

Project Management Development – Practice and Perspectives

Report on the Eight International Scientific Conference on Project Management in the Baltic Countries

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The Eight International Scientific Conference on Project Management in the Baltic Countries was held during 26-27 April 2019 at the University of Latvia in Riga. The theme of the conference was “Project Management Development – Practice and Perspectives”. Organizers of the event included the Research Institute of the Project Management of the Faculty of Business, Management and Economics, University of Latvia and the Professional Association of Project Managers, Latvia.

The aim of the conference was to discuss results of scientific research in project management issues, to establish new contacts and networking between professionals involved in project management, and to enhance the capacity of project managers.

The conference programme included opening plenary session, and 3 parallel streams of papers and presentations. All papers were reviewed by two reviewers and papers included in the conference proceedings were double blind reviewed. Detailed conference program you can find [here](#).

Conference keynote speakers for 2019 were **Prof. Dr. Michael J. Littman** (USA), **Prof. Dr. Carsten Wolff** (Germany) and **Prof. DI Philipp Rosenberger** (Austria).



The work of the conference was organized in the 3 parallel sessions:

1. Practical Project Management and Project Management in the ICT sector

Session chairs: Prof. Carsten Wolff and Prof. Philipp Rosenberger

2. Social Aspects and New Directions in Project Management

Session chairs: Prof. Arvi Kuura, and Prof. (emer.) Dr. Žaneta Ilmete

3. Project Risk Management and Quantitative Methods in Project Management

Session chairs: Prof. Wolfgang Tysak and Prof. Andrejs Cekuls



Prof. Michael J. Littman (SUNY: Buffalo State, USA. University of Haifa, Israel).

Michael J. Littman, chair and associate professor of business, is recognized for his consistently superior, student-focused, and innovative teaching skills, sound scholarship, and exceptional level of service to Buffalo State students. His strong commitment to students' starts with advisement, extends into the classroom, and stretches to their post-graduate careers.

Littman has a long record of positive impact on student growth and performance through a variety of offerings, including freshman seminars, senior seminars, honors sections, and graduate-level courses, plus courses cross-listed in history and communications. He has taught 42 different undergraduate and graduate courses at Buffalo State. The focus of his teaching has been to instill and develop the positive personal and professional skills students need for a rewarding role as ethical leaders in their profession and community.

He has also mentored international faculty through the Fulbright program and African Regional International Scholar Development Internship program.

Littman also has a strong record of scholarship that supports his excellence in the classroom. He is an internationally recognized scholar and consultant who is often requested to collaborate with a European network of partners. He has participated in projects in the Netherlands, Latvia, and Germany. He has a long history of being a requested reviewer by journals and textbooks in a variety of business areas. He also has served his community as a two-term president of the Williamsville Central School District Board of Education and has served as a member of the Buffalo's Superintendent Advisory Council on Occupational Education.

Prof. Littman during the conference presented a report **“An Analysis of Project Management Programs in the State University of New York System”**. An increasing number of jobs are focussing on project approach, with growing demand for qualified project managers. Michael J. Littman emphasizes in his research that, according to the PMI data for 2010-2020, the USA have created 6.2 million jobs for project managers, noting that certified project managers earn up to 20% more than uncertified ones. It gives a particular importance to review the opportunities for obtaining education in project management.

Several of the conference expert reports are devoted to analysing the academic project management programmes on offer, and the state of certification in the academic context - notably, the masters' programme (level 7)

by Carsten Wolf, which has been implemented and available in multiple countries for several years, and Michael J. Littman's analysis of project management programmes.



Prof. Dr. Carsten Wolff (FH Dortmund, Germany).

Carsten Wolff is a full professor for computer science at Dortmund University of Applied Sciences and Arts since 2007. He studied electrical engineering and economics at Paderborn University and did a PhD in electrical engineering at the Heinz Nixdorf Institute. In his industrial career, Dr. Wolff was in the semiconductor industry (Infineon AG). He is a founding member and director of the research institute IDiAL and the spokesman of the industry-university-cluster ruhrvalley. Furthermore, he is the co-founder of two technology companies. One of his research interests is the development of processes, methodology and tools for the management of digital transformation.

Prof. Wolff during the conference presented a report **“Organizational DNA of the Master’s Programme EuroMPM”**.

The European Master in Project Management (EuroMPM) is a study programme which was initially conducted at the University of the Basque Country (UPV), Bilbao, Spain, the NTNU Trondheim, Norway, and the Dortmund University of Applied Sciences and Arts (FH Dortmund), Germany. It is based on a joint curriculum and didactic model. The programme is taught in 3 or 4 semesters with two “teaching semesters” which deliver a set of modules and one or two “project semesters” which are devoted to projects and Master’s thesis.

