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School of Advanced Social Studies

"Book of Abstracts"

16th Slovenian Social Science Conference 2023

"Crises and Empowerment in Social Transformations"

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
- Slovenian Social Science Association

October 26-27, 2023, Slovenia

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Slovenian National Committee of the
UNESCO Management of Social Transformations Program (MOST),
School of Advanced Social Studies, Nova Gorica, Slovenia,
and Slovenian Social Science Association

16th SLOVENIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE CONFERENCE
"Crises and Empowerment in Social Transformations"

Keynote speakers:

Prof. Michael Slobodchikoff, Troy University
Prof. Emilian Kawalski, Jagiellonian University

Scope of the Conference

Currently, we are facing many crises on different societal levels. One can observe major turbulences especially in the area of climate, energy, and economy, which result in a variety of responses in political, cultural and individual contexts. Turmoil on a macro societal level is precipitating disturbances, disorientation and stress on a level of individuals, but are, however, also an opportunity to thrive (Sathouris 2010), while encouraging actors on different social levels to act properly within the contested social conditions. The key question that the conference addresses is: Which facets of crises we can observe, what are the consequences for the society and humanity, and under what conditions, crises can be understood as an opportunity for empowerment towards a positive social change.

There are many different actors dealing with consequences of crises; (1) on a macro scale, we have transnational and national political actors, such as nation states, (2) on a mezzo scale, there are organisations and communities, (3) on a micro level, we deal with individuals, their interactions, aspirations and actions. The issues challenge the social scientists and experts dealing with crises in the world of unprecedented social transformations to search for new knowledge on how to address trajectories for a better life. Social reality has become inextricably intertwined with digital transformation with the increasingly central role of artificial intelligence in all spheres of social life. Therefore, the topic calls for the interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches, such as sociology, cultural anthropology, international relations, economics, political science, psychology, counselling, management, environmental studies, computing and informatics.

Contributions addressing these and similar aspects of social crises and ways of empowerment in the context of social transformations are welcome. You may address macro, mezzo level or individuals dealing with a broad comparative perspective, case studies, and applying a broad variety of theories and research methods.

Abstract, language, and submission:
The organisers 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: http://conference.fuds.si/

Publication of the papers:
Full papers based on the conference presentations submitted until 30 November 2023 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 2023 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.
Organising institutions:
- Slovenian National Committee of the UNESCO Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST)
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Important Deadlines:
Deadline for submitting paper proposals (max. 400 words) – 31 August 2023
Notification of paper acceptance – 15 September 2023
Deadline for registration – 30 September 2023

Conference Fees:
There are no conference fees. The conference is supporter by the national UNESCO MOST programme.

Conference venue:
Hybrid form, SASS Ljubljana, Leskoškova 9, combining on-site participation (preferred) and online participation (for those unable to travel)

Prof. Borut Rončević, PhD
Dean of SASS

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

The Agenda

Thursday, 26 October

8:30-9:00	**Arrival and registration**
9:00-9:30	**Welcome addresses**

- Matej Makarovič, president of the national UNESCO Management of Social Transformations programme

- Borut Rončević, dean of the School of Advanced Social Studies (Nova Gorica, Slovenia)

- Bandana Purkayastha, University of Connecticut (USA) and vice-president for the national associations at the International Sociological Association

9:30-10:30   Keynote speech with discussion: *Great Power Conflict following the War in Ukraine*
- Michael Slobodchikoff, Troy University, USA

10:30-11:00   Coffee Break

11:00-12:30:   Parallel Panel 1: Contemporary Diaspora Research and Policies

Chair: **Jure Leskovec,** Stanford University (USA

- Marinka Žitnik, Harvard university (USA): *Transatlantic Cooperation and the Diaspora as a Soft Power - The Role and Importance of Intellectuals in the United States and Canada*
- Željko Oset, Research Institute of American Slovenian Education Foundation ASEF (Slovenia): *Mechanisms for attracting foreign and returning domestic experts to strengthen Slovenia's position in global digitalization trends*
- Dejan Valentinčič, Research Institute of American Slovenian Education Foundation ASEF (Slovenia): *Digital transformation of Slovene emigrant community in the United States and Canada*

11:00-12:30   Parallel Panel 2: Crises, Transformations and their Communicative Aspects

Chair: **Simona Kukovič,** School of Advanced Social Studies
- Mateja Rek, School of Advanced Social Studies and Faculty of Information Studies (Slovenia): *Trends in parents' digital media education practices in Slovenia*
- Anja Bašin, School of Advanced Social Studies (Slovenia): *Media Literacy in Slovenia: Challenges, Research, and the Path Forward*
- Andrej Drapal, Consensus/ School of Advanced Social Studies (Slovenia) (Slovenia): *The Crisis and the "Crisis"*

12:30-14:00   Lunch Break

14:00-15:30   Parallel Panel 1: Social Research for Social Transformation – a word from three members of the Executive Committee of the International Sociological Association

Chair: **Borut Rončević,** School of Advanced Social Studies

- **Jan Marie Fritz,** University of Cincinnati (USA): *An Opportunity for Positive Social Change: Incorporating Social Science Practice into Your Academic Program*
- **Shaikh Mohammad Kais,** *University of Rajshahi (Bangladesh): Broken Families: An Explo ration of the Psychosocial Impact of Parental Divorce on Santal Children in Bangladesh*
- **Mabrouk Boutagouga,** University of Batna (Algeria): *Empowering Women Bread winners in Algeria: Resilience Through Traditional Food Entrepreneurship Amidst Economic Crisis*

14:00-15:30   Parallel Panel 2: The Digital in Times of Societal Transformations

Chair: **Matevž Tomšič,** School of Advanced Social Studies

- **Deepika Anshu Bara,** Indian Institute of Technology, Dhanbad (India): *Rhetoric of Common Service Centre in Bridging Digital Divide in India: Evidence from Rural Jharkhand*
- **Volodymyr Sulyma, Ruslan Duka, Kateryna Yaroshenko, Sergij Malinovskyj,** Dnipro State Medical University (Ukraine): *Application of the Moodle system in the training of Ukrainian doctors during Russia's war against Ukraine*
- **Janja Lozar,** School of Advanced Social Studies (Slovenia): *Addressing the everchanging demand for innovation and change: Bringing Artificial Intelligence into industry by developing skills of students and employees*
- **Simona Kukovič,** School of Advanced Social Studies and University of Ljubljana (Slovenia) and **Jelena Joksimović,** Faculty of Information Studies, (Slovenia): *Transfor mation towards a Transparent and Trustworthy Public Administration: Reporting on Ceremonial Gifts*

15:30-15:45   Coffee Break

15:45-17:15   Parallel Panel 1: Psychosocial studies and Social Transformations

Chair: **Tamara Besednjak Valič,** Rudolfovo – Science and Technology Centre Novo mesto

- **Edit Lezha, Eranda Bilali (Halluni),** University of Shkodra "Luigj Gurakuqi" (Al bania): *Teachers' Psychological Wellbeing during Covid-19; A Phenomenological Approach*
- **Peter Ferfoglia, Tamara Besednjak Valič, Erika Džajić Uršič,** School of Ad vanced Social Studies (Slovenia): *Emotional Awareness: Impact of Social and Technological Transformation on Group Dynamics*
- **Fatjona Haka,** University of Tirana (Albania): *The Relationship Between (Self) Compassion & Shame and Guilt Experiences in a Sample of Albanian University Students*
- **Maks Tušak, Matej Tušak,** University of Ljubljana (Slovenia): *Medical hypnosis in modern clinical practice*

15:45-17:15   Parallel Panel 2: Social Transformations and the New Generations

Chair: **Janja Mikulan,** School of Advanced Social Studies
- **Adina Salaoru,** Babes Bolyai University from Cluj Napoca (Romania): *Enhancing Non-Cognitive Abilities for Youngster through Physical Activities Intervention Programs*
- **Vitor Sérgio Ferreira,** University of Lisbon (Portugal): *The rise of "new dream jobs" among new generations: intertwining the crises in traditional transitions to qualified work and the "play bour" enhancement*
- **Sorana Constantinescu, Ivan Alexandru, Adina Salaoru,** Babes Bolyai University from Cluj Napoca (Romania): *Civic engagement through participatory budgeting: a youth perspective*
- **Kseniia Gromova,** Faculty of Information Studies in Novo mesto (Slovenia): *Aspects of intercultural recruitment and selection of highly-skilled international female staff in Slovenia*

