

Beatrice Monciunskaitė

Beatrice Monciunskaitė is a PhD student at the School of Law and Government, Dublin City University. With a background in Public law, she worked and conducted research in Ireland in the areas of criminal law, personal injuries and immigration.

Education:

Bachelor of Law with Honours, School of Law and Government, Dublin City University, Ireland, 2015-2018

Master of Law (LL.M) with Distinction, School of Law, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, 2018 – 2019

Supervisor:

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Thesis Title:

What is the Status of Democracy in Lithuania and Latvia? A two Country Study in the Context of Democratic Backsliding in Eastern and Central Europe

Thesis abstract:

In recent years, there has been a drastic decline in democratic standards and the rule of law in Eastern and Central Europe. The rise of populist rhetoric used by political parties has been noted as the enabling force for democratic backsliding. Countries in the former 'Eastern Bloc' in the EU seem to have been particularly badly hit by the rise of populism. Hungary and Poland who successfully departed from communism in the 'Third Wave' of democracy have increasingly slipped back into their authoritarian past. Much international and scholarly attention has been directed at these two former communist states for their violations of the rule of law and democratic principles. However, little attention has been spared for the Baltic states of Lithuania and Latvia. Scholars cite these states as having taken to democracy particularly well after Soviet collapse. However, with democratic standards increasingly worsening in neighbouring countries, is the democratic future in Lithuania and Latvia as bright as many anticipate?

If the state of constitutionalism in Lithuania and Latvia is found to be in decline like in neighbouring Hungary and Poland, this would benefit academic understanding of why democracy is failing in Eastern Europe. Identifying universal factors contributing to democratic regression would inform the best way for the EU to address the problem. Furthermore, if Lithuanian and Latvian democracy is performing stronger than in Hungary

and Poland this would also reveal factors that inhibit democratic decay and allow preventative measures to be developed. Most importantly, while my thesis is focussed on the state of constitutionalism in Lithuania and Latvia, this research would be a valuable addition to the emerging research field of democratic decay within comparative constitutional law.

Areas of Interest:

Constitutional law, Administrative law, Democratic theory, Democratisation, Constitutional Courts, Jurisprudence.

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