



International Conference on

„EU Integration Perspectives of the Candidate Countries“

29-30 May, 2026

Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University
Georgia, Batumi, 6010, Ninoshvili/Rustaveli str. 35/32
Administrative building, 55 Auditorium

Jean Monnet Chair „Closer to the EU“



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Agenda of the Conference

29 MAY 2026

Registration: 9:30 – 10:00

10:00 - 12:30 AM

Conference Opening and Presentation of Jean Monnet Chair “Closer to the EU”

COMPETITION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION SESSION – Hybrid format

Moderator – Prof. Solomon Menabdishvili

1. **Solomon Menabdishvili**, Ph.D, Jean Monnet Chair “Closer to the EU”, professor, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, “Sanctions for the Breaches of Competition Law and Consumer Protection Law in Georgia”
2. **Anna Piszcz** Ph.D, professor, University of Białystok, “Development of Polish Competition Law”
3. **Krystyna Nizioł** Ph.D, professor, University of Szczecin, “Development of Polish Consumer Law”
4. **Zurab Gvelesiani**, Ph.D, associate professor, University of Georgia, “One Authority, Two Missions: Does Institutional Integration Distort Competition Law Enforcement in Georgia?”
5. **Guranda Chelidze**, Ph.D, Jean Monnet Chair “EU-PPS”, professor, Caucasus University, “Consumer Protection in Georgia: Progress and Challenges under the European Union Enlargement Package (2023–2025)”
6. **Guram Kontselidze**, Ph.D candidate, The New Vision University; Invited Lecturer at Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, “Commercial Guarantees in Consumer Law: Approximation of Georgian Law to EU Standards – A Comparative Analysis”
7. **Mariam Sharashanidze**, LL.M student, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, “Horizontal Merger Guidelines: Comparative studies (EU-Georgian)”
8. **Nato Saginadze**, BA student, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, “Restoration of a Violated Right within the Framework of Unfair Commercial Practices”
9. **Slobodan Vukadinović**, Ph.D, associate professor, Union University Belgrade, Serbia “Serbian Consumer Law: Characteristics and its evolution”
10. **Dijana Marković-Bajalović**, PhD, professor, UNION University School of Law, Belgrade, Serbia, “Due Process in Competition Law - Does It Matter for Candidate Countries? - A case of Serbia”
11. **Petrina Broka**, Dr., associate professor, University of Tirana, 12. **Kevin Treska**, LL.M., Executive Head of the International Agreements Sector, Ministry of Finance.



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“State Aid Control in Albania: Legal and Institutional Challenges in the Context of EU Integration”

13. **Gabriela Belova**, professor DSc, 14. **Gergana Georgieva**, PhD, associate professor, Department of International Law and International Relations, Faculty of Law and History, South-West University, “Neofit Rilski” – Blagoevgrad “The EURO in Bulgaria: Competition Challenges”

12:30 – 13:00 Questions & Discussion

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 16:30 PM

Two online sessions in parallel

1. UKRAINE’S EUROPEAN INTEGRATION SESSION

Moderator: Prof. Krystyna Nizioł

15. **Liudmyla Savanets**, Ph.D, associate professor, West Ukrainian National University “Approximation of Ukrainian Contract Law to EU Law: Implementation of the Consumer Sales Directive”
16. **Valentyna Gera**, Ph.D student, West Ukrainian National University, Ternopil, Ukraine, “The Legal Framework for Data in Contractual Relations: Lessons from EU Law and Prospects for Ukraine”
17. **Hanna Poperechna**, Ph.D, associate professor, West Ukrainian National University, “Reform of Ukrainian Contract Law in Light of EU Integration: Implementation of the Digital Content Directive”
18. **Anastasiia Labyk**, Ph.D student, Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University Chernivtsi,
19. **Ivan Toronchuk**, Ph.D, associate professor, Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, “Problems and Prospects for Ensuring Digital Human Rights in Ukraine in the Context of the European Integration”
20. **Olha Zastavna**, Ph.D, associate professor, West Ukrainian National University, “Regional public authority transformation in the context of Ukrainian European integration”
21. **Mykhailo Samuliak**, Ph.D student, West Ukrainian National University, “Self-governance of the bar as a guarantee of the rule of law in the context of European integration”
22. **Anzhelika Baran**, Associate Professor at the Department of International and European Law, Faculty of Law, West Ukrainian National University, Fellow of the



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Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (Philipp Schwartz Initiative), Osnabrueck University (Germany), “Germany's 1968 Emergency Legislation: Lessons for Fragile Democracies, with a focus on Ukraine”

2. EUROPEAN INTEGRATION EXPERIENCES SESSION

Moderator: Prof. Anna Piszcz

- 23. DZIUBEK Ireneusz Teodor**, Professor, University of Kalisz “The „European Firearms Pass” as an example of a legal instrument for safety control and harmonization among countries”
- 24. Łukasz Mikołajczyk**, Dr., University of Kalisz, “The Importance of European Integration in the Context of Hybrid Threats”
- 25. Kamila Mikołajczyk**, University of Kalisz, “Non-verbal Communication in the European Union Defense”
- 26. Mateusz Lewek**, Dr., University of Kalisz, “Poland in International Police Cooperation in Combating Migration-Related Crime”
- 27. Bogumiła Pawlaczyk**, Dr., University of Kalisz, “Harmonization of Law in the European Union: The Case of Poland”
- 28. Jacek LORKOWSKI**, MD, PhD, State Institute of Medicine of the Ministry of Interior and Administration, Clinic of Orthopedics and Traumatology, Warsaw, **29. Agnieszka WÓJCIK-CZERNIAWSKA**, Ph.D, MBA, Department of Finance and Management Warsaw School of Economics, Poland, “Evolution of Medical Workforce Education Standards in the EU Accession Process and the Protection of Human Capital Resources: A Case Study of Poland as a Lesson for Candidate Countries”
- 30. HOFMAN Adam**, Ph.D. University of Kalisz, The Centre for Implementation Research, “Navigating the European Higher Education Integration Process: The Case of the University of Kalisz”

16:30 - 17:30 Questions & Discussion

End of the first day

Excursion in Old Batumi

30 MAY 2026

GEORGIA’S EUROPEAN INTEGRATION SESSION

10:00 – 12:30 AM

Moderator: Giga Phartenadze, PhD

31. Nino Kharitonashvili, Professor, Caucasus University, “Challenges and Mutual



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Benefits of Georgia's Membership in the European Union“

32. **Levan Mosakhlashvili**, Professor, Caucasus University, “The Principle of Legitimate Expectations in EU Administrative Law and Its Approximation in Georgia”
33. **Nugzar Putkaradze**, Ph.D, associate professor, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, “Administrative Silence and European Standards of Good Administration: Integration Perspectives”
34. **Giga Phartenadze**, Dr. associate professor, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University,
35. **Tinatini Iashvili**, professor, Georgian Technical University, Faculty of Business Technologies, “European Commission Conditionality and Democratic Governance in Georgia: Assessing the Implementation Gap”
36. **Ioseb Shotadze**, Ph.D candidate, New Vision University, assistant at Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, “Regulation of Crypto-Assets in the European Union and Georgia”
37. **Gia Chkhaidze**, Ph.D candidate School of Law, Sulikhan-Saba Orbeliani University “The Case Law of the European Court of Human Rights as a Comparative Source of Law in Constitutional Proceedings”
38. **Nino Kapanadze**, Ph.D candidate, School of Law, Sulikhan-Saba Orbeliani University “Democratic Reforms in Georgia within the Context of European Union Integration”
39. **Mary Chakvetadze**, Ph.D candidate, the Institute of International Law, Faculty of Law, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, “Georgia’s EU Integration Through Legal Approximation: Harmonisation with the Acquis Communautaire in the Context of the Black Sea Green Energy Corridor”
40. **Maia Manchkhachvili**, Ph.D in political science, associate professor, Georgian Technical University,
41. **Irakli Nodia**, Ph.D student of TSU, assistant at Sulikhan-Saba Orbeliani University, “Turkey’s Fulfillment of the Copenhagen Criteria: An Analysis of Political Criteria”
42. **Anri Verulidze**, LLM student, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, “Gender Inequality in Labor Relations Based on The Example of Georgia”

12:30 – 13:00 Questions & Discussion

End of the Conference

Closing remarks

Abstracts:

*** Solomon Menabdishvili (Jean Monnet Chair, professor, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University)**

“Sanctions for the Breaches of Competition Law and Consumer Protection Law in Georgia”

Georgia adopted new Competition Law in 2012, which has been fully enforced since 2014 fall. The original one provided the fine for the undertakings breaching competition rules maximum 10 percent of their income. After the significant amendments and changes in 2014 the law provided the fine maximum 5 percent of the undertaking's turnover. In 2023 the law was amended once again, and the law now provides that the maximum fine can be 5% of the gross income for the previous financial year.