17:15-17:45   Coffee Break

17:45-19:15 Parallel Panel 1: Democracy, Politics and Identities

Chair: **Maruša Gorišek,** Institute for Developmental and Strategic Analysis (IRSA)
- **Tea Golob, Matej Makarovič, Maruša Gorišek,** Faculty of Information Studies in Novo mesto (Slovenia): *Challenges to Democracy and the Role of Social, Cultural and Economic Capitals*
- **Lucie Cviklová,** University of Hradec Králové (Czech Republic): *The Role of the Third Political Crisis in the Czech Republic in the Post-Communist Social Transformation and Empowerment of Civil Society Forces*
- **Alexandru-Vasile Sava, Sorana Constantinescu,** Babes Bolyai University from Cluj Napoca (Romania): *At the Gates: National Identity, European Identity and East-European Xenophobia*
- **Pusham Azad Babu, Jawaharlal Nehru** University (India): *The political in the production of demographic heterogeneity: Manipur's experience*
- **Wafae Elarabi, Abdelmalek Essaâdi** University (Morocco): *Decentralization in Morocco after the movement of 20 February and the question of the fundamental rights of the local population - A sociological pilot study in the region of Fes-Meknes*

17:45-19:15 Parallel Panel 2: Looking into Some Extraordinary Challenges and Crises

Chair: **Emil Karajič,** School of Advanced Social Studies (Slovenia)
- **Lužný, Dušan and Jan Váně, Jan Kaňák,** West Bohemia University (Czech Republic): *Universities in crisis? The Impact of Academic Capitalism on the Czech Social Sciences and Humanities.*
- **Ramazan Gün,** Bingöl University (Turkey): *Food Safety Crisis in Society: Causes, Consequences, and Mitigation*
- **Kiran Prakash Vattamparambil,** Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur, (India): *Governance during COVID-19: A Study on Challenges and Response Actions in Kerala*
- **Livija Rojc Štremfelj and Tamara Besednjak Valič,** School of Advanced Social Studies (Slovenia): *Spontaneous volunteer management in the recovery phase of natural disasters*
- **Lazar Gjurov, Bojan Miklosh, Aleksander Grizev,** University Goce Delcev (North Macedonia): *The Influence of Diversity on Organizational Cultures*

Friday, 27 October

8:30-9:00   **Arrival and registration**

8:45-9:00   **Welcome address**
                  Dr. Milan Zver, Member of European Parliament

9:00-10:30   **EU as a Global Actor in Fragmented and Traumatized World (EU-GlobalAct)**
                  Jean Monnet Module

Chair: **Janja Mikulan,** School of Advanced Social Studies (Slovenia)
        - Abdelhak El Bakouri, Mohamad First University (Morocco): *Climate Change Crisis and its Impact on Migration and Displacement Issues and Challenges of Empowerment and Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean Basin*
        - Ugba Dajo, Federal University Gusau (Nigeria): *Crises and Empowerment: Integrating Forced Migrants into Social Safety Nets in Gusau Metropolis, Zamfara State, Nigeria*
        - Amna Ben Amara, diversophy® (Tunisia): *Populism as Crisis Politics: Revisiting Security Policies in the Age of Populism*
        - Janja Mikulan and Martina Malinović, School of Advanced Social Studies (Slovenia): *Vulnerability and resilience to radicalisation and violent extremism in Slovenia: Perceptions from the local level*

10:30-11:00   **Coffee Break**

11:00-12:30   **"Sustainable Industry 4.0 for European Union" (SI4.0forEU) Jean Monnet Module**

Chair: **Erika Džajić Uršič,** School of Advanced Social Studies (Slovenia)
        - Robert Birungi, Makerere Institute of Social Research (Uganda): *Africans and Nature: The Case of the Banyoro Ethnic Community and Cultural Resistance Against Environmental Destruction*
        - Erika Džajić Uršič, Simon Muhič, Urška Fric, Alenka Pandiloska Jurak, Rudolfovo – Science and Technology Centre of Novo mesto (Slovenia): *Encouraging the development of Industrial Symbiosis Networks – Transition to Circular Economy*
        - The session under the JM Module SI4.0forEU will also provide an Introductory presentation of the Module leader and its activities. Scholars will be invited to contribute to the session with their research insights, scientific reviews and discussion

12:30-14:00 Lunch Break

14:00-15:30   **"Technology and Innovations for Agenda 2030 - EU Global Leadership" (TIA2030)**
Grand Strategies and their Implementation
Jean Monnet Center of Excellence

Chair: **Borut Rončević,** School of Advanced Social Studies (Slovenia)
  - **Doug G Davis,** Troy University (USA): *European Demographics, Security, and Welfare*
  - **Zdenek Uherek,** Charles University (Czech Republic): *Migration of Skilled Professionals as a Means of Amelioration of Global Crisis Phenomena*
  - **Aleksandra Govedarica, Nataša Kraljević, Darko Lacmanović, Predrag Ljubotina, Urša Lamut, Andrej Raspor, Bojan Rojko,** School of Advanced Social Studies (Slovenia): *Exploring possibilities for the development of creative industries in tourist destinations of rural tourism in Montenegro and Slovenia*
  - **Aleksandar Grizhev, Lazar Gjurov,** University Goce Delcev (North Macedonia): *Gender mainstreaming in North Macedonia and Slovenia*

15:30-16:00   **Coffee Break**

16:00-17:30   **"Media, Populism and Political Stability in the European Union" Populism and Media Messaging**
Jean Monnet Center of Excellence

Chair: **Matevž Tomšič, School of Advanced Social Studies (Slovenia)**

  Discussants:
  - **Petr Just,** Metropolitan University Prague (Czech Republic)
  - **Marijan Krivak,** Sveučilište u Osijeku (Croatia)
  - **Miro Haček,** University of Ljubljana (Slovenia)

17:30 - 17:45   **Concluding Remarks**

Daniel Baguma:

Adapting to transformation: Assets based Approach to building Sustainable small and Rural communities in Western Uganda

Abstract

One of the challenges facing the policy makers and governments of developing countries is to design policies and development programs that are tailored towards alleviating poverty in totality and reducing the inequality among different groups. Asset-based economic development is an approach that builds on community resources to strengthen local and regional economies. This approach to economic development involves identification of assets and evaluating how preserving and strengthening them could contribute to regional and local economic competitiveness. The success of an assets based economic development is a function of strong leadership at both the local and regional levels. It requires innovation, collaboration, and a rethinking of traditional economic development paradigm. However, designing of such inclusion or targeted policies and development programs requires understanding of how the aggregated poverty effect is distributed among groups and yet most of the poverty research work has dwelled on aggregate poverty analysis rather than disaggregated. This study seeks to assess the feasibility of an asset based approach to building sustainable small and sustainable livelihood strategies in the rural settings of Western Uganda.