Organizational DNA (or corporate DNA) is proposed to phrase and codify the philosophy, structure, beliefs and capabilities of an organization. It forms a description of an organization which can be used for communication, strategy development and as a tool for management. The application of the concept of organizational DNA to a Master’s programme in Project Management (as the European Master in Project Management - EuroMPM) follows the idea to view Master’s programmes as a kind of learning or self-optimizing organization. Considering the concept of the DNA can lead to a new analysis of the capabilities and therefore of the goal of academic Master’s programmes in a very practical domain like project management. It can help to answer the question: what can we achieve with a Master’s programme in project management? Furthermore, it can be a tool to analyse and plan the development options for such study programmes: how can we develop the capabilities? How can it be more effective and more efficient? Finally, forming a consensus on the DNA of the EuroMPM can be a common ground for the members of the EuroMPM consortium.

Prof. C.Wolff concluded that DNA of EuroMPM can be an important step for the further development and for achieving success. Furthermore, discussing and thinking about us is a motivating team experience where a consensus is an experience of success. Such a discussion forms a team spirit and leaves the consortium members with a feeling of strength. Coming back to their home institutions, they can convince others and communicate what their work is good for. Coming from a strong consortium their position is strengthened, too. This is the reason why organizations like to talk about themselves. It's about self-assurance. It should not distract people from doing their work in delivering education and doing science on project management. Instead, it should help to become better, to have better outcomes and a bigger impact on how project management is done in the 21st century in Europe.



Prof. Dr. Philipp Rosenberger (Austria).

Dr Philipp Rosenberger is a professor at FH Campus Vienna at master program technical management focusing on IT project management in an agile development context.

After many years in consulting focussing on technical aftersales and business as well as project management and especially IT project management development in Europe and China, he got into the financial sector, managing the implementation of a current account financial product implementation project at ING DiBa Online bank in Vienna and in parallel starting his own small consulting company ROSCON.at

Philipp is now focussing on scientific research of hybrid IT project management models, fulfilling the both needs of a tightly managed classical project regarding budget, cost, quality, predictability and reliability, as well as the needs of an agile culture in the development part of the project.

During the conference Philipp presented a co-authored paper with József Tick (Hungary) **“Adaption of Selected PMBOK Processes to Fit SCRUM Developments”**.

Authors mentioned that neither the definition of success nor its measurement is dogmatically defined by a framework, be it waterfall or agile. Even though these and other traditional frameworks have a strong foothold in the industry and seem to influence the definition of success as well as the assessment process, other contributing factors are likely to be shaping these concepts as well. The shift towards including qualitative success indicators in the definition and measurement of project success is noticeable and is applied irrespective of the boundaries set by project

management frameworks. Traditional concepts are still valid today but share an almost level playing field with their counterparts emphasising quality. Data regarding measurement reinforce the prevalent opinion that quantitative success indicators are likely easier to measure. Still, organisations seem to be striving to find ways to include qualitative success indicators in their assessment process

Given the complexity of the industry and the broader project environment, aspects such as size of the organisation, the customer environment, as well as the individual people involved shape the assessment process. It seems to be a question of organisational culture. However, this is merely one conclusion drawn based on the literature review and the results at hand.

Their study explored the definition of project success and revealed the relevance of traditional measurement approaches by assuming a closed system, where only the view of professionals regarding their respective organisations was considered. However, project environments are more complex. The impact that customer organisations have on the definition of project success as well as the assumption that “success” is a context-specific concept can only be tested by broadening the scope of research. This research does also not consider the causality of the established relationships i.e. *why* a change in the predictor variable *causes* a change in the dependent variable. This, too, may be subject to further research.

To take this research one step further, the authors suggest an exploratory case study involving customer organisations as well as delivery organisations with project setups of varying complexity and homogeneity. Such an approach could be useful in discovering not only how flexible the definition of project success really is, but how the concept morphs, for example, when opposing or two similar cultures come up against each other. Since the data has shown a shift towards multidimensionality in assessing project success, developing a standardized, modular scorecard that can be shaped to the individual differences of project environments and considers varying organizational needs poses an interesting challenge for the future.

In the conference was represented 17 countries in total, including Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Austria, Columbia, United Kingdom, USA, Poland, Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, India, The Netherlands and Switzerland.

The International Scientific Project Management Conference organized by the Professional Association of Project Managers of Latvia in co-operation with the Research Institute of the Project Management of the Faculty of Business, Management and Economics, University of Latvia has now become a proven value. Its international recognition has considerably grown and similarly has the quality of the submitted articles. The proceedings hereby are the fourth in turn and present articles of both scientific and practical significance. We are particularly pleased to announce that the articles published in the proceedings are now available indexed internationally via EBSCOhost research database.

The articles in the proceedings are aimed at both theory and practice. They present extensive depiction of the contemporary situation in project management by covering

the internationally applied methods and tools, the standards project management methodology is currently based on and developments expected in the field in the nearest future.