As for the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights, it was adopted by the Georgian Parliament in 2022. The law provides sanctions for the breaching of consumer law up to 2 percent of the annual turnover of the trader.

The paper will examine the development of the sanctions of the laws and their practical application by the Agency.

*** Anna Piszcz (Professor, University of Białystok, Poland)**

“Development of Polish Competition Law”

This brief overview of developments of Polish competition law, very different from the European Community (EC) competition rules at the beginning, captures its changes caused by a number of factors within and outside Poland. The analysis leads to two questions – both related to EC (later, EU) competition rules, being an important part of “framework conditions” for economic activity. First, how was Polish competition law harmonized with them before joining the EU (May, 1 2004)? How were the legislations and judicial standards amended in order to offer compatible conditions for the Polish companies to act on the EC markets and EC-based companies to act on the Polish market? The second basic question is: how did and does Poland improve and refine endlessly the legal framework for competition protection after May, 1 2004?

Krystyna Nizioł (Professor, University of Szczecin)

“Development of Polish Consumer Law”

The aim of this study is to discuss the fundamental issues relating to the development of consumer protection law in Poland, and subsequently to highlight the challenges associated with the protection of consumer rights in the financial market. Accordingly, the analysis begins by examining, amongst other things, the objectives of this law, the definition of a consumer, and the institutions responsible for consumer protection in Poland. Subsequently, the focus shifts to issues concerning the protection of consumer rights in the financial market. The choice of this particular topic was dictated by the use of artificial intelligence in the financial market

(particularly the banking market). This situation gives rise to new challenges regarding the protection of consumer rights in this market, the analysis of which will highlight the challenges facing consumer protection law in Poland (using the financial market as an example).

***Zurab Gvelesiani (Associate professor, University of Georgia)**

“One Authority, Two Missions: Does Institutional Integration Distort Competition Law Enforcement in Georgia?”

The institutional design of competition and consumer protection enforcement remains largely unharmonized within the European Union, allowing Member States and candidate countries to adopt diverse governance models. While some jurisdictions maintain separate authorities, others have opted for integrated structures that combine competition law and consumer protection mandates within a single agency. In 2022, Georgia followed this latter approach by extending the mandate of its competition authority, established in 2014, to include consumer protection functions. This reform was justified by reference to expected synergies, including enhanced information-sharing, institutional efficiency, and more coherent market oversight.

This paper critically examines whether such institutional integration delivers on these promises in the context of a developing enforcement environment. While the combined model offers clear theoretical advantages, it also carries the risk of unintended consequences that may shape enforcement priorities in practice. In particular, the paper develops the concept of “enforcement substitution”, whereby authorities operating under resource constraints and political sensitivity may tend to prioritize less complex and more publicly visible consumer protection cases over politically and economically sensitive competition law enforcement.

Drawing on the Georgian experience, the paper explores whether the integration of mandates has contributed to a shift in enforcement patterns, potentially weakening the role of competition law as a tool for addressing structural market issues. The analysis situates these findings within the broader EU integration framework, highlighting the gap between formal legal approximation and the conditions necessary for effective enforcement.

The paper argues that, in contexts characterised by limited institutional capacity and heightened political sensitivity, integrated enforcement models may inadvertently encourage a reallocation of regulatory effort towards lower-risk areas of activity. While this does not undermine the value of consumer protection enforcement as such, it raises important questions about the balance between different regulatory objectives within a single authority.

***Guranda Tchelidze (Jean Monnet Chair, professor, Caucasus University)**

Consumer Protection in Georgia: Progress and Challenges under the European Union Enlargement Package (2023–2025)

The paper examines the state of consumer rights protection in Georgia within the framework of the EU's Enlargement Package (2023–2025). Approved annually by the European Commission, the Enlargement Package is an important strategic tool for assessing candidate and potential

candidate countries' alignment with EU legislation and standards. In this context, protecting consumer rights is considered one of the key areas in need of fundamental reform.

The research shows that Georgia has made certain progress in this area, as evidenced by the establishment of an institutional framework and the development of relevant legislation. The main body responsible for protecting consumer rights - The Georgian Competition and Consumer Agency - is gradually strengthening its capabilities, as evidenced by an increase in the number of applications and a rise in decisions made in favour of consumers.

Despite progress having been made, Georgian legislation still only partially aligns with the EU's legal framework. Significant gaps remain in areas such as the regulation of digital content, representative actions, consumer rights relating to the sale of goods and product safety standards. Although there has been some progress in regulating timeshares and related contracts, ensuring that the market surveillance system complies with EU requirements remains problematic.

Methodologically, the study is based on desk research and qualitative analysis of official EU documents, specifically the enlargement package and the implementation reports of the Association Agreement from Georgia. This approach enables progress to be assessed, trends to be identified, and key reform directions to be determined.

Despite the positive trends, the results of the study indicate that further reforms are needed in Georgia to protect consumer rights. These reforms should include legislative harmonisation and strengthening institutional mechanisms to ensure full compliance with European Union standards.

***Guram Kontselidze (PhD Candidate, The New Vision University; Invited Lecturer at Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University)**

“Commercial Guarantees in Consumer Law: Approximation of Georgian Law to EU Standards – A Comparative Analysis”

On the one hand, pursuant to the Association Agreement between the EU and Georgia, Georgia has undertaken the obligation to approximate its national consumer protection legislation to the legal standards of the European Union. In fulfilment of this commitment, the Parliament of Georgia adopted the Law of Georgia on Consumer Protection, which, alongside other key institutions of consumer law, regulates the issue of commercial guarantees.

The present article “Commercial Guarantees in Consumer Law: Approximation of Georgian Law to EU Standards a Comparative Analysis” aims to examine the institution of commercial guarantees within the legal frameworks of the European Union and Georgia. The research is based on a comparative legal methodology and focuses both on the normative regulation and its practical implications.

The article analyses the legal nature of commercial guarantees, their distinction from statutory liability, and their function within the system of consumer protection. Particular attention is devoted to the standards established under EU law, including the provisions of Directive (EU) 2019/771 on Sale of Goods, as well as to the extent of their harmonization within Georgian legislation.

The study seeks to identify similarities and differences between EU and Georgian law and to assess the extent to which Georgian legislation effectively ensures the level of consumer protection associated with commercial guarantees as provided under EU law. Special emphasis is placed on the legal and practical challenges related to the application of commercial guarantees, including the level of consumer awareness and the transparency of guarantee conditions. The research highlights the importance of approximating Georgian law to EU consumer protection standards and its practical significance.

***Mariam Sharashanidze (LLM student, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University)**

“Non-Horizontal Concentrations in Digital Markets: Competition Risks and Regulatory Challenges”

In today’s rapidly developing digital economy, non-horizontal concentrations have become increasingly common as large companies expand their activities across different stages of production, distribution, and online services. Unlike horizontal mergers, which involve companies operating in the same market and directly competing with each other, non-horizontal concentrations mainly include vertical and conglomerate mergers between businesses that operate at different market levels or in related sectors.