Keywords: Assets based approach, social inclusion , sustainable development , innovation ,collaboration

Robert Birungi:

AFRICANS AND NATURE: THE CASE OF THE BANYORO ETHNIC COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL RESISTANCE AGAINST ENVIRONMENTAL DESTRUCTION

Abstract

»Following the 2006 Oil discovery in Bunyoro region, the indigenous Banyoro ethnic community has since witnessed unprecedented environmental destructive activities spring up in the name of economic development. These include the proposed construction of the EACOP pipeline, deforestation of Bugoma natural forest, Oil drilling activities, forced land evictions, tremendous urbanization, ethnic tension and a migration influx. These changes have adversely affected the cultural, spiritual and moral attachment initially enjoyed between the Banyoro and their natural environment. In response however, the Banyoro have opted for an incursion into the longue durée in search for pre-colonial eco-friendly alternatives to resist these adverse impacts. They treat this as an ecological crisis likely to influence a pathway to extinction of the rich Bunyoro cultural heritage as well as an outright violation of the spiritual sanctity of mother nature. In intervention, therefore, this paper intends to contextualize the Bunyoro experience to broaden the discussion on the viability of African traditional alternatives as a cultural resistance against modernity, globalization and neo-liberal tendencies of privileging economic development over environmental sustainability. I argue that sustainable development should prioritize the cultural authenticity of indigenous communities, and thus transcend the myopic view that treats the environment as a mere physical infrastructure. Therefore, my inquiry is primarily guided by the questions: How do we historically link African identity with ecological balance? How are pre-colonial African traditional practices relevant to the prevailing 21st century environmental challenges? How applicable is the particular Banyoro intervention applicable to the general context of environmental sustainability? Methodologically, the paper will rely on interviews, observation, online polls, ethnography and existing literature as tools of scholarly investigation.

Keywords: Bunyoro, Environment, Cultural Resistance, Environmental Destruction

Jan Marie Fritz:

An Opportunity for Positive Social Change: Incorporating Social Science Practice into Your Academic Program

Abstract

An Opportunity for Positive Social Change: Incorporating Social Science Practice into Your Academic Program

Jan Marie Fritz, Ph.D., C.C.S.
Professor, University of Cincinnati, Distinguished Visiting Professor,
University or Johannesburg and Adjunct Professor, Taylor's University (Malaysia)
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UNESCO's Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme works with organizations to assist UNESCO Member States "strengthen the connection between research and policy and between knowledge and action." The MOST Programme believes "this is key to fostering positive social change towards inclusive and sustainable development."
One of the MOST Programme's objectives is to "contribute to national and international policy debates and agendas." While many university academic programs like this objective, how to do this is often not a focus or even a part of their academic programs. If it is part of an academic program, the focus may be on conducting research rather than on how one goes about "strengthening the connection between… knowledge and action."
This presentation by a clinical sociologist focuses on how academic programs can make practice part of their programs. Examples will come from selected academic programs and focus on specific examples (e.g., mediation, the protection of children in armed conflict, environmental justice, national inclusion efforts for women and girls). The presentation also will cover how interdisciplinary academic programs (ones that focus on practice or have a practice track) can be accredited by the Commission for the Accreditation of Programs in Applied and Clinical Sociology.

Keywords: university social science programs, applied research, intervention, accreditation, clinical sociology

Volodymyr Sulyma, Ruslan Duka, Kateryna Yaroshenko, Sergij Malinovskyj:

Application of the Moodle system in the training of Ukrainian doctors during Russia's war against Ukraine

Abstract

The crisis that arose during Russia's war against Ukraine concerns, in particular, the conditions for the training of doctors. The search for possible solutions to this issue using the Moodle system is considered in our work. The advantages of distance education are the possibility of learning simultaneously a large number of students, facilitating the educational process, in the case of education of people with disabilities, adaptability - training using modern software and technical equipment makes e-education more accessible. Also, usually distance learning is cheaper than regular education, first of all, for due to the reduction of expenses for moving, living in another city, reducing the costs of organizing the courses themselves. Moodle allows you to create interactive mini-programs that can contain text, sound, video information, as well as any images. Using branched the script allows simulate diagnostic, treatment process with registration of the correct choice and erroneous actions of the student. In addition, scenarios may include the tests that makes this module basic in solving the task of practical learning skills both in surgery and in other fields of medicine. The doctor's of the general medical practice tasks determinations basic requirements of scope of knowledge and practical skills for graduating student of institute of higher education of IV level of accreditation: goal-directed methodical algorithm of questioning of the patient (getting anamnesis), physical examination, substantiation of provisional diagnosis, determinate algorithm of additional methods of investigations with analysis of received results, differential diagnosis, forming clinical diagnosis, substantiation of treatment program and it's implementation. Opponents the use of distance education in medicine is considered as such it is impossible to master practical skills, which are the main ones a component in the training of future medical workers. However, on ours opinion, the use of this form of education in medical educational institutions not only possible, but in wartime safe and necessary. It is certainly necessary to train a doctor in practical skills of traditional face-to-face contact, but all theoretical training and solving debatable issues of tactical decision-making issues in the treatment of the patient can be done remotely.

Keywords: Medical, students, Moodle, Russia`s war

Kseniia Gromova:

Aspects of intercultural recruitment and selection of highly-skilled international female staff in Slovenia

Abstract

Nowadays, social transformation tendencies have led to notable cultural diversity, necessitating adeptness in behaviour patterns and communication within varied cultural contexts. This need extends to both individual interactions and organizational environments. In turn, active globalisation processes increase international mobility among highly-skilled professionals i.e. expatriates as highly-qualified employees working permanently or temporarily outside their country of birth or citizenship (Perera, Chew and Nielsen 2018). Those global talent pool members, "international boundary spanners", are beginning to represent a valuable component of the worldwide staffing and are conducive to the competitive advantages of multinational organisations (Chun and Ariss 2015). However, the intercultural and international environment might be considerably demanding and requires specific intercultural competencies to comprehend how to navigate novel trajectories in life. This entails new knowledge, methods of adaptation as well as cultural awareness along with certain personal qualities (Chun and Ariss 2015; Barmeyer, Stein and Eberhardt 2020)

The research analyses drivers and barriers for the female applicants going through the recruitment process in Slovenia as highly-skilled self-initiated international expatriates (SIEs). The qualitative research methodology was designed with six in-depth interviews with female respondents from Sweden, Belarus, Russia and Latvia. Theoretical frameworks of G. Hofstede, E.T. Hall, F. Trompenaars, C. Hampden--Turner and cultural intelligence competences models were applied to define HRM processes within the analysis. Findings demonstrate that the future female employees ought to consider not only general working aspects but also cultural differences and similarities, which affect international HR selection and recruitment process and appear to be drivers and barriers for SIEs. Necessary intercultural competences (cultural awareness, low ethnocentrism, proactivity, adaptability, sensitivity, reflexivity, open mindset, readiness to challenges) and certain fields of knowledge (procedural, culture specific, legal ones) for the entry-level of the recruitment process in Slovenia are identified. The main contribution of the research is estimated within the IHRM perspective as the representation of the highly-skilled female employees' side within the recruitment process in the international arena. Moreover, it may improve intercultural cooperation within the female expatriates' recruitment and selection process and enrich personal intercultural competences concerning the employment culture in Slovenia and the European Union.

Keywords: culture, self-initiated expatriates, intercultural competence, recruitment practices, international human resource management

Alexandru-Vasile Sava, Sorana Constantinescu:

At the Gates: National Identity, European Identity and East-European Xenophobia

Abstract

In this paper we will trace how East-European nationals attempt to assert their claims to a European identity on the basis of their opposition to non-European migrants and refugees. This complicity in racist and xenophobic practices may seem paradoxical, as most East-European ethnic groups are (or in some cases were until very recently) met with xenophobic hostility when emigrating towards West-European countries. However, such a phenomenon has historical parallels to how certain groups of European migrants (Irish, Italians, Slavic peoples etc.) were faced with racist hostility when migrating to the United States in the 19th and early 20th century, and rejected from the category of "whiteness". According to previous analyses of the subject developed within whiteness studies, the inclusion of these ethnic groups into the racial category of White Americans was contingent on their participation in the racial oppression of African-Americans, as well as other racial minorities. We will analyze whether a similar process is underway with nations from the Eastern periphery of the EU. To this end we will analyze the voting behavior and political participation of East European diaspora populations together with survey data on the shifting attitudes towards minorities to explore how the perception and self-representation of East-Europeans in Western European countries (with a specific focus on Romanian nationals) has shifted with the appearance of newer non-European migrant groups, and what potential implications this might have on the development of European identity in general.