The current global economy and growing digitalization require ever new solutions for cooperation between economy and society. In these terms, Project management serves as a key discipline ensuring technically innovative and fast satisfaction of clients' demands. The classical project management methods are faced with certain changes in such circumstances. The new factors of success are agile and hybrid project management, as well as social competence and interactivity. The time of choosing between agile and traditional project management has already passed. Today, the tools to use for project management combine both agile and traditional elements. That is why this conference features experts shared their experience with the use of agile methods, techniques, and formats in Project development. They reviewed the agile project management practice in IT, real estate, consulting, construction, and other projects. The new formats additionally concentrate on the development of their standards of use and the problems arising in their practical application.

Project management is closely connected with the risks influencing the project time-span, costs and quality. The issue of coping with project risks, implementation of risk planning and supervision of the subsequent process is discussed based on the experience of practical project implementation.

Project management applies not only for business environment. In the global context those tools and methods have been implemented also in public administration. Several research results for project management in the public sector have been presented also in the conference.

Prof. (emer.) Dr. oec. Žaneta Ilmete (chair of the conference and professional association of project managers) also concludes that project management is closely connected with the risks influencing the project time-span, costs and quality. The issue of coping with project risks, implementation of risk planning and supervision of the subsequent process is discussed based on the experience of different construction projects all over the world. For this reason the research dedicated to this topic might be interesting to all project implementers.

Communication, ethics, and leadership, as well as emotional intelligence are critical success factors in project management, and several reports will analyse them. Good project culture works toward success in a project, but not every culture is good for every project. Projects are implemented within the framework of multiple cultures, which must be integrated. The conference sections and results were elaborated on the practice and the new solutions and vision that project manager's face when commencing the changes.

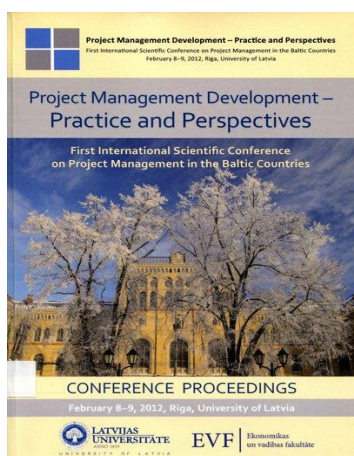
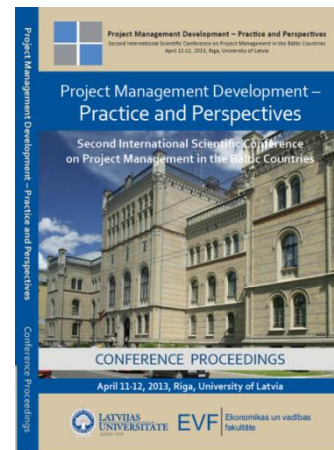
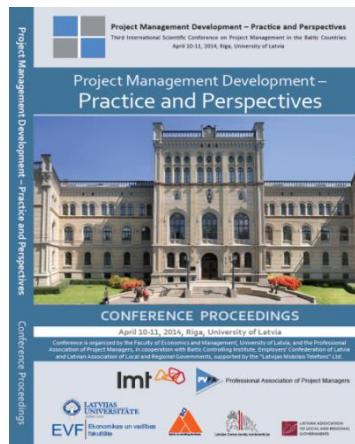
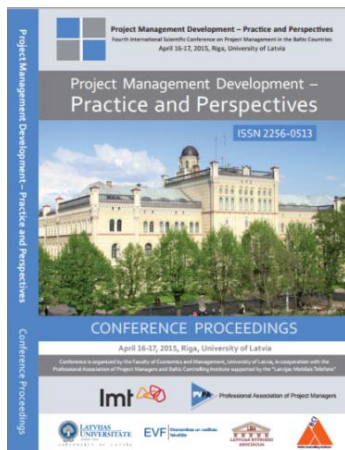
There are articles devoted to the project manager's personality and opportunities to acquire education and pursue a career. Several articles concern the experience of project management education in higher education institutions of various countries and can be worth the interest of project management professionals.

The conference organizing committee also wants to say many thanks for support and contributions to this conference and papers submitted by the PM World Journal international authors' community.

Some photos from the conference:



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About the Author



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Emils Pulmanis is a member of the board of the Professional Association of Project Managers in Latvia and development project manager at State Audit Office of the Republic of Latvia. He has gained a BSc. in engineer economics, a professional master's degree in project management (MSc.proj.mgmt) and currently is a PhD candidate with a specialization in project management. He has elaborated and directed a number of domestic and foreign financial instruments co-financed projects. He was a National coordinator for a European Commission-funded program – the European Union's financial instruments PHARE program in Latvia. Over the past seven years he has worked in the public administration project control and monitoring field. He was a financial instrument expert for the Ministry of Welfare and the European Economic Area and Norwegian Financial Mechanism implementation authority as well as an expert for the Swiss – Latvian cooperation program as a NGO grant scheme project evaluation expert. He has gained international and professional project management experience in Germany, the United States and Taiwan. In addition to his professional work, he is also a lecturer at the University of Latvia for the professional master study program in Project management. He has authored more than 50 scientific publications and is actively involved in social activities as a member of various NGO's.

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