Traditionally, such concentrations have been viewed as less dangerous for competition because they can create important economic benefits, including increased efficiency, lower operational costs, better integration of services, technological innovation, and improved consumer experience.

However, despite these advantages, non-horizontal concentrations may also create serious competition concerns, especially in digital markets where a small number of powerful companies already hold significant market influence through data control, digital ecosystems, and network effects.

This paper examines the legal and economic implications of non-horizontal concentrations within the framework of European Union and Georgian competition law. The research focuses particularly on vertical and conglomerate mergers in digital markets and analyzes the extent to which current competition law mechanisms are capable of identifying and preventing anti-competitive effects. Special attention is given to issues such as market foreclosure, barriers to entry for smaller businesses, restriction of access to digital platforms, strengthening of dominant positions, and the possibility of reducing innovation and consumer choice in the long term. The paper also discusses the growing importance of data and digital infrastructure as sources of market power in the modern economy.

The study applies comparative, analytical, and doctrinal research methods. It examines EU merger control practice, relevant legal standards, and recent developments in Georgian competition legislation. In addition, the paper reviews the approach of competition authorities toward balancing economic efficiency and the protection of fair competition in complex digital markets.

The research argues that although non-horizontal concentrations often generate positive economic outcomes and may contribute to market development, insufficient regulatory

assessment can strengthen the market power of dominant companies and negatively affect long-term competition. Therefore, competition authorities should adopt a flexible, case-specific, and economically informed approach when evaluating such transactions, particularly in fast-growing digital markets where traditional competition assessment methods may no longer be fully effective.

Nato Saginadze (BA student, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University)

“Restoration of a Violated Right within the Framework of Unfair Commercial Practices”

The presented paper proposes the topic of the protection of human rights at the local level. The research issue involves determining what unfair commercial activity entails, how the rights of the consumer—as the weaker party, a vulnerable natural person—may be violated within the framework of unlawful activity, and how a violated right may be restored.

The research methodology includes studying the Law of Georgia on the Protection of Consumer Rights, processing and analyzing the decisions of the Georgian Competition and Consumer Protection Agency.

The aims of the research and the preparation of the academic paper are to enhance the level of human rights protection and to educate individuals about their rights, which ultimately will lead to raising public awareness.

The main findings indicate that a consumer must receive a product corresponding to the value paid, must not become a victim of unfair commercial practice—that is, must not be provided with incomplete or incorrect information—must be informed about the percentage and duration of promotions, and, most importantly, must not be subjected to pressure, coercion, or threats in the process of making a decision (whether to purchase or not purchase a product, or to receive or refuse a service).

The conclusion states that the trader is in a superior position compared to the consumer, and that the state, together with the rest of society, should strive to ensure that the weaker party does not become the primary object of oppression.

***Slobodan Vukadinović (Associate professor, the UNION University School of Law, Belgrade, Serbia)**

“Serbian Consumer Law: characteristics and evolution”

The paper proceeds from the legal and policy commitment of the Republic of Serbia to align its legislation with that of the European Union, stemming from the 2008 Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, on the one hand, and the Republic of Serbia, on the other. Under this Agreement, Serbia undertook to ensure an active consumer protection policy in accordance with EU law and to harmonise its legislation with the level of protection in force within the European Union. The paper examines the legislative approach to regulating the consumer protection system in Serbia, the authorities responsible for its implementation, current challenges, and the level of enforcement of consumer

rights. The analysis starts from the process of constitutionalisation, as the 2006 Constitution of the Republic of Serbia contains a specific provision on consumer protection. The development of consumer protection law in Serbia is critically analysed through its periods and phases, starting with the first Consumer Protection Act adopted at the federal level in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 2002. The analysis then turns to the changes introduced by the 2010 Act, followed by the system established by the 2014 Act. Particular attention is given to the changes introduced by the 2021 Act, which remains in force. A recent development is that, on 20 March 2026, the Government submitted to Parliament a new Draft Consumer Protection Act; its key innovations are considered, particularly the planned alignment with EU directives not yet implemented in Serbia. Attention is also given to the Constitutional Court's decision invalidating provisions of the Civil Procedure Act governing collective protection of rights, thereby effectively precluding collective consumer actions. The need for collective consumer protection is further considered in the context of Directive (EU) 2020/1828 on representative actions, along with possible steps to improve the system.

***Dijana Marković Bajalović (Professor, the UNION University School of Law, Belgrade, Serbia)**

“Due Process in Competition Law - Does It Matter for Candidate Countries? -A case of Serbia)

While Serbia opened negotiations for EU accession in January 2014, negotiations in the Internal Market Cluster, to which the competition policy chapter belongs, have not yet begun. In its annual reports on Serbia's progress in the accession process, the European Commission assesses the competition legislative framework, the institutional framework and the enforcement capacity. The Commission finds the legislative framework broadly aligned with the EU competition acquis. The assessment of the procedural aspects of Serbian competition law has not been a focus of the Commission so far. At the same time, the Commission has been continuously emphasising the importance of strengthening the rule of law.

Serbia established the current institutional and procedural framework for implementing competition law in 2009 - 2010, with the adoption of the Competition Protection Act (CPA) and a set of secondary legislation. Serbian procedural competition law is based on the General Administrative Procedure Act of 2016, supplemented by specific CPA rules that reflect the exceptional nature of competition proceedings and the need to harmonise with EU law. CPA is only partially aligned with Council Regulation 1/2003/EC, Commission Regulation 773/2004, Council Regulation 139/2004 and Consolidated Commission Implementing Regulation 2023/914.

In the paper, we discuss three important departures of the CPA rules from the EU competition procedure. The first concerns the complainant's status in antitrust investigations. The second touches upon third-party standing in merger control proceedings. The third one pertains to the transparency of investigations and the Commission for Protection of Competition's (CPC) decision-making. Shortcomings in the regulation of these issues within the CPA contributed to the relatively low credibility of CPC's decision-making and to decreased public awareness of competition law enforcement.

Focusing on harmonisation of national substantive competition rules with EU law is not sufficient for the success in accession negotiations. The procedural aspects of competition law must receive adequate attention when assessing a candidate country's preparedness to assume obligations arising from EU membership. Procedural competition rules should be seen as one of the elements for assessing the respect for the rule of law in a candidate country, the rule of law being the fundamental EU value.

***Petrina Broka (Associate professor, University of Tirana)**

***Kevin Treska (Executive LL.M. Head of the International Agreements Sector, Ministry of Finance)**

“State Aid Control in Albania: legal and institutional challenges in the context of EU integration”

European Union integration represents one of the main strategic priorities of the Albanian state. Within the framework of this process, an important objective remains the establishment of a free and effective market through the protection of fair competition. In this regard, the proper implementation of state aid control plays a significant role in ensuring effective and undistorted competition in the market.

This paper examines the current framework of state aid control in Albania, addressing both its legal and institutional dimensions. It analyses not only the existing regulatory structure governing state aid but also the main challenges that the Albanian state aid system is facing and is expected to face in the context of the country's EU integration process. Attention is devoted to the level of approximation with the European Union competition acquis and to the role of national institutions responsible for monitoring and enforcing state aid rules.

Another important aspect of this paper concerns the relationship between competition law and state aid control, as well as their broader connection with consumer welfare. Although state aid control is traditionally considered an instrument of competition policy aimed at preventing market distortions, its effective implementation also contributes indirectly to improving consumer welfare by promoting transparency, ensuring equal market conditions, and supporting access to essential services. In this context, strengthening state aid control mechanisms represents an important step not only toward compliance with EU integration requirements but also toward enhancing market efficiency and consumer protection in Albania.

