- Gabija Grigaitė-Daugirdė (Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania)

Moldova's Struggle for a European Future: An Election Analysis
A series of presentations of the EDI analysis, including an event in the Seimas for decision makers and separate expert breakfasts. They examined Moldova's efforts to withstand Russia's hybrid pressure and the country's readiness for EU accession negotiations.

Roundtable: The New Geopolitical Reality
An international forum of think tanks dedicated to defending the ideals of freedom and democracy in an age of hybrid threats.

The podcast „Dešinysis protas“ (The Right Mind)

The podcast **„Dešinysis protas“ (*The Right Mind*)** is one of the Institute’s most important platforms for the continuous articulation of ideas, philosophical reflection and the spread of right of centre thought. With 24 episodes over the past year, we have built an intellectual chronicle.

This year’s guests included Volodymyr Yermolenko, Vilius Bartninkas, Agnia Grigas, Laurynas Kasčiūnas, Ingrida Šimonytė, Raimondas Kuodis, Vytautas Ališauskas, Alvydas Jokubaitis and many others.

All episodes of „Dešinysis protas“ are freely available on the Institute of European Right’s YouTube and Spotify channels.

Institute of European Right

The Institute of European Right is a think tank in Vilnius working in the tradition of the moderate right. We produce policy analysis and research, hold conferences, discussions and training, and work with partners in Lithuania and across Europe.

More analyses and commentaries: edi.lt/en · info@edi.lt