Introduction

Dear Readers,

We are presenting you the 9th issue of *Eastern Review*. This issue is published in a formula inaugurated last year – entirely in English. Our journal has received funding from the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education under the Support for Scientific Journals Program, which aims to strengthen the level of internationalization of both the published content and the editorial team of the journal. Recently, *Eastern Review's* back issues have been made available at Elsevier's Digital Commons publishing and institutional repository platform.

Accordingly, in this volume, the majority of authors are from abroad: Belarus, Georgia, Russia, Norway, Ukraine. It also features authors from such Polish academic centers as: Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, AGH University of Science and Technology, Jagiellonian University, University of Silesia in Katowice.

The journal's Program Council and its editorial team are truly international. The editorial process rests largely on the employees of the Chair of Political Systems of the Faculty of International and Political Studies, University of Lodz, supported by other members of the Faculty, as well as researchers from Belarus, Lithuania and Ukraine. The journal is published by the Lodz University's International Center for East European Research (ICEER) in cooperation with the Committee for the Study of Integration of Europe of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Lodz.

Easter Review is committed to publishing cutting-edge research on the regions of Central and Eastern Europe, as well as post-Soviet area, viewed from political, social, economic, and cultural perspectives.

The volume opens with Sabrina P. Ramet's article *Hegel, revolution, and the rule of law*, discussing "Hegel's stress on the importance of absolute monarchy to protect a liberal political order", since, according to him, "democracy could threaten liberal values or, to put it differently, the fewer constraints on democracy, the greater the potential threat to liberalism". Marek Barański analyzes (*The political party system in Slovakia in the era of Mečiarism. The experiences of the young democracies of central European countries*) the role of political parties in the establishment of the foundations of Slovakian democracy, including the pro-democratic and undemocratic tendencies displayed by Vladimir Mečiar.

The next three articles – Victor Nitsevich, *Subjective grounds for expanding the powers of the President of the Russian Federation*; Anna Jach, *Possibilities for cooperation between the non-governmental, non-commercial sector and the public sector in modern Russia*; Roman Savenkov, *Public contestation practices in Russia in 2000–2020* – focus predominantly on socio-political processes taking place in contemporary Russia, such as the President's expanding powers, the development of civil society and the Russian political regime's stability being endangered by growing public contestation.

The following section includes three articles covering problems of international and national security, in the fields of digital security (Vakhtang Maisaia, Alika Guchua, Thornike Zedelashvili, *The cybersecurity of Georgia and threats from Russia*); hybrid forms of contemporary warfare, as exemplified by actions taken by Russia toward former Soviet Union's republics (Anastasiya Ilyina, *Russia's hybrid invasion in Belarus during the presidential election campaign 2020*); and energy security (Michał Kumor, Stanisław Porada, *A common gas market for Visegrad Group countries*).

The remaining three articles discuss various socio-cultural phenomena of modernity. Magdalena Bogucewicz (*The consequences of the migration crisis on the Balkan route and human rights: the current situation and prospects in Serbia*) examines cases of human rights violations on the Balkan route as one of the implications of European migration policies, and applies them to the Serbian context. Daria Yashkina (*A sociological perspective on the phenomenon of solo--living in Eastern Europe: An attempt at conceptualization*) looks at the phenomenon of solitary living as a consequence of the processes of individualization that are characteristic of the entire modern world. Finally, Elena V. Lebedeva (*"The right to the post-soviet city": Analysing communication gaps in the public space*) investigates the communication gaps in the public spaces of post-Soviet cities (from the perspective of business-government-society interaction) through the paradigm lens of urban sociology coupled with the perspective of communications studies.

Editorial team