Gabriela Belova (Professor, South-West University “Neofit Rilski”, Blagoevgrad)

Gergana Georgieva (Associate professor, South-West University “Neofit Rilski”, Blagoevgrad)

“The EURO in Bulgaria: Competition Challenges”

On January 1, 2026, Bulgaria officially became the 21st member of the Eurozone. While the transition was technically seamless, it has triggered a unique set of challenges for national and EU competition authorities. The primary concern is the tension between free-market pricing and the regulatory mandates of the Euro Adoption Act, which prohibits “unjustified” price increases during the transition. This paper examines the legal and economic implications of the current

dual-pricing mandate (active until August 2026) and its unintended effects on market behavior. Specifically, it analyzes the legitimacy of the Commission for Protection of Competition (CPC) in monitoring “speculative” inflation, and whether these interventions align with traditional EU antitrust principles or constitute a temporary form of price regulation. Furthermore, the planned introduction of the digital euro by the European Central Bank raises additional concerns regarding market structure and competition, particularly in light of the anticipated huge financial and operational burden on European banks. The Bulgarian case is of particular relevance, as it provides a vital “integration perspective” for future Eurozone candidates.

***Liudmyla Savanets (Associate professor, West Ukrainian National University)**

“Approximation of Ukrainian Contract Law to EU Law: Implementation of the Consumer Sales Directive”

Ukraine, as a country with EU candidate status, is required to harmonize its national legislation with EU law. One of the key areas of such alignment concerns EU sales law. In the context of future EU membership, Ukraine will also be obliged to implement Directive (EU) 2019/771, which regulates certain aspects of contracts for the sale of goods. Directive 2019/771 on certain aspects concerning contracts for the sale of goods has been transposed into the national law of all EU Member States using a number of different approaches, ranging from changing the general law of obligations, to a partial implementation of just the consumer sales law. A crucial issue for the Ukrainian legislator is the scope of application of the new rules: whether they should extend to all contractual obligations (with specific exceptions for consumer contracts) or be limited exclusively to consumer sales in cases of non-conformity. This article provides a comparative analysis of the Directive (EU) 2019/771 and Ukrainian sales law. It also outlines general approaches to the transposition of Directive (EU) 2019/771 into Ukrainian private law, with particular attention to the interaction between consumer law and general private law. Furthermore, it examines key concepts such as “lack of conformity,” the seller’s liability in such cases, and the remedies available to address non-conformity.

This paper analyses the methods used to transpose Directive 2019/771 into the legal systems of EU Member States and Ukraine, with an emphasis on highlighting the main differences and the choices made concerning the options left by the EU legislator to the Member States’ disposition. These issues will be considered from the perspective of all EU Member States using a comparative approach. The analysis starts with an overview of the existing regulation of sales contract in Ukraine, the first steps towards implementing Directive 2019/771 into Ukrainian consumer sales law and a comparative study of the EU Member States’ experience of transposing Directive 2019/771 into national laws. It concludes by taking a perspective method for the transposition of Directive 2019/771 into Ukrainian private law, which should be carried out in the Ukrainian Civil Code and form the basis for a general sales law. The importance of this approach is due to the central role that the Ukrainian Civil Code plays in regulating sales contracts, the recodification of contract law in light of EU integration, the idea of the Europeanisation of private law and the formation of new general terminology based on European

models of the digital age, according to which the concept of the consumer is currently losing relevance.

***Valentyna Gera (PhD candidate, West Ukrainian National University, Ternopil, Ukraine)**

“The Legal Framework for Data in Contractual Relations: Lessons from EU Law and Prospects for Ukraine”

The article explores the conceptual foundations and practical aspects for data use in contracts in European Union and Ukraine law. Particular attention is paid to the concept of "digital things," which has recently appeared in Ukrainian law. The study examines the balance between the right of businesses to freely use data for profit and the need to protect the rights of the individuals to whom this data belongs.

It is emphasized that current Ukraine law requires further updates to meet EU standards, specifically the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2023/2854 on harmonised rules on fair access to and use of data (Data Act), which aims to create a fair environment for data sharing. The impact of Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence (AI Act) on the content of contractual obligations is separately analyzed, particularly in the context of using data for training artificial intelligence systems and ensuring their confidentiality. It is substantiated that the recognition of data as "digital things" in Ukrainian law is only the first step toward the effective development of a modern economy.

The focus is placed on the issue of inequality between parties in contracts, emphasizing the importance of ensuring that large companies do not restrict access to information for other market participants. It is concluded that despite progressive steps in reforming Ukrainian law, it is still necessary to define in detail how exactly the rights to digital things should work in specific contracts.

The study determines that the effectiveness of contractual regulation will depend on whether users can easily receive their data and transfer it to others, as is already the case in the EU. Significant changes in the use of smart contracts and automated data management in Ukraine still require deep study and further regulatory consolidation.

***Hanna POPERECHNA (Associate professor, West Ukrainian National University)**

“Reform of Ukrainian Contract Law in light of EU Integration: Implementation of the Digital Content Directive”

This paper examines the reform of Ukrainian contract law in the context of European Union integration, with particular emphasis on the implementation of Directive (EU) 2019/770 on contracts for the supply of digital content and digital services. Special attention is paid to the adoption of a new Law on Digital content and digital services as a key step toward aligning Ukrainian legislation with the EU acquis in the digital sphere and ensuring a modern regulatory framework for digital transactions.

The study analyses the emerging legal framework governing digital content and digital services, focusing on contractual obligations of traders, conformity requirements, and remedies available to consumers in cases of non-conformity. It is argued that the implementation of Directive (EU) 2019/770 introduces a fundamentally new model of contractual regulation, which departs from traditional sales law and reflects the specific nature of digital goods as intangible assets.

Particular attention is devoted to the legal qualification of digital content and digital assets within Ukrainian civil law. The paper explores the concept of a “digital thing” introduced in Article 179¹ of the Civil Code of Ukraine and examines its significance for incorporating digital objects into the system of civil law. Digital content is analysed through the criteria of economic value, transferability, and its capacity to function as an object of civil rights.

The paper further addresses the circulation of digital assets, including their transfer, use, and enforcement, as well as the challenges of determining the applicable legal regime. It highlights the lack of a coherent doctrinal approach to digital assets and the resulting legal uncertainty.

It is concluded that the implementation of Directive (EU) 2019/770 has initiated a structural transformation of Ukrainian contract law, introducing a specialized regulatory regime for digital content and digital services that departs from traditional contractual models. However, the current legal framework remains conceptually incomplete, particularly with regard to the legal qualification of digital assets and the determination of applicable civil law regimes. The absence of a coherent doctrinal approach to the classification of digital objects as things, proprietary rights, or sui generis assets generates legal uncertainty in both contractual and property relations. Therefore, further doctrinal elaboration and systematic legislative refinement are required to ensure consistency in the regulation of digital content and to achieve effective alignment with European Union law.

***Anastasiia Labyk (PhD candidate, assistant, Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University Chernivtsi, Ukraine)**

***Ivan Toronchuk (Associate professor Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University Chernivtsi, Ukraine)**

“Problems and Prospects for Ensuring Digital Human Rights in Ukraine in the Context of the European Integration”

In the early 21st century, digitalization has reached an impressive scale: we have witnessed how information and communication technologies have permeated almost all spheres of social life. Today, it is impossible to imagine processes or operations that have not undergone changes in the context of digitalization. Many traditional rights have acquired new meaning, such as the right to freedom of expression, the right to seek, collect, and store information, the right to privacy, education, work, etc. In addition, we observe the emergence of a specific group of fourth-generation rights — digital rights, which are essentially the result of human activity in cyber-physical space.

This article examines the current state of ensuring and protecting digital human rights within the European human rights system, which remains one of the most progressive in the world.

Through the jurisprudence of the ECHR and the Court of Justice of the European Union, Europe demonstrates a clear legal response to contemporary challenges related to the emergence of new categories of human rights and the reimagining of traditional ones. A significant achievement of the EU has been the formation of an anthropocentric model for regulating the digital environment, which prioritizes personal safety, the fight against discrimination, and privacy protection.