Keywords: European identity, whiteness studies, attitudes towards the EU, xenophobia

Shaikh Mohammad Kais:

Broken Families: An Exploration of the Psychosocial Impact of Parental Divorce on Santal Children in Bangladesh

Abstract

Globally, a mounting number of children experience family disruptions due to parental divorce or separation. Marital instability presents not a single risk factor, but multiple crises for children. Existing literature suggests some common effects of parental dislocation on children such as poor performance in school, loss of interest in social activity, difficulty adapting to change, emotional sensitivity, feelings of guilt, engaging in destructive behavior, increase in health problems, and loss of faith in marriage and family. Additionally, individual, familial, ethnic, social, and cultural factors determine the intensity of risks associated with changes in children's family life.

The Santals are the second largest ethnic minority people in Bangladesh. Although both husband and wife can demand divorce (bapak) in the Santal community, traditionally, Santals viewed marriage as an indestructible bond and any breaching couple was ridiculed in society. With an increasing rate of adultery and mistrust between spouses associated with the digital transformation of society, however, Santal community is now experiencing few cases of marital dissolution. Other factors that contribute to divorce are personality clashes, financial hardships, family interruptions, and dowry. For whatever reasons parental divorce takes place among the Santals, it leaves profound psycho-social bearings on the children.

Taking a sociological perspective, this research aims to uncovering the nature, extent, and impact of divorce in the Santal indigenous community in Bangladesh. For this study, field-level data were collected from three Santal settlements in northern Bangladesh by employing qualitative research methods including ethnographies, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions. The research finds that there are differing rates of divorce among Sanatan (traditional/ Hinduized) Santals and Christianized Santals, with less occurrence of divorce among the latter group. Similarly, since the children in a divorce vary (different temperaments, different ages), the impact of divorce on children also varies. Few Santal children show resilience and, with the assistance of their seniors, accept the situation as a transitional phase to which they easily adjust themselves. Others cannot bear parental dislocation and break down completely. Since understanding family change and its consequences is crucial to social scientists, health care professionals, and policy makers, the findings of this research can be used in formulating family laws and policies for ethnic indigenous communities in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Parental divorce, Family crises, Social transformations, Santal children, Bangladesh

Tea Golob, Matej Makarovič, Maruša Gorišek:

Challenges to Democracy and the role of Social, Cultural and Economic Capitals

Abstract

We explore attitudes toward democracy in relation to social divisions by focusing on the European Union member states and the corresponding EU political field. Positioning in the European political field is addressed through the theory of social fields as provided by Bourdieu and further conceptualized by Fligstein and McAdam. Drawing on the data obtained from the European Social Survey, we conducted a principal component analysis of the attitudes toward democracy and a correspondence analysis between these attitudes and social, cultural, and economic capitals. We demonstrate that attitudes toward challenging the existing representative democratic order can be seen in terms of two distinct dimensions: authoritarianism and populism.

Keywords: democracy, authoritarianism, populism, conspiracy theories, political field, habitus

Sorana Constantinescu, Alexandru Ivan, Adina Salaoru:

Civic engagement through participatory budgeting: a youth perspective

Abstract

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a relatively new mechanism of democratic participation used in many cities across the world as a tool for social empowerment at the local level. While it is not uncommon to find municipalities that use various forms of this system, little research has been done on how the citizens perceive this deliberative mechanism.

This paper aims to explore the attitudes of young people towards Participatory Budgeting in relation to their attitudes towards political participation. The focus on young people has a dual reasoning behind it: 1) Elections show that young people are generally less conventionally active, yet they prefer unconventional forms of political participation, and 2) PB is mainly digital, making it more accessible for younger generations.

Participatory Budgeting has the potential of being a great tool for social empowerment and legitimization at local level, especially when faced with lower voter turnouts. Understanding how young people perceive it can play an important part in creating systems aimed at reducing citizens' perceived alienation from the political life. To this end, during June 2023, four focus groups have been organized with young people (age 18 to 24) from Cluj-Napoca, one of the Romanian cities that have implemented a PB system. The study will address the following research questions (1) How do young people perceive participatory budgeting in relation to their political attitudes? (2) How political do young people perceive participatory budgeting to be? (3) How do the political attitudes of young people affect their willingness to engage in Participatory Budgeting? and (4) How does trust in local authorities affect young people's trust towards PB?

Keywords: political participation, participatory budgeting, digitalization, trust

El Bakouri Abdelhak:

Climate change crisis and its impact on migration and displacement issues and challenges of empowerment and sustainable development - In the Mediterranean basin

Abstract

Climate change, particularly in the recent years, is a threat to human life globally, in general, and in the Mediterranean basin in particular. Such a situation has been subject of warnings from the United Nations and other international organizations, despite the numerous conferences held since the Earth Summit in 1992, through the Kyoto and Paris Agreements to the Sharm El-Sheikh Recommendations. In light of the worsening and accelerating global warming phenomenon, fears of the catastrophic repercussions of climate change are increasing. Therefore, at the heart of these changes and of their repercussions are our Arab and African regions, which also witnessed severe heat waves and droughts, thunderstorms, fires and floods that caused damage to the infrastructure and loss of life and property.

This led individuals and groups to emigrate and flee from villages to cities and from one country to another, in search of a better life. From this standpoint, the issue of migration and displacement, which originates from the dangers of climate change and its repercussions on societies, has witnessed an important quantitative and qualitative development during recent decades, as the number of migrants is increasing in the world. In the past year, for instance, we find an increase in the number of displaced people, reaching 7 million displaced persons. This was confirmed in the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' report.

Thus, for an effective management of these crises, either related to climate change or to the phenomenon of migration and displacement associated with them, these countries are called to increase their investments in order to cope with the stakes of sustainable development in the Mediterranean basin, as well as to accelerate the pace of adaptation, by managing a set of development plans and adopting a set of public policies to govern the growing migration patterns. These initiatives are to enable individuals and societies to live in dignity, and to ensure political, economic and social stability for all members of society.

In this context, we will try, through sociological approaches, to address the issue of climate change and the exacerbation of global warming and El Niño, in their relationship to issues of migration, displacement, and the challenges of sustainable development and empowerment in the Mediterranean basin.

Keywords: climate change, migration, displacement, challenges, development

Dejan Valentinčič, Marinka Žitnik, Željko Oset:

CONTEMPORARY DIASPORA RESEARCH AND POLICIES

Abstract

Diaspora issues are gaining increasing importance in today's globalized world, characterized by unprecedented mobility. Unlike a few decades ago when interest in diasporas appeared to be declining, except for notable cases such as the Jewish and Armenian diasporas, contemporary focus has shifted back to diaspora politics and policies. This renewed attention extends not only to many countries but also to international organizations, NGOs, and academia. The evolving dynamics of the modern world are reshaping diasporas themselves, raising questions about their identities and for example, their connections with their homelands. Countries are reacting differently to those challenges. Some view emigration as a solution to overpopulation and regard diasporas as sources of remittances. Conversely, others consider emigration a challenge and are crafting policies aimed at encouraging return migration. Some countries see their diaspora communities as influential assets in their foreign policy and public diplomacy efforts, while compatriots living abroad are welcomed influences in domestic politics. Nonetheless, most of them recognize their diasporas as valuable sources of foreign investment, tourism, scientific collaboration, and funding for various initiatives in their homelands. To borrow Joseph Nye's concept, diasporas can be seen as a form of soft power. The purpose of this panel is to facilitate a discussion on the comparative aspects of contemporary diaspora research and policies.

