Miķelis Grīviņš Dr soc



Health-oriented food systems, precision supply chains and sustainable nutrition

Main supervisor | Healthy and Sustainable Food Systems Research Group
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Current position	Research Professor
Organisational unit	Faculty of Social Sciences, Healthy and Sustainable Food Systems Research Group
KEY-RSU role	Main supervisor
Thematic area	SSRC-1 Food and Nutritional Security of People with Severe Medical Conditions

Host environment

The Faculty of Social Sciences brings together social-science teaching and research at RSU, while the Healthy and Sustainable Food Systems Research Group provides an interdisciplinary environment connecting food systems, sustainability and health. View faculty profile | View group profile

Supervisor Overview

Miķelis Grīviņš is a Research Professor in the Faculty of Social Sciences and leads the Healthy and Sustainable Food Systems Research Group at Rīga Stradiņš University. As a KEY-RSU main supervisor, he will support one postdoctoral researcher investigating food and nutritional security among people with severe medical conditions.

Research Expertise

His expertise spans health policy, food supply chains, healthy and sustainable nutrition, and precision supply chains. His research connects food systems, One Health, rural development and human-nature relations, with particular attention to how institutions, infrastructure, households and market actors shape access to appropriate food.

The group works across disciplinary and sectoral boundaries and uses mixed-method designs combining interviews, surveys, case studies, citizen science and participatory approaches. These methods can be complemented by self-tracking data, remote sensing, geographic information systems and supply-chain mapping. This breadth supports research that links lived experience and household practices with organisational, spatial and policy-level analysis.

Research Opportunities

The KEY-RSU theme focuses on food and nutritional security among people with severe medical conditions, including dietary needs, barriers to access and the social and structural factors influencing nutrition before, during and after cancer treatment. A central opportunity is to investigate how food supply chains could become more flexible and responsive to specific health conditions, treatment pathways and dietary requirements.

The postdoctoral researcher will have substantial scope to shape an original project within this area. Possible directions include mapping health-oriented supply chains, examining how healthcare providers, food producers, retailers and households could be better connected, and developing or testing models for precision supply chains. The project may combine stakeholder interviews, surveys, case studies, participatory research and spatial analysis. It can connect empirical research with broader questions of food-system transformation and social innovation while remaining grounded in the needs of people navigating serious illness.

Research Environment and Collaboration

The postdoctoral researcher will join an interdisciplinary group working on food systems, sustainability and health. Integration will include team meetings, research seminars, collaborative project activities and regular exchange with doctoral and postdoctoral colleagues. The environment offers shared methodological expertise, research tools and potential access to relevant datasets and project materials, subject to the requirements and approvals of the individual research plan.

Ongoing contexts include FoodCityBoost, which examines the economic, health, social and environmental impacts of urban farming models, and RISE AgriFood LV, which explores innovation across food supply and production. The group also studies household meal practices and dietary decision-making. Professional networks include the European Society for Rural Sociology, the European Food Safety Authority and the International Farming Systems Association. These connections can support international visibility and collaboration with academic, public-sector and community partners, while Latvia's compact research and policy environment creates opportunities for direct engagement with practitioners and decision-makers.

Supervision and Researcher Development

Supervision will combine regular communication with increasing autonomy. Meeting frequency will reflect the stage and needs of the project, with feedback and key decisions discussed collaboratively. Early work will focus on refining the research question, methodology, milestones and publication strategy; as the project develops, the postdoctoral researcher will take greater ownership of scientific choices, collaborations and outputs.

Miķelis Grīviņš currently supervises four doctoral researchers and works with a postdoctoral researcher whose research addresses human-nature relations and the role of landscapes. The incoming postdoctoral researcher will be integrated into ongoing projects, seminars and networks, with opportunities for peer learning and collaboration. His supervision environment is deliberately agile: it provides clear direction and practical support while preserving space for independent thinking, methodological experimentation and the development of a distinctive scientific profile.

Career Development Support

Career development will be embedded in the research programme. Support can cover research design and project management, grant and fellowship proposals, publication and research-output strategy, conference participation, international networking, teaching or supervision experience, Open Science and research-data practices, and science communication or policy engagement.

The postdoctoral researcher will be encouraged to build leadership and team-development skills, initiate collaborations within and beyond academia and engage with stakeholders across healthcare, food production, retail, public administration and communities where relevant to the project. The intended outcome is an independent researcher able to define a research agenda, assemble partnerships, lead projects and connect rigorous scholarship with practical food-system and health challenges.

Who May Particularly Thrive in This Environment

This environment may particularly suit a curious and collaborative postdoctoral researcher who is comfortable working across disciplinary and sectoral boundaries. A strong fit would be someone interested in linking food-

system research with concrete health challenges, willing to explore new partnerships and methods, and ready to contribute actively to the group while developing an independent direction. Openness to participatory and transdisciplinary research, constructive feedback and engagement with practitioners will be especially valuable.

Selected Contributions

FoodCityBoost Urban Food Systems and Sustainability

Contribution: development and application of approaches for assessing the economic, health, social and environmental impacts of different urban farming models. KEY-RSU relevance: demonstrates integrated food-system assessment and the ability to connect sustainability, health and real-world implementation.

RISE AgriFood LV Innovation in Food Systems

Contribution: research on innovations across food supply and production involving different product groups. KEY-RSU relevance: provides a platform for examining how supply-chain innovation may respond to specialised dietary and health needs.

Household Food Practices and Dietary Decision Making

Contribution: supervision of research on how households construct meals and negotiate dietary choices. KEY-RSU relevance: supports analysis of food access and nutrition as relational and socially embedded processes rather than individual choice alone.

Manoeuvring between regulations to achieve locally accepted results: analysis of school meals in Latvia and Finland

Grivins M, Tisenkopfs T, Tikka V and Silvasti T. Food Security 10, 1389-1400 (2018). DOI 10.1007/s12571-018-0856-6. Contribution: co-author of comparative research on how regulatory perspectives and local implementation shape food provision. KEY-RSU relevance: demonstrates how policy and institutional arrangements affect access to healthy food.

Bricolage for Self-Sufficiency: An Analysis of Alternative Food Networks

Grivins M and Keech D. Sociologia Ruralis 57, 340-356 (2017). DOI 10.1111/soru.12171. Contribution: corresponding and lead author in comparative research on how resources are mobilised within alternative food networks. KEY-RSU relevance: informs analysis of supply-chain restructuring, adaptability and locally embedded food provision.

Supervisory Availability

Miķelis Grīviņš plans to provide regular scientific supervision throughout the KEY-RSU employment period. Supervision will be adapted to the project's stage and will combine accessible guidance with increasing autonomy, integration into the research group and support for the postdoctoral researcher's progression towards an independent research profile and wider collaborations.