For Ukraine, which holds the status of a candidate for EU membership, the harmonization of national legislation with European standards is one of the primary tasks. The article analyzes key challenges on this path, including the obsolescence of the domestic legal framework regarding personal data protection, the lack of an effective independent supervisory body, and the challenges posed by the need to balance national security under martial law with the observance of citizens' digital freedoms. The prospects for implementing the provisions of the GDPR and the EU AI Act in Ukraine are outlined.

***Olha ZASTAVNA (PhD, associate professor, West Ukrainian National University)**

“Regional Public Authority Transformation in the Context of Ukrainian European Integration”

The article analyzes the transformation of regional public authority in Ukraine in the context of European integration. It is argued that the current institutional model, despite decentralization reforms, remains incomplete and inconsistent with European standards of regional democracy.

The existing system at the regional level is characterized by the dominance of state executive authorities and the lack of genuine regional self-government. Oblast and district councils, although formally local self-government bodies, represent the collective interests of territorial communities rather than a distinct regional community. Their key decisions are largely implemented by regional state administrations within delegated powers, which leads to the concentration of authority within the state and weakens regional institutional capacity.

Drawing on European practice, particularly the Council of Europe's Reference Framework for Regional Democracy, the study highlights that regional self-government entails the legal competence and capacity of regional communities to manage public affairs under their own responsibility in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. In EU Member States, regional governance typically combines representative and executive bodies with clearly defined powers in policy-making and implementation.

It is substantiated that Ukraine's European integration necessitates a reconfiguration of the regional governance model to ensure both effective implementation of state regional policy and the development of capable regional self-government. Key reform priorities include aligning the administrative-territorial structure with the NUTS 2 classification, establishing executive bodies of regional councils, clearly delineating competences between levels of government, and introducing state supervision through prefectural-type institutions.

The study concludes that strengthening the regional level of governance is essential for enhancing administrative efficiency, democratic legitimacy, and sustainable territorial development in Ukraine.

***Samuliak Mykhailo (PhD candidate, West Ukrainian National University)**

“Self-governance of the Bar as a Guarantee of the Rule of Law in the Context of European Integration”

The paper examines the self-governance of the Bar in Ukraine as a fundamental guarantee of the rule of law in the context of European integration, with particular attention to the challenges posed by the ongoing war with Russia and recent international legal developments. It argues that an independent and self-regulating legal profession constitutes a key element of a democratic legal order, ensuring effective protection of human rights and the proper functioning of justice, even under conditions of armed conflict.

In Ukraine, the Bar is established as a non-state, self-governing institution, reflecting European standards that require the autonomy of lawyers from governmental interference. Such autonomy becomes especially critical during wartime, when risks of pressure on legal professionals increase and the protection of defence rights becomes more vulnerable. In this context, self-governance enables the legal profession to uphold core principles, including independence, confidentiality, and access to a fair trial.

The paper analyzes the legal framework governing the Bar in Ukraine, particularly the Law of Ukraine “On the Bar and Practice of Law” (2012), in light of European standards and recent developments, including Ukraine’s steps toward adopting the Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer. It is demonstrated that this Convention strengthens guarantees of professional independence and safety of lawyers, reinforcing their role within the justice system. At the same time, the paper identifies challenges affecting the effectiveness of Bar self-governance, including issues of transparency, accountability, and disciplinary procedures, which may be exacerbated under martial law. In the context of European integration, addressing these challenges is essential, as compliance with rule of law standards remains a prerequisite for EU accession.

The paper concludes that strengthening Bar self-governance, while ensuring accountability and aligning with new international standards, is crucial for maintaining the rule of law and safeguarding the legal profession in wartime conditions.

***Anzhelika Baran (Associate professor, West Ukrainian National University)**

„Constitutional Emergency Powers: comparative lessons from Germany and implementation for Ukraine within the framework of European integration“

As Francis Fukuyama argued, liberal democracy may be understood as the «end point of mankind’s ideological evolution»; however, recent events – including full-scale war in the centre of Europe, ongoing conflicts in the Middle East, the pandemic – highlight the growing prominence of crises that undermine the stability of legal systems.

In this context, the legal regime of a state of emergency performs a paradoxical function: while it constitutes a deviation from the ordinary constitutional order, it simultaneously serves as a

mechanism for its protection. This contradiction becomes particularly acute in prolonged crises, where public authorities are compelled to act beyond ordinary legal frameworks. Fragile or transitional democracies are especially vulnerable to such challenges due to limited institutional resilience and an increased risk of power concentration. Ukraine's experience, particularly after 2022, illustrates this dynamic.

Against this background, the German constitutional model of emergency powers is of particular relevance. Developed in response to the failures of the Weimar Republic, the 1968 emergency legislation sought to overcome the authoritarian notion of the «hour of the executive» by embedding effective checks and balances.

This study conducts a comparative legal analysis of Germany's 1968 emergency legislation and evaluates its potential adaptation in Ukraine within the framework of European integration. It further considers the EU legal order, where emergency governance operates as a multi-level system rather than a unified codified framework, structured around the principles of proportionality and the rule of law.

The paper argues that adapting elements of the German model in line with these principles can strengthen Ukraine's constitutional resilience and democratic legitimacy. In the context of EU accession and rule of law conditionality, such alignment constitutes a key requirement for membership.

***Ireneusz Teodor DZIUBEK (Professor, University of Kalisz)**

"The „European Firearms Pass” as an example of a legal instrument for safety control and harmonization among countries”

This article examines the impact on the security of European Union (EU) member states, using the introduction of the „European Firearms Pass” (EFP) as an example. This document is issued to individuals and enables the legal transport of firearms between EU member states. It was introduced pursuant to Council Directive 91/477/EEC.

The aim of this study is to illustrate the essence of creating legal instruments for control and harmonization of security among states, using the systemic principles regarding the possession and movement of firearms within the EU as an example.

From a research perspective, this article employs a theoretical-analytical approach, utilizing a review of the relevant literature and a comparison with exemplary regulations in the United States of America (USA).

It has been determined that the introduction of such a document has simplified administrative procedures and standardized safety standards. This benefits a number of social groups, including hunters, sport shooters, and gun collectors. From a systemic perspective, the EFP plays a vital role in: shaping security policy and cooperation among EU member states; controlling the legal circulation of weapons; and preventing cross-border crime. From a legal standpoint, weapons are treated as goods subject to state control. The philosophy behind this regulation is based on strict regulation of rights, with an emphasis on public safety and prevention. The practical recommendations indicate that the EFP is an element of the control system, not a right to possess

weapons. This document does not grant the right to possess weapons—it merely confirms that right and, at the same time, enables the movement of weapons between EU member states.

A comparison of the „European Firearms Pass” with USA regulations reveals a fundamental civilizational difference. The European security model is based on control, prevention, and harmonization. In contrast, the American model lacks a comparable solution. It is based on individual freedom and responsibility.

The final conclusion emphasizes that the EFP is an example of the creation of a legal instrument for control and harmonization of security among states. From a systemic perspective, it simplifies existing standards and procedures, and in social terms, it serves as an example of a compromise between mobility and security in the context of supranational integration.

***Łukasz Mikołajczyk (Dr. Uniwersytet Kaliski im. Prezydenta Stanisława Wojciechowskiego)**
„The Importance of European Integration in the Context of Hybrid Threats”

The contemporary security environment is characterized by increasing complexity and multidimensional threats, which increasingly take the form of hybrid activities. These include, among others, cyberattacks, disinformation, economic pressure, the instrumentalization of migration, and interference in democratic processes. Destabilizing activities in the social and political spheres have also intensified recently. In this context, European integration is gaining particular importance as a mechanism for strengthening the resilience of Member States and countries aspiring to membership in the European Union.

The aim of this article is to analyze the importance of European integration in countering hybrid threats and to assess the extent to which cooperation within the European Union contributes to building common defense, institutional, and information capabilities. The paper assumes that the European integration process is not only a political and economic project but also a significant instrument for strengthening collective security. Particular attention is paid to the role of common EU policies, coordination of Member State actions, and the importance of European solidarity in responding to asymmetric threats.