Suggested speakers:

Marinka Žitnik, Harvard university: Transatlantic Cooperation and the Diaspora as a Soft Power - The Role and Importance of Intellectuals in the United States and Canada

Željko Oset, Research Institute of American Slovenian Education Foundation ASEF: Mechanisms for attracting foreign and returning domestic experts to strengthen Slovenia's position in global digitalization trends

Dejan Valentinčič, Research Institute of American Slovenian Education Foundation ASEF: Digital transformation of Slovene emigrant community in the United States and Canada

TBC: Mitigating the consequences of brain drain and strengthening the mechanism of brain circulation

*Other panelists who successfully applied to the conference with relevant topics

Keywords: diaspora, brain drain, brain circulation, return migration, scientific diaspora, cultural heritage

Ugba Dajo:

Crises and Empowerment: Integrating Forced Migrants into Social Safety Nets in Gusau Metropolis, Zamfara State, Nigeria

Abstract

There is a disturbing trajectory unfolding in Nigeria in the manner the state responds and cares for victims of crises such as floods, conflict and other forms of violence. Most often, the state condemns the crises, provides unsustainable temporary palliatives and abandons the victims to their faith. Such is the condition of rural dwellers and residents in the suburbs of Zamfara State who have come under persistent attacks from bandits, kidnappers, farmers and herders' conflict and other forms of violence in the past one decade. This has not only dislocated the rural economy but has also forced people to migrate into the inner city to take refuge with family members, friends and relative and some, in internally displaced persons(IDPs) camps. The forced migration of people has not only worsened the rise in number of the urban poor which hitherto stood at 42% but also led to a significant surge in urban population growth. Using in-depth interview, snowball sampling technique and a sample size of 63 forced migrants living in Gusau metropolis, the study observed that most of the forced migrants struggled daily to make ends meet because they do not possess the knowledge and skills required to work in the formal urban economy. Most of the migrants, out of frustration, despair and despondency either resort to begging for alms to survive or are forced into crime or prostitution. The paper noted that government has not been able to track and document the number of forced migrants into Gusau metropolis and integrate them into any known social safety net programme. The paper recommends that government and non-governmental organizations should collaborate to include forced migrants into social safety nets to ameliorate their sufferings.

Keywords: Crises, Empowerment, Migration, Rural, Urban

Wafae Elarabi:

Decentralization in Morocco after the movement of 20 February and the question of the fundamental rights of the local population -A sociological pilot study in the "region of Fes-Meknes"

Abstract

This paper addresses the problem of decentralization and its role in the realization of basic rights of the local population after the February 20 movement in Morocco and its demand for change and social justice. The paper adopts an exploratory sociological approach; open to other scientific fields concerned with local Affairs, Governance and Development. A descriptive approach has been adopted, based on both quantitative and qualitative, for a better understanding of the phenomenon, on the one hand, and to interpretation it, on the other. The research in the Fez-Meknes region was conducted on a sampling of 300 participants for quantitative research, and consisting a sample of 25 members of local and regional councils for qualitative research, so that the "snowball" technique was adopted in the selection of the participants. While quantitative data were analyzed using analysis content, and the quantitative data were analyzed by SPSS technique. The study concluded that the experience of decentralization of the studied area could not achieve the basic rights of the local population. The study further concluded that there is a symbolic dominance of the central actor over the local one, in the sense that the representations of the latter have not got rid of the idea of the centralization.

Keywords: Decentralization, movement of 20 February, local actor, local development, basic rights

Peter Ferfoglia, Tamara Besednjak Valič, Erika Džajić Uršič:

Emotional Awareness: Impact of Social and Technological Transformation on Group Dynamics

Abstract

Profound social transformations, resulting from organizational choices in this historical moment, can lead to complex changes with significant impacts on workgroup performance. HR departments are tasked with monitoring, understanding, supporting, and re-evaluating employees during organizational restructuring due to new cultural, social, and technological contexts.

The case study focused on a company that concurrently faced acquisition by a foreign competitor and the integration of artificial intelligence into its work processes. Interviewing all employees (17), we aimed to uncover their emotions during these transformations. Subsequently, we presented and discuss the results to various managerial profiles to create a comparative table, which also included an analysis conducted using ChatGPT to assess the potential utility of this tool for such analysis.

It is evident that individuals now, more than ever, seek well-being and personal values even in a work context. From the analysis, we note that employees struggle to recognize their emotions, leading to varying perspectives and challenges. The HR department thus emphasizes the usefulness of encouraging employees toward personal emotional awareness to facilitate adaptation to social and technological changes, both within and outside the work environment. Attentive leaders recognize the importance of emerging value trends. Supporting employees in uncovering and acknowledging personal emotions can become pivotal in directing their skills and resources toward personal growth, thereby enhancing workforce efficiency.

RQ: What are the experiences and associated emotions among employees during social and technological transformations, and how are they interpreted by different managers within the organization and by artificial intelligence?

Keywords: Emotional Awareness, Group Dynamics, Organizational Restructuring, Social transformation, Technological Impact

Mabrouk Boutagouga:

Empowering Women Breadwinners in Algeria: Resilience Through Traditional Food Entrepreneurship Amidst Economic Crisis

Abstract

This paper delves into the remarkable stories of resilience and empowerment among women breadwinners in Algeria who have responded to economic crises by engaging in home-based traditional food production and sales. In a world marked by crises and transformations, these women's experiences offer a unique lens through which to explore how individuals at the micro level navigate and transform their lives amidst challenging social conditions.

Through field research conducted in the city of Batna in Algeria, this study unveils the intricate strategies and narratives of women who have assumed the role of primary financial providers for their households. Employing qualitative interviews, participant observations, and ethnographic immersion, this research provides a profound understanding of their entrepreneurial endeavors within the traditional food sector.

Economic crises have given rise to macro-level disturbances, yet for women breadwinners in Algeria, these challenges have simultaneously opened doors to empowerment. This paper investigates how these women leverage their culinary skills and cultural heritage to produce and sell traditional foods from their homes. It explores the economic, social, and cultural dimensions of their activities, shedding light on their interactions with customers, communities, and the evolving dynamics of home-based entrepreneurship.

The study also probes into the aspirations and actions of these women, revealing their strategies for adapting within their families and society. Their experiences are contextualized within the broader landscape of digital transformation, where digital increasingly influences everyday life.

In summary, this paper contributes to the overarching conference theme of crises and empowerment in social transformations. It illuminates the resourcefulness and agency of women breadwinners in Algeria who, through home-based traditional food entrepreneurship, not only secure their families' financial stability but also play a pivotal role in preserving cultural heritage. These women empower themselves and inspire positive social change amidst economic adversity, exemplifying the resilience of individuals in the face of contemporary societal challenges.

Keywords: Women Breadwinners, Economic Crisis, Traditional Food homework, Empowerment

Asist. Prof. Dr. Erika D. Uršič, Prof. Dr. Simon Muhič, Prof. Dr. Borut Rončević, Asist. Prof. Dr. Urška Fric, Asist. Prof. Dr. Alenka Pandiloska Jurak:

Encouraging the development of Industrial Symbiosis Networks – Transition to Circular Economy

Abstract

The setting of Slovenia serves as the main point for this multidisciplinary research, which converges at the intersection of sustainable development, the Circular Economy, and Industrial Symbiosis. In line with SDG 12, our analysis highlights Slovenia's progress in the direction of sustainable consumption and production. Importantly, the research's realism is bolstered by the use of municipal garbage, fostering partnerships and enhancing its legitimacy. Our research investigates industrial symbiosis through a qualitative lens, filling in knowledge gaps about the functions of social elements. We will use the qualitative method to reveal insights into network activities while keeping pace with changing dynamics. Its compatibility with the indicator system used by the European Commission emphasizes how current and important it is. The research draws on a wide range of empirical evidence, including published sources, research findings, and professional opinions.

As a whole, our multidisciplinary research will reveal avenues for circular transformation in Slovenia. We foresee a future where circularity, sustainability, and symbiosis intertwine for long-lasting transformation, by fusing theoretical underpinnings with practical techniques.

Keywords: Industrial symbiosis, transition, social elements, long-lasting transformation, social sustainable dynamics

Salaoru Adina:

Enhancing non-cognitive abilities for youngster through physical activities intervention programs.

Abstract

Academic achievement, job performance, occupational attainment, health and longevity, and personal and societal well-being are the variables that influence the overall development of wealthy societies. Recent studies, starting with OECD have concluded that non-cognitive abilities positively influence these indicators as much as cognitive ones do, while the first has a major impact in areas like diminishing the school dropout degree, minimizing damaging social behaviour like crime ratio, increasing wage level, and mental and physical health. Increasing the development rate related to the Big Five dimensions, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience, leads to developing social and emotional skills that are related to one's ability to cooperate, achieve long-term goals, and emotional balance.

