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# THE INTERNET AS INFRA- STRUCTURE IN POST-SOCIALIST LITHUANIA

## SUBJECT

I situate the Internet as infrastructure through a long-term fieldwork among key telecom stakeholders – academics, politicians, business-people – who have been maintaining socially valued physical Internet networks since the 1990s in Lithuania. I look at Lithuania, because it happens to have excellent (highly accessible, cheap, fast) Internet services since its emergence as a nation state after the Soviet Union disintegration, which makes it an intriguing research case. I thereby develop a new critique of infrastructures that is situated, open-ended, and ‘looks elsewhere’ (H. Becker).

## RESEARCH QUESTION

**HOW INFRASTRUCTURING PRACTICES, GEOPOLITICAL IMAGINARIES, AND CRITICAL NEGOTIATIONS OF THE INTERNET AS INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTAIN AND SHAPE IT IN POST-SOCIALIST LITHUANIA?**

## APPROACH

By exploring the Internet as infrastructure through fieldwork, I argue that Internet is an emergent result of ongoing labor practices of infrastructuring, geopolitical imaginaries and critical negotiations

- Both planned labor practices of digging, mediating, planning, documenting and others, and their situated contingencies comprise Internet infrastructuring on the ground
- Also, strange (following Zygmunt Bauman) geopolitical imaginaries of binaries and non-binary cooperation shape the Internet as infrastructure in Lithuania
- Moreover, critical negotiations, which I explore by inquiring into “Lietuvos telekomas” privatization case, show that infrastructure development changes over time, and these changes are surrounded by critical justifications and different future visions.



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