The article is based on an analysis of the relevant literature, European Union strategic documents, and selected examples of contemporary security crises. It is indicated that the effectiveness of countering hybrid threats depends largely on the level of political, information, technological, and legal integration. The conclusions from the analysis confirm that European integration plays a key role in building institutional and societal resilience, constituting one of the fundamental pillars of Europe's security in the 21st century.

Kamila Mikołajczyk (mgr. Uniwersytet Kaliski im. Prezydenta Stanisława Wojciechowskiego)
“Non-verbal Communication in the European Union’s Defense”

This article analyzes the role of non-verbal communication in shaping and strengthening the defense capabilities of the European Union, viewed not only as a political and economic community but also as an international security actor. The focus is on non-verbal

communication, broadly understood as gestures, institutional symbolism, military presence, ceremonial practices, security architecture, joint exercises, force mobility, and the demonstration of operational capabilities. The aim of the study is to demonstrate that non-verbal communication plays a significant strategic and communicative role in defense. The article assumes that non-verbal communication in EU security and defense policy is an important tool for building deterrence credibility, political cohesion, and the perception of intra-EU and transatlantic unity.

The analysis is based on an interdisciplinary approach, combining the perspectives of security studies, social communication, and international relations. Particular attention is paid to selected practices and actions of the European Union within the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), which can be interpreted as forms of nonverbal strategic communication. It is pointed out that in the face of contemporary hybrid threats, geopolitical pressure, and information warfare, the symbolic and performative aspects of EU defense activities are clearly increasing in importance.

The article's conclusions indicate that nonverbal communication does not merely supplement formal political declarations but can be considered an autonomous component of European strategic communication in the area of security and defense. However, its effectiveness depends on the coherence of the message, institutional capabilities, and the clarity of the signals sent to both Member States and external entities.

***Mateusz Lewek (Dr. Uniwersytet Kaliski im. Prezydenta Stanisława Wojciechowskiego)**
“Poland in International Police Cooperation in Combating Migration-Related Crime”

Migration-related crime constitutes one of the major challenges to the internal security of Poland and the European Union. This issue gained particular significance both during the initial migration experiences associated with the 2015 crisis and under the current migratory pressure on the Polish-Belarusian border, which remains connected with the Russo-Ukrainian war and the destabilising actions of the Russian and Belarusian regimes.

Contemporary migration-related challenges are multidimensional, encompassing not only the phenomenon of illegal border crossing, but also the activities of organised criminal groups involved in migrant smuggling, document forgery, and the facilitation of illegal border crossings. The scale and dynamics of these phenomena make it necessary to continuously improve national and international mechanisms of cooperation among the services responsible for state security.

The aim of the article is to present Poland's role in international police cooperation in combating migration-related crime, with particular emphasis on the experience of the Polish Police resulting from the 2015 migration crisis and the current situation on the Polish-Belarusian border. The analysis focuses on the significance, scope, and practical forms of cooperation between the Police, the Border Guard, Europol, and Frontex in the context of combating migration-related crime and protecting the external border of the European Union.

The article applies the institutional-functional method as well as an analysis of the relevant literature, official documents, legal regulations, and statistical data of the Police and the Border

Guard concerning offences related to illegal border crossing and the organisation of illegal migration.

The conducted study indicates that the effectiveness of counteracting migration-related crime depends not only on the physical protection of the state border, but also on efficient information exchange, criminal intelligence analysis, inter-institutional coordination, and participation in mechanisms of European cooperation. The conclusion drawn from the study is that further strengthening of cooperation between the Polish Police, Europol, Frontex, and the Border Guard is necessary, as only an integrated model of action makes it possible to respond effectively to contemporary threats related to migration-related crime.

Bogumiła Pawlaczyk (Dr. University of Kalisz)

“Harmonization of Law in the European Union: The Case of Poland”

The harmonization of law within the European Union constitutes one of the fundamental mechanisms of integration, aimed at approximating and unifying legal regulations in force across Member States. In the context of deepening integration, differences between national legal systems may hinder both the free movement of goods and services and effective cooperation between states. The process of harmonization not only contributes to the simplification of legal norms but also strengthens the protection of citizens rights and supports the development of a competitive and coherent internal market. At the same time, it should be emphasized that harmonization involves several challenges that require proper identification and effective institutional responses.

This article analyses the process of legal harmonization in the European Union using Poland as a case study. It considers both classical areas of integration, such as consumer protection and competition law, as well as more sensitive fields, including constitutional and criminal law.

The aim of the study is to present the essence of harmonization as a process of approximating the legal systems of Member States and to identify the mechanisms through which it is implemented. The research employs the dogmatic-legal method, the comparative method, and an analysis of the literature and case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union. The analysis demonstrates that legal harmonization in Poland has led to a significant unification of legal standards, although its scope and intensity vary depending on the area of law. The highest level of harmonization can be observed in economic fields, whereas in criminal and constitutional law it remains limited, indirect, and selective. It is also indicated that harmonization in these areas raises important challenges related to the protection of state sovereignty and the relationship between national law and European Union law. This process remains dynamic and constitutes one of the key elements of the functioning of the contemporary legal order.

***Jacek LORKOWSKI (DR. MD. PhD. VP of Surrey** (State Institute of Medicine of the Ministry of Interior and Administration, Warsaw; University of Surrey (CVSSP), Guildford)

***Agnieszka WÓJCIK- CZERNIAWSKA (DR. MBA.** Warsaw School of Economics, Poland)

“Evolution of Medical Workforce Education Standards in the EU Accession Process and the Protection of Human Capital Resources: A Case Study of Poland as a Lesson for Candidate Countries”

The article analyzes the harmonization of nurses’ qualifications in Poland in the context of implementing Directive 2005/36/EC, focusing on the consequences of post-accession transformations in the education system. The main research problem concerns the depreciation of the pre-accession training model (medical secondary schools – LM and SM) in favor of an academic model, which has generated significant socio-economic losses and systemic tensions within the healthcare sector.

The aim of the study is to assess the effects of the lack of a smooth and inclusive systemic transition, as well as to identify negotiation and implementation errors that contributed to a workforce and financial crisis in healthcare institutions. The research applies legal analysis of national and EU regulations, statistical data from the Polish Chamber of Nurses and Midwives, and a review of court rulings concerning wage disputes and recognition of qualifications. The hypothesis tested assumes that the implementation of EU standards without proper validation of professional experience leads to the waste of human capital and labor market destabilization.

The findings indicate that the introduction of bridging studies and the linkage of remuneration solely to formal educational credentials resulted in internal pay inequity, an increase in legal disputes, and the loss of tacit knowledge essential for the effective functioning of healthcare systems. The discussion highlights key strategic errors, including the failure to negotiate automatic recognition of professional experience (as observed in the German model) and the prioritization of external mobility over domestic labor market stability.

Recommendations for candidate countries, such as Georgia, include the implementation of grandfathering clauses, the development of experience validation systems (RPL/ECTS), and prior workforce mapping. The conclusion emphasizes that experience-based capital constitutes a strategic resource, and its systemic depreciation generates long-term, often irreversible economic and social costs for the state.

***Adam HOFMAN (PhD. University of Kalisz)**

“Navigating the European Higher Education Integration Process: The Case of the University of Kalisz”

This article provides an in-depth analysis of the academic dimension of European integration, utilizing the University of Kalisz as a fundamental case study of a key regional teaching and research center. The author examines the role of the university as a platform for knowledge exchange and a specific microcosm of challenges, where tensions between local identity and EU standardization requirements converge.

Within the framework of systemic security and institutional stability analysis, the presentation explores the dialectic of opportunities and threats arising from participation in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). On one hand, curriculum harmonization processes and

increased student mobility are viewed as factors building the resilience and competitiveness of Polish academia; on the other, critical structural risks are identified.

These primary threats include the brain drain phenomenon, which may weaken the intellectual potential of the region, and increasing bureaucratic burdens that determine the adaptive efficiency of the institution.

The objective of this article is to outline strategic directions for navigating integration processes in a manner that maximizes the benefits of European synergy while minimizing risks to the stability of the national and regional education systems.

***Nino Kharitonashvili (Professor, Caucasus University)**

“Challenges and Mutual Benefits of Georgia's Membership in the European Union”

The European Union enlargement is currently a very relevant issue for a number of countries, especially for Georgia. Enlargement fatigue primarily pertains to the European Union's challenges with expanding its membership and integration processes. It refers to a weariness or reluctance among existing EU member states towards further enlargement of the union. The main aspect is how much the European Union itself wants or needs it. The 2004 enlargement gave rise to questions of ‘enlargement fatigue. In its most practical form, this discourse was about the EU’s ‘absorption capacity’, its ability to institutionally, procedurally and materially digest new member states without disrupting and diluting the integration process. In turn, this led to the ‘widening versus deepening debate: did members want more Europe in the geographic sense or the integration sense? There was no doubt about the salience of the debates on enlargement, but what appeared to change in the aftermath of the 2004 enlargement was the nature of sentiment about this process. Another aspect is how realistic is the perspective of other countries, like Georgia's future accession to the European Union based on its geopolitical situation. Georgia, as a representative of one of the oldest civilizations with an endemic population, has been the link between Europe and Asia. Accordingly, European and Asian characteristics are combined in Georgian culture, which has been a discussion issue of its belonging to Europe for years, but today the country has received the status of a candidate for the European Union. It is very important for the country with the specific geographical condition, as Russia initially did not oppose eastern enlargement, an increasingly strident Moscow is now belatedly pushing for a rival economic bloc, the Eurasian Union. The paper will discuss the above-mentioned issues and challenges of accession using a comparative legal and analytical method. As a result, recommendations will be provided in terms of the mutual benefits of Georgia's accession to the European Union.

***Levan Mosakhlashvili (Professor, Caucasus University)**

“The Principle of Legitimate Expectations in EU Administrative Law and Its Approximation in Georgia”

The principle of legitimate expectations constitutes a fundamental element of EU administrative law, closely linked to legal certainty, proportionality, and the right to good administration. Developed through the jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), the principle protects individuals who have reasonably relied on clear and precise assurances given by competent public authorities. In the context of EU integration, the effective incorporation of this principle into national legal systems represents an important dimension of legal approximation.

The primary research question of this paper is: to what extent is the principle of legitimate expectations recognized and effectively applied in Georgian administrative law in light of EU standards? The study aims to assess the normative and judicial development of the principle in Georgia and to identify potential gaps in its alignment with EU administrative law.

The methodological approach combines doctrinal legal analysis with comparative examination of CJEU case law and relevant Georgian legislation and judicial practice. The paper argues that, although elements of the principle are implicitly present in Georgian administrative law, its doctrinal structure and consistent judicial application remain underdeveloped. Strengthening its normative clarity and judicial articulation is essential for deeper legal convergence with the European Union.

***Nugzar Putkaradze (Associate professor, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University)**

“Administrative Silence and European Standards of Good Administration: Integration Perspectives”

The process of integration with the European Union requires not only normative approximation but also a structural transformation of administrative law principles. Administrative silence, conceptualized as a legal construction of administrative inaction, raises fundamental questions regarding its compatibility with European standards of good administration. This principle, firmly embedded within the legal order of the European Union, encompasses requirements of reasoned decision-making, reasonable time, transparency, accountability, and effective judicial protection.

The paper provides a doctrinal and comparative analysis of administrative silence, examining both negative and positive legal fiction models and assessing their impact on the effective realization of individual rights. Particular attention is devoted to the principles of effectiveness and equivalence, which limit national procedural autonomy within the European legal framework.

The study argues that the formalistic construction of administrative silence may generate structural deficiencies in rights protection and undermine the standards of good administration. Consequently, the integration perspective necessitates a conceptual reconsideration and reform of the institution in order to ensure substantive compliance with European governance principles and to strengthen the effectiveness of legal harmonization.

***Giga Phartenadze (Associate professor, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University)**

***Tinatin Iashvili (Professor, Georgian Technical University)**

„EU Recommendations and Democratic Governance in Georgia: Assessing the Implementation Gap“

The European Union’s enlargement policy relies on conditionality as a central mechanism for promoting democratic governance, the rule of law, and institutional reform in candidate countries. Following the granting of candidate status, Georgia has entered a critical phase of its European integration process, where the implementation of European Commission recommendations serves as the key benchmark for further progress. However, despite formal legislative alignment, significant concerns remain regarding the depth and effectiveness of substantive institutional transformation, as highlighted in the 2025 Enlargement Package.

This article examines the extent to which EU conditionality and recommendations have contributed to meaningful democratic governance reforms in Georgia, beyond formal compliance. It argues that while Georgia has achieved measurable progress in aligning its legal and institutional framework with EU standards, a persistent implementation gap remains in critical areas such as judicial independence, accountability mechanisms, anti-corruption policy, and political pluralism.

The study is grounded in the theoretical framework of Europeanisation and EU conditionality, distinguishing between formal adoption of reforms and their internalisation within domestic political and institutional structures. It conceptualises the “implementation gap” as the divergence between legislative approximation and substantive democratic transformation in practice.

Methodologically, the research combines qualitative document analysis of EU policy outputs (including the 2025 Enlargement Package), national reform strategies, and independent analytical reports with exploratory survey data collected from Georgian respondents. The survey investigates public perceptions of EU recommendations and evaluates perceived reform effectiveness across key governance domains, including judicial independence, anti-corruption policy, media freedom, and political depolarisation.

The findings suggest that the implementation gap is primarily driven by limited political will, institutional weaknesses, and persistent political polarisation. In addition, the analysis highlights that the effective implementation of EU recommendations has been increasingly complicated by recent legislative developments in Georgia. In particular, respondents widely perceive that laws commonly referred to as the “transparency law” and the legislation on grants and foreign funding have contributed to a more restrictive regulatory environment for civil society and media actors. While these measures are formally justified in terms of regulatory oversight and institutional accountability, their broader impact is frequently associated by respondents with reduced civic space and increased challenges for non-governmental organisations and independent actors engaged in EU-related reform processes.

The article concludes that, although EU recommendations remain a powerful external driver of reform, their transformative potential is increasingly shaped by domestic legal and political dynamics. Bridging the implementation gap therefore requires not only formal compliance with

EU requirements, but also sustained political commitment, strengthened institutional capacity, and a regulatory environment that supports rather than constrains inclusive democratic participation. Enhancing monitoring mechanisms and shifting the evaluative focus from formal adoption to qualitative implementation are essential for advancing Georgia's democratic consolidation and European integration trajectory.

***Ioseb Shotadze (PhD candidate, The New Vision University, Assistant at Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University)**

“Regulation of Crypto-Assets in the European Union and Georgia“

The accelerated proliferation of virtual assets, particularly crypto-assets, within the contemporary international financial system has introduced a range of complex regulatory challenges, notably in the areas of consumer protection, financial stability, and the prevention of money laundering and terrorist financing. In response, the European Union has established a comprehensive and harmonized regulatory framework — Markets in Crypto-Assets Regulation (MiCA) — which provides a legal taxonomy of crypto-assets, sets forth authorization and supervisory requirements for crypto-asset service providers, and incorporates robust safeguards for investors and consumers.

This study analyzes the principal dimensions of the European Union's regulatory approach, with particular emphasis on measures designed to enhance transparency, accountability, and market integrity within the crypto-asset ecosystem. The MiCA framework represents a significant step toward the creation of a coherent, standardized, and high-integrity legal environment across the EU's financial markets.

In contrast, the regulatory landscape governing crypto-assets in Georgia remains underdeveloped and fragmented. Despite the rapid expansion in the use and circulation of crypto-assets, a comprehensive legal definition and unified regulatory regime have yet to be fully established. Nevertheless, in light of increasing market activity and integration into the global financial system, efforts have emerged to align domestic regulations with international standards. In this context, the role of the National Bank of Georgia is of particular significance, given its mandate to supervise the financial sector and implement regulatory policy.

The objective of this research is to identify and critically assess the divergences between the European Union and Georgia in the regulation of crypto-assets, evaluate the effectiveness of existing legal frameworks, and propose potential pathways for regulatory reform in Georgia. Special attention is given to the prospects for harmonization with EU regulatory standards and the implications for financial stability, economic development, and the investment climate.

***Gia Chkaidze (PhD candidate, The New Vision University)**

“The Case Law of the European Court of Human Rights as a Comparative Source of Law in Constitutional Proceedings”

One of the 12 recommendations for Georgia's European Union integration involves the proactive application of European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) practices by its courts. Amendments to the legislation have enabled the Constitutional Court to consider the interpretations reflected in the judgments of the ECtHR when interpreting normative acts. For the Constitutional Court, ECtHR interpretations serve as an additional argument when interpreting the content of a disputed norm. The Constitutional Court may adopt the ECtHR's interpretations when determining the scope of a right, but it cannot base its decisions solely on these interpretations. Recently, the Constitutional Court even made a decision contrary to ECtHR practice.

It is worth noting that the Constitutional Court does not have a unified position on the role and purpose of ECtHR practice, including its margin of appreciation.

Drawing on an analysis of the Constitutional Court's case law, this paper examines the role of ECtHR jurisprudence within the hierarchy of comparative legal sources, with particular emphasis on the Constitutional Court's role. The goal of these recommendations is to enhance the effective incorporation of ECtHR practices into the Constitutional Court's decision-making process.

Nino Kapanadze (PhD candidate, Sulkhani-Saba Orbeliani University)

"Democratic Reforms in Georgia within the Context of European Union Integration"

Georgia's aspiration toward European Union integration has been a central pillar of its foreign and domestic policy, particularly since the signing of the Association Agreement in 2014.

Democratic reform has emerged as both a prerequisite and a driving force in this process, shaping institutional development, governance practices, and political culture. This paper examines the trajectory of democratic reforms in Georgia through the lens of EU integration, highlighting both progress achieved and persistent challenges.

The study focuses on key reform areas, including judicial independence, electoral processes, anti-corruption measures, and media freedom. It evaluates how EU conditionality and normative influence have contributed to legislative and institutional transformations in Georgia. Special attention is given to the role of political polarization and informal governance practices, which continue to hinder the consolidation of democratic institutions.

While Georgia has made notable advancements in aligning its legal framework with EU standards, the implementation gap remains a critical issue. The paper argues that democratic reforms are often driven by external incentives rather than internal political consensus, raising questions about their sustainability. Furthermore, public trust in democratic institutions remains fragile, underscoring the need for deeper societal engagement in the reform process.

The analysis also considers the impact of recent developments, including Georgia's EU membership perspective and the evolving geopolitical environment. It concludes that while EU integration continues to serve as a powerful catalyst for democratic reform, the success of this process ultimately depends on the commitment of domestic actors to uphold democratic principles beyond formal compliance.

This paper aims to contribute to the broader discussion on EU enlargement and democratic transformation, offering insights into the complexities of reform in a post-Soviet context.

Mary Chakvetadze (Ph.D candidate, Tbilisi State University)

“Georgia’s EU Integration Through Legal Approximation: Harmonisation with the *Acquis Communautaire* in the Context of the Black Sea Green Energy Corridor”

Georgia’s European integration is fundamentally a legal and institutional process, grounded in the approximation of domestic legislation to the *acquis communautaire* under the EU–Georgia Association Agreement and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. This article argues that Georgia’s progress towards European Union membership depends not only on political aspiration, but also on credible, sector-specific legal harmonisation capable of generating regulatory predictability, institutional trust, market access, and investor confidence. Although Georgia obtained EU candidate status in December 2023, the European Commission’s 2025 Georgia Report points to a continuing gap between declared European ambition and effective implementation, particularly in the areas of competition policy, consumer protection, and energy market regulation. The report identifies no progress in competition policy, only partial alignment in consumer protection, and insufficient further progress in the implementation of the Electricity Integration Package.

As a case study, the article examines the Black Sea Submarine Cable project linking Georgia and the EU through Romania. The project is significant not only as an infrastructure initiative, but also as a legal and regulatory test of Georgia’s readiness for deeper integration into European energy and connectivity systems. EU and World Bank materials explicitly link the project’s success to alignment with the fundamentals of EU energy law, electricity market regulation, and rules compatible with ENTSO-E. The article therefore demonstrates that successful participation in strategic European connectivity projects requires more than geographical position or political will; it depends on effective legal convergence and credible institutional implementation. It concludes that legal approximation should be understood as a form of strategic state-building and as the most practical pathway through which Georgia’s aspiration towards the EU may be translated into meaningful functional integration.

***Anri Verulidze (LLM student, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University)**

“Gender Inequality in Labor Relations based on the example Of Georgia”

Gender Equality in Georgia, represents one of the main constitutional rights of Georgia’s constitutional framework. It also is a pressing issue in contemporary Georgia because in every sphere of modern social life and field work in Georgia, there are cases of gender inequality which the EU has specifically pointed out in the Recommendations issued by the European Commission, also known as “12 priorities”. The gender inequality problem today appears in parts of the daily life and social structures of Georgia, for example this problem consists in the employment field, where women face gender bias problems and male employees often benefit from structural advantages, where does this problem tend to occur in the Employment sector and

how does it manifest? Based on the statistics and researches today Georgian women face problems like: lower salary compared to men despite the type of work obligations which are almost as same as those of male employees, the male-dominated employment field because in Georgia men enter employment contract earlier compared women, they also face problems such as gender stereotypes, lower yearly earning compared to male employees since on average monthly men tend to earn twice more than women so yearly earnings of women in Georgia are lower than men earn per year on national average scale. One more problem is the workplace service, sometimes men tend to receive such service for the better demonstration in obligation compared, where women were refused to receive such service. One more problem hinted by the court precedent which shows gender discrimination in workplaces, is maternity because there are cases where women were refused the job position because of pregnancy.

***Maia Manchkhvili (Associate professor, Georgian Technical University)**

***Irakli Nodia (PhD candidate, Tbilisi State University; assistance, Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani University)**

“Turkey's Fulfillment of the Copenhagen Criteria: An Analysis of Political Criteria”

The process of accession to the European Union is based on the **Copenhagen criteria**, which determine the compliance of candidate countries with the standards of democratic governance, the rule of law, and the protection of human rights. Turkey's relationship with the EU represents one of the longest and most complex integration processes, where the fulfillment of political criteria is of particular importance.

The aim of the research is to analyze the dynamics of Turkey's fulfillment of the Copenhagen political criteria and to identify the key challenges hindering the country's EU integration. The study is based on the annual reports prepared by the **European Commission**, but we will focus on the most recent, specifically the **Turkey Report 2024**, which contains the latest observations and recommendations for Turkey. Earlier progress reports will be used to draw general conclusions, enabling a comparative analysis.

The analysis shows that despite the reforms implemented in the initial stages, a **democratic backsliding** has been observed in recent years. Problems are particularly evident in the independence of the judiciary, freedom of the media, and the functioning of civil society. At the same time, EU assessments note a disruption of the institutional balance and a tendency toward the concentration of power in the executive branch.

The research also reflects the discrepancy between the EU's official assessments and academic analytical approaches, reinforcing the conclusion that Turkey's fulfillment of political criteria is inconsistent and fragmented. Finally, the paper concludes that existing challenges pose a significant barrier to the country's EU accession process and emphasizes the necessity of political reforms to strengthen the prospect of rapprochement with the European Union.