Studies have concluded that regular physical activities have positive effects on the development of non--cognitive abilities, mainly when implemented at a young age, even in the case of children with various motor, emotional, or cognitive disorders. Since sports have always provided society with models related to winning, psychological balance, focus, hard work, sacrificing for the team, and goal attainment, this paper explores and identifies the structure that a physical activity intervention program should have to be efficient in consistently developing life skills abilities. The main directions of the research are: 1) identifying the specific elements that the physical activities programs should include to maximize the effect on developing non-cognitive abilities, (2) measuring the impact that participation in sports competition has on the development of non-cognitive abilities (3) examining the transferability of non-cognitive abilities acquired during physical activities programs to real-life situations.

Keywords: non congnitive abilities, life skills, human capital

G Doug Davis:

European Demographics, Security, and Welfare

Abstract

European states are facing a difficult demographic transition as their population ages and declines. The continent is entering a threshold moment when the working age population will be small than the number of retirees. Germany and Greece are likely to see this change within the next ten years and many states are likely to follow. This paper uses UN population projections to assess when the aggregate elderly or retired population will exceed the number of laborers within Europe. It will address this within the framework of European security and assess the consequences it will have on public appropriations in the coming decades.

Keywords: Demography, Europe, Security

Aleksandra Govedarica, Nataša Kraljevič, Darko Lacmanovič, Predrag Ljubotina, Urša Lamut, Andrej Raspor, Bojan Rojko:

Exploring possibilities for the development of creative industries in tourist destinations of rural tourism in Montenegro and Slovenia

Abstract

Recently, in tourist destinations, we have noticed the need to include a wide range of creative industries in the local tourist offer. The aforementioned applies especially to rural areas, where the effect of such an expansion of the supply is multiple. In addition to satisfying the wishes of tourists, such an approach enables more efficient development of rural areas, which in turn provides more opportunities for young people. Creative industries can be a significant segment of the tourism industry through contributing to revitalising the countryside as a tourist destination. It is reviving local crafts and traditions, restoring local people's pride in their cultural heritage, preserving tangible and intangible cultural heritage, creating new jobs in the creative sectors and increasing income from such sectors. Therefore, it is increasing the overall competitiveness of the target destination.

Slovenia and Montenegro, with their rich cultural traditions and remarkably preserved nature, are good examples of applying the abovementioned practices. With this goal in mind, it is advisable, if not necessary, to carefully research the existing approaches in this area with all their advantages and disadvantages. With their different historical and cultural backgrounds, the two countries offer the possibility for mutual comparison, which is the goal of the bilateral project. As a part of the project, we will investigate existing practices and opportunities that the environment offers from the different perspectives of the stakeholders of the creative tourism offer. Due to the need for in-depth identification of needs, opportunities and threats, the methodological approaches will be primarily based on a qualitative paradigm. In this context, we will analyse three notable festivals in both countries. The findings of the case studies will be compared with the results of semi-structured interviews in which we will talk to all key stakeholders. To identify the situation on the side of providers within the framework of festivals, we will use a short online survey to also address music performers as one of the stakeholders on the supply side of the creative industry. The main goal of the project is to determine the possibilities for the development of creative industries in rural tourist destinations in the framework of improving the general tourist offer of Montenegro and Slovenia.

Keywords: culture, creativity, tourism, rural, Slovenia, Montenegro

Ramazan Gün:

Food Safety Crisis in Society: Causes, Consequences, and Mitigation

Abstract

Food safety is a critical global concern that profoundly impacts society's health, well-being, and economic stability. This study examines the various dimensions of the food safety crisis within society, exploring its causes, consequences, and potential mitigation strategies. This literature review reveals that food safety crises often stem from factors such as foodborne pathogens, contamination, fraud, and environmental hazards, and can manifest through foodborne illness outbreaks, recalls, and allergen mislabelling, among others. The consequences of food safety crises are far-reaching, including public health risks, reduced consumer confidence, economic downturns, and social disparities. These crises disrupt daily life, strain healthcare systems, and lead to increased healthcare costs. Additionally, they erode trust in the food industry and necessitate costly recalls and regulatory changes. Vulnerable populations often bear the brunt of these crises, exacerbating existing inequalities. To address food safety crises effectively, a multi-pronged approach is required. Proactive measures must be taken at various levels, from stringent regulatory oversight and industry best practices to consumer education and behavior change. Collaboration among government agencies, food producers, retailers, and consumers is imperative in preventing and mitigating crises. Moreover, fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and sustainability in the food supply chain is vital. In conclusion, the food safety crisis in society is a multifaceted issue with significant implications for public health, consumer confidence, and economic stability. Timely and coordinated efforts across sectors are essential to minimize the risks, consequences, and social impact of food safety crises and ensure that safe, nutritious food remains accessible to all members of society.

Keywords: Food safety crisis, Society, Public health risks, Global concern

Aleksandar Grizhev, Lazar Gjurov:

Gender mainstreaming in North Macedonia and Slovenia

Abstract

Throughout human history, the relationship between genders has evolved towards gender equality. However, as Huntington's theory suggests, modern societies and civilizations will primarily distinguish themselves by the culture: the gender roles, norms, beliefs, and expectations will differ among the civilizations. Western culture and societies rely heavily on the principle of gender equality. To enable social change and reach gender equality, a concept known as gender mainstreaming has been introduced. It is an approach to reaching gender equality by creating gender-sensitive policies and strategies, a process and approach first introduced by the UN in 1985.

In the turbulent 20th century, many countries in the regions of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe went (or are still going) through a process of social transformation. Depending on the history, geography, traditions, culture, and many other factors, there is a big difference among those societies in the level of gender equality. In that context, the aim of the paper is to compare the level of gender equality in North Macedonia and Slovenia. There are many entities that provide annual overview and rankings of the countries concerning gender equality, using many criteria. Within the scope of the paper, we will review and compare the gender legal framework in both countries, and we will analyze the political empowerment of women. Among other criteria and parameters, we will elaborate on different reports on gender equality indexes. As Hofstede's research and theory suggest, there is a difference between the countries in respective cultural dimensions. When comparing North Macedonia and Slovenia on those cultural dimensions, we can see a big difference between both countries. There are many reasons for this, and those will be elaborated in the paper. Nevertheless, the geographical and historical specifics of both the countries seem to be the main drivers behind the difference: North Macedonia influenced by the long-standing presence of Turkish Empire and Slovenia influenced by the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Both empires have had a huge impact on their respective cultures and societies. As the paper will show, Slovenia ranks much higher on many of the gender equality indexes, and the gender mainstreaming approach have created gender-sensitive national policies and strategies. Although North Macedonia ranks lower than Slovenia, it has made significant progress in the social transformation in terms of gender equality.

Keywords: gender, social change, mainstreaming, culture, equality

Kiran Prakash V:

Governance during COVID-19: A Study on Challenges and Response Actions in Kerala

Abstract

The outbreak of COVID-19 was identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. Coronavirus, officially named Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization due to rapid and widespread transmission. This contagious and communicable disease has become one of the significant public health challenges in the world. The first coronavirus case in India was reported in the Thrissur district of Kerala on January 30, 2020. Using the prior experience of the Nipah virus outbreak, the state successfully handled the first phase of COVID-19 (March 2020- December 2020). According to the World Health Organization and the Indian Council of Medical Research guidelines, the state adopted well-established pandemic control measures. The government is setting up rigorous rules and regulations to safeguard the community from disease transmission. Several key strategies, like surveillance, quarantine, good quality testing strategies, uninterrupted treatment services, community participation, and proactive care for the elderly and people with comorbidities, and educational and social mobilisation for behavioural change, contributed to effective pandemic management. The WHO acknowledged the state's strategic planning of disease control and social security methods, which came to be known as the Kerala management model. However, the model's success during the second phase (March 2021-September 2021) was less visible. The study aims to assess the state government's challenges and response actions during COVID-19 and to understand the community's perceptions of their efficacy. A comparative assessment of the first wave (March 2020- December 2020) with that of the second wave (March 2021- September 2021) is made to understand the success and failure of the model.

