



Organizacija Združenih  
narodov za izobraževanje,  
znanost in kulturo



Nacionalni odbor programa za  
upravljanje z družbenimi  
spremembami - MOST



**Slovenian National Committee of the  
UNESCO Management of Social Transformations Program (MOST),**

**and**

**School of Advanced Social Studies, Nova Gorica, Slovenia**

in cooperation with

Slovenian Social Science Association and ISA Junior Sociologists Network

*cordially invite you to submit paper proposals for the*

## **13<sup>th</sup> Slovenian Social Science Conference**

### ***Digital Society and Sustainability***

*November 11-13, 2021*

*Keynote speakers:*

**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Igor Perko**, University of Maribor, Slovenia  
**Dr. Dražen Simleša**, Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, Croatia

Additional keynote speakers may be added later on.

*Scope of the Conferences:*

Addressing the issues of sustainable development in the context of technological advancements seems to be more important than ever. The recent outbreak of the coronavirus has enormously underscored some severe weaknesses of the global social system, revealing contested and incongruent processes of

modernisation. On the one hand, we can observe global economic flows bounded to the ideology praising continuous growth and atomised consumers, which has devastating impacts on the natural environment and social interactions. On the other, we still face the dominance of national authorities preserving their interests despite challenges whose consequences reach far beyond national borders.

Social and environmental challenges are inextricably intertwined with technological ones. The immense expansion of information, communication and transport technologies has fused the physical, digital and biological worlds, Digitalisation and automatization - based on big data, artificial intelligence, internet of things - have permeated all aspects of society. One can observe exponential technological revolutions, including the rise intelligent processes, integrated reality, new energy matrix, digital governance, bioprogramming and neurogamification – referring to industry and economic development, political actions and governance, cultural encounters or everyday practices of human beings. Technology provides ground-breaking opportunities for development, improve the quality of life, health care, business infrastructure, ease the working conditions, encourage learning and creativity, improve trust towards decision-making institutions, connect people through the means of communication and transport - and encourage synergies between all that listed. However, it also poses severe threats for human society. When it is exploited for purely profit and power-seeking endeavours, it contributes to the existing deterioration of the natural environment and causing ecological disasters. It also deepens the exclusion of population who cannot afford those technologies or lack the skills required to use them, it leads to losing jobs, digital divide, digital illiteracy – and thus providing grounds for exclusivist, narrow-minded thinking among individuals and groups.

There is a mutual dialectical influence between technology and society on which the conference focuses; while digitalisation is causing a great impact on human interactions, cognition, organisations, and institutions – its emergent settings influence back upon the development and implementation of technological innovation within the society

Within the Conference we will deal with these challenges observing them in the interplay among structure, culture and individuals opening a variety of burning issues to be explored. Based on this, our conference shall primarily but not exclusively focus on:

- a) **Techno-social challenges for sustainable development:** in terms of dehumanisation, alienation and anomie, social and political instability, fragmentation and polarisation, excessive manipulation, surveillance and repression, deepening inequality and exclusion, accelerating environmental degradation and pollution.
- b) **Democratic governance and sustainable steering:** in terms of the governance as politics (expression of different interests, political competition and relations between political actors) as well as to the governance as public policy (creation and implementation of different public policies). Governance as a key social actor in providing a proper normative and regulatory settings enabling not only technological but also sustainable dimensions of society to flourish
- c) **Organisational structures and processes** that encourage technological and social innovations: in terms of companies, NGOs, media, academic institutions etc., which have to enable effective responses to excessive individualisation and the technology related risks. There is a challenge of adapting the organisational processes to the current social and economic problems by creating new jobs, personal wealth, and/or contributing to solidarity
- d) **The impacts that digitalisation on individuals:** in terms of its affects on individuals' interactions, cognition, attitudes, values, identities, creativity, productivity. There is also a role of digital literacy, learning and reflexivity for individuals' agency in responsible behaviour, which one should find important.

*Contributions addressing these and similar aspects of social transformations are welcome. You may address both Eastern and Western societies, global North or global South, deal with broad comparative perspective, individual case studies, and apply a broad variety of theories and research methods.*

***Abstract, language, and submission:***

The organizers invite theoretically or empirically grounded papers on the above topics. Special consideration will be given to empirically grounded papers, either comparative or country-based. The language of the abstracts, the papers and the conference will be English. Abstracts should be no more than 400 words long. They should be accompanied by the name(s) of the author(s), his/her/their affiliation(s) and e-mail(s).

The *processes of abstract submission* and acceptance will be managed using the [online platform](#). Please make sure you initially create an account for yourself on the conference platform and choose the status of *Author* in the process: <https://conference.fuds.si/>.

***Publication of the papers:*** Full papers based on the conference presentations submitted before December 14, 2021 (i.e. no more than one month after the conference) of acceptable quality will be published in an edited book or in an edited volume of an international scientific journal *Research in Social Change – RSC* (based on the topic and the author's preferences). *RSC* is an international, peer-reviewed journal published by Sciendo that welcomes contributions for the 2021 volume. Interested conference participants can submit the prepared articles even before the conference following the [instructions on the official RSC website](#). The accepted, peer-reviewed, papers will be published free of charge.

***Organizing institutions:***

- Slovenian National Committee of the UNESCO Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST)
- School of Advanced Social Studies / Fakulteta za uporabne družbene študije v Novi Gorici
- International Sociological Association: Junior Sociologists Network
- Slovenian Social Science Association

***Important Deadlines:***

Deadline for submitting paper proposals (max. 400 words) – September 20, 2021

Notification of paper acceptance – September 30, 2021

Deadline for registration – October 25, 2021

***Conference Fees:***

As the Conference shall take place on-line, **no fees** are required!

***Conference venue:***

ON-LINE EVENT

Prof. Dr. Borut Rončević  
Dean of SASS

Prof. Dr. Matej Makarovič  
President of the MOST  
National Committee at  
UNESCO