Keywords: COVID-19, Keralamodel, Local Governance, Challenges, Response Actions

Anja Bašin:

Media Literacy in Slovenia: Challenges, Research, and the Path Forward

Abstract

In a rapidly evolving digital world dominated by artificial intelligence, media literacy stands as a vital skill, encompassing the capacity to access, analyze, evaluate, and generate media content across diverse platforms. Elevating it at the individual level represents a collective stride towards a society that is well-informed, responsible, and digitally aware. This, in turn, fosters improved decision-making and more constructive responses to an array of crises.

In Slovenia, there's a lack of a unified, nationwide approach to media education in primary and secondary schooling. This means students often rely on individual institutions or the efforts of teachers and experts for media literacy education. Children learn from peers at school, while parents remain important educators and role models at home. To add on, the media and civil society themselves also play a role in this process.

Media Education and Literacy in Slovenia (2021) by Mateja Rek delves into these issues, which have gained urgency due to the rapid development of addictive technologies. The author combines insights from various scholars with the results of long-term research, led by her at the Infrastructure Program – collecting, managing, and archiving data on media literacy in Slovenia at The School of Advanced Social Studies (SASS). The program ongoing since 2013 gathers primary and secondary data regarding media habits and literacy, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups, including young people. Though to this point analysis of the latter population relied primarily on material collected quantitatively by eliciting responses from parents, this year's additional study employs qualitative method to provide a deeper understanding, particularly from the perspective of young individuals. We investigated how youth perceives media education in Slovenian society, identified the stakeholders who influence it, their methods, and studied the dynamics of these relationships. To collect answers to general and specific research questions, two student focus groups have been conducted so far. However, the findings not only helped us achieve our research goals, but also revealed opportunities for improvement and serve as a foundation for future studies.

In summary, to promote positive societal change through improved media literacy, it's crucial to raise awareness about media's influence, address media vulnerabilities, provide education, foster collaboration among stakeholders, innovate media literacy tools, advocate for policy reforms, build community resilience, endorse alternative narratives, and recognize the impact of crisis-related lessons. Collaboration among educators, policymakers, media, tech firms, and individuals is essential for an informed and responsible society, especially during crises.

Keywords: Media literacy, Media habits, Media education, Primary and secondary schooling, Youth, Slovenia

Maks Tušak, Matej Tušak:

Medical hypnosis in modern clinical practice

Abstract

The American Psychological Association defines hypnosis as a waking state of consciousness with a directed attention, reduced external awareness and increased suggestibility. The use of hypnosis dates back in the time of the oldest people - the Sumerians, that is the fourth millennium BC. With the era of mesmerism came the science of hypnosis awakened and spread again among doctors and psychologists. At the end of the 20th century, hypnosis began to spread again in medical and psychological circles and thus at the beginning of the 21st century even became a recognized method in some countries treatment among doctors. The uses of hypnosis are quite diverse. Doctors use it as hypnoanesthesia and hypnoanalgesia during and after surgery and for the treatment of diseases, the cause of which is psychosomatic (stomach ulcer). It is also used to treat some skin diseases (atopic dermatitis, psoriasis, viral warts and acne vulgaris) headaches and autoimmune diseases. Hypnosis is often a useful method in a wide variety of situations, to increase self-confidence, e.g. when preparing an athlete for a performance or when preparing people for stressful situations and for the treatment of stress and anxiety disorders. It is a method that is of great help to therapist in the implementation of psychotherapy. Hypnosis itself is not a treatment method. It's just a technique that helps us perform more easily psychotherapy, as suggestions for a patient in a hypnotic state are up to fifteen times stronger than in awake state. It is an extremely useful method to help in the implementation of psychotherapy for depression, anxiety and various phobias and a wide range of addictions (e.g. eating disorders, withdrawal from smoking, etc.). Hypnosis is increasingly used as an adjunct in complex modern treatment.

Keywords: medical hypnosis, clinical practice, hypnotherapy, hypnoanalgesia, hypnoanaesthesia, suggestion

Zdenek Uherek, Veronika Beranska:

Migration of Skilled Professionals as a Means of Amelioration of Global Crisis Phenomena

Abstract

Asymmetric flows in the transfer of information and technologies in technical sciences, as well as values, norms, and knowledge of the humanities and social sciences to different parts of the world, are a significant problem that exacerbates the crisis phenomena of contemporary societies. In the humanities and social sciences, for example, it is evident that a large number of specialists trained abroad will never apply their knowledge in countries of origin and will not transfer quality education to local universities and think tanks of source regions. We consider creating tools for the effective circulation of know-how to migrants? countries of origin and opening pathways for return migration one of the key issues of the contemporary world. In my contribution, I would like to focus on the example of contemporary migration from the Czech Republic, the needs of people staying abroad, the nature of their transnationalism and the possibilities that the state creates to facilitate their journey to the source destination, and, on the other hand, what it neglects. I believe that the UNESCO-MOST programme is very suitable for this topic, and as a long-time collaborator of UNESCO-MOST and a member of the Czech Commission for UNESCO, I would like to discuss it.

The empirical data available to me were collected in two quantitative surveys. The first survey was in 2021 with 940 respondents, and the second in 2023 with 669 respondents. The questions of the first survey were formulated in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. The following qualitative survey consisted of 110 guided interviews. I will use these and comparative data from other destinations to show how current migration trends are changing, particularly in the context of transforming Central and Eastern Europe, what forms of communication with countries of origin are taking place, and what possible activities for streamlining return migration or close communication with the countries of origin are available. The study of these issues is relevant not only for Central and Eastern European countries but especially for countries of the Global South, which frequently suffer from brain drain not because European and other developed countries want to exploit them but because countries of origin, especially after the completion of studies, and finalizing internships or contracts, are unable to attract them back.

Keywords: migration, return migration, high skilled migrants, countries of origin

Amna Ben Amara:

Populism as Crisis Politics: Revisiting Security Policies in the Age of Populism

Abstract

Crisis can be perceived as the mainstay of right-wing populism. When linked to policy making populism implies a sense of crisis which "etymologically subsumes a choice between stark alternatives and, thus, demands action" (Taggart and Pirro 2018). The urgency that a crisis communicates calls for practical policy implications to frame and manage it (Ahlquist et al. 2020). Having a look at the recent events that took place within the international scene, including the financial crisis, the shaking faith in democratic institutions and the Covid-19 pandemic, one can argue that "the stage has been set for populists to sweep in, appeal to 'the people' and enjoy great success by capitalizing on a general loss of faith and disaffection with politicians, the elite and representative politics in general" (Moffit, 2015). This could account for the steady rise of populist movements across the world, including Italy, Scandinavia, Latin America, and more recently the United States. Regardless of whether populism triggers crisis or vice versa this research paper focuses on the argument that a crisis is not value free nor does it represent an objective description of certain situations. Rather, as noted by Moffit (2015) crises are epitomes of certain linguistic practices performed by populist leaders, who are considered as active participants in "the 'spectacularization of failure' that underlies crisis, allowing them to pit 'the people' against a dangerous other", whether this other is cultural, ethnic, racial, political, or even sexual, and thus to prompt the use of extreme security measures to eradicate it.

Keywords: Populism, Crisis, Security, the Self, the Other, Covid-19

Deepika Bara:

RHETORIC OF COMMON SERVICE CENTRE IN BRIDGING DIGITAL DIVIDE IN INDIA: EVIDENCE FROM RURAL JHARKHAND

Abstract

Even though the capabilities of technology are expanding and it is becoming more affordable, a sizable portion of the population in developing nations lacks the financial resources to own basic information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as computers and the Internet. Despite the fact that these technologies are becoming more accessible, this is the case. This indicates that the vast majority of people residing in developing nations (such as India) are unable to access and utilize the newly developed electronic government apps and services. As a consequence, the digital divide, which already exists between rural and urban areas and economically disadvantaged and affluent populations, will widen even further. India has established Common Services Centres (CSCs) as a means of providing villagers with electronic access to public services. This is part of a larger endeavour by the nation to narrow the widening digital divide. This article takes a stance and aims to examine some of the issues and barriers that such CSCs face, as well as provide some suggestions for making their deployments more successful and ensuring the sustainability of their operations. This piece is written from the authors' perspective and is based on the cognizance of the context as well as the knowledge of and concerns regarding the study topic. A number of pertinent and recent citations have been used to demonstrate the current status of the topic and to support the authors' opinions presented in this work.

Keywords: Common Services Centres, CSC, Electronic Governance, e-Governance, Rural Connectivity, Public Service Delivery

Livija Rojc Štremfelj, Tamara Besednjak Valič:

Spontaneous volunteer management in the recovery phase of natural disasters

Abstract

The crises humankind has faced throughout history can be man-made or natural. We respond to them differently as they usually, especially natural disasters, happen unexpectedly. The response is given by professionals and by volunteers. The volunteers can be affiliated with a relief organisation or can be spontaneous.

While countries usually have their emergency action plans written and ready in cases of disasters, the lessons from COVID-19 response or other natural disasters in the near past, the literature brings out the phenomenon of spontaneous volunteers. Their role in planning the response to natural disasters should not be neglected. With the appearance of social media, as the news about the disaster reaches masses of people in a matter of minutes, the number of spontaneous volunteers rises. They gather in masses to help people struck by their misfortunes and eliminate the consequences as quickly as possible.

In this paper, we will single out some good managerial practices of spontaneous volunteer allocation and assignments in natural disasters from several parts of the world. The researchers have already defined the behavioural traits of spontaneous volunteers at the sight of the disaster, and the advantages and disadvantages of using the massive amount of volunteer help have been discussed in papers on disaster management. The literature already contains some solutions to the coordination of spontaneous volunteers, and we want to present an applicable synopsis of possible solutions to manage the flow of volunteers better in any natural disaster.

Crises always provide new research opportunities when researchers can embrace new learnings and propose better disaster management next time they occur. We expect that our conference paper will contain applicable proposals for managers of relief organisations to improve their emergency action plans, including digital solutions and investing in the education of staff of humanitarian aid organisations and all other civil stakeholders.

As Slovenia was struck by devastating floods, windfalls and avalanches in July and August 2023, this paper can present a kick-start for in-depth research of volunteers' response to this natural disaster.

Keywords: spontaneous volunteers, natural disaster, disaster management, emergency response, relief organisations

Edit Lezha, Eranda Bilali(Halluni):

TEACHERS' PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING DURING COVID-19; A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH

Abstract

Studies on teacher wellbeing have been focused largely on stress and burnout.This research aimed to explore how teachers perceived professional wellbeing during COVID-19 and what kind of strategies they used in order to manage it.A phenomenological research design was conducted based on a focus group with teachers who were selected based on their participation in university training courses for professional development.Teachers with burnout symptoms are likely to perform and achieve educational goals less effectively than their healthy and engaged colleagues. Perceived powerlessness and job insecurity in the workplace is detrimental to teachers' well-being as it results in reduced psychological well-being. The consistency of the burnout construct across occupations provided evidence that teacher burnout should be restricted to occupational issues relating to service provision.

Keywords: teacher wellbeing, COVID-19, burnout, phenomenological design

Andrej Drapal:

The Crisis and the "Crisis"

Abstract

The main contribution of this paper is the rationalization of the concept of crisis (meme). The conclusion of the paper is that current crisis cases such as the Corona crisis or the climate crisis as two of the world's best known are based on misunderstandings and are therefore socially unsustainable or even malignant.

As Thomas Kuhn explained in The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (Kuhn & Hacking, 2012), every crisis is a part of normality. Every paradigm shift comes as a predictable surprise. Neither Covid nor the climate crisis fit Kuhn's concept. They do not resemble Copernicus, Newton, Darwin, relativity, or quantum mechanics paradigm shifts. They are more like string theory, which tried to bring about a paradigm shift 40 years ago, so far without success. 40 years for a paradigm shift is equivalent to the climate crisis that has persisted as a social phenomenon since 1980, and about 4,5 billion years for the Earth.

Could Nassim Nicholas Taleb with his Black Swan concept (Taleb, 2008) at least explain the Covid crisis? It looks like Covid came as a known unknown, a black swan. But then it fits Kuhn's paradigm shift, a normality.

Where then do today's crises come from that should be treated as part of normality? This paper argues that the main cause is the misconception of agency. When agency shifts from the individual (micro level) to the macro level, the time perspective shifts from finite, as it should be for a crisis, to indefinite, as is evident for the climate »crisis« and even Covid, as the same macro level already predicts that more threatening viruses are on the way, a permanent crisis is on the way.

What kind of societal change is needed to meet the evolutionarily predictable changes in our environment and not fall into the trap of panic, ill-adapted to life's ongoing challenges? The answer, which this paper will support with various examples, is a shift from progressivism, which places social action at a macro level, the state or even a world government, to conservatism, which conceives and assumes the individual as the only actor from which society emerges (Drapal, 2022).

Keywords: evolution, crisis, emergence, individual, society

Prof. Lazar Gjurov, Ph.D., teach. ass. Bojan Miklosh, MA, ass. prof. Aleksandar Grizev, Ph.D.:

THE INFLUENCE OF DIVERSITY ON ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES

Abstract

Globalization and changing demographic patterns increasingly confront modern leaders with the challenge of managing teams with a pronounced degree of diversity, or being placed in a situation to accomplish certain missions and tasks, to lead, in a multicultural context. Consisting of assumptions, values, and artifacts, organizational culture is ubiquitous in organizations, and more and more emphasis is placed on understanding its complexity and developing leadership within it. Diversity, as a social and organizational aspect, sets another layer of opportunities and challenges, which, properly understood and exploited, can contribute to the formation of a better and more cohesive social or organizational culture. In this regard, the paper aims to answer the research question »How do leaders manage diversity in organizational culture?«, while investigating the components and meaning of diversity, the differences and determinants of national cultures through various theories, the influence of national cultures on organizational cultures in organizations that operate in certain territories, whereby it perceives the role of the leadership element in organizational cultures and draws lessons and conclusions for managing organizational diversity.

Keywords: leadership, diversity, culture, multicultural context, national

Pusham Azad Babu:

The political in the production of demographic heterogeneity: Manipur's experience

Abstract

South Asia is a melting pot of diverse religious, ethnic, and cultural groups. Despite having historical narratives of peaceful co-existence and intermittent conflicts between different human collectivities, the post-colonial period has witnessed conflicts unfolding in various manifestations, cutting across religious and ethnic groups. These conflicts are drivers of violence and social instability often leading to spatial division of ethnic and religious groups. Reorganisation of space takes place not just physically but also at the subjective/cognitive levels. Spatial divisions are often creations, either a product of implicit/systematic political craft or a sudden fallout of hostility between a powerful and a subordinated group. A diverse population that embodies a meaning of oneness of a nation evolves into a heterogenous rendition of clustered complexes, leading to differential orderings of socio-economic and cultural indicators of different human collectivities.

This paper engages to understand how demographic indicators amongst the Pangals (the minority Muslim community of Manipur) vis-à-vis the majority Meitei community evolves from a historically differentiated yet relatively homogenous population into a deeply divided one with heterogenous manifestations. After a series of major and minor incidents of violence which are often communal in nature, division between the two communities takes shape both in material and subjective sense along with a clear spatial reorganisation. Using the Lefebvrian model of production of space the paper contends that the production of a 'reified community spaces' at the physical, mental, and social levels are functions of power play where the dominant position of the Meiteis serves in exerting a hegemonic power to generate a spatial divide. It is argued that this leads to relatively deprived changes in the socio-economic and cultural indicators of the Pangal population. The paper maintains the heterogenous manifestation has a historical and deeply political undertone than what is seen.

Keywords: Production of space, Reification, Spatial divide, Demographic heterogeneity

Fatjona Haka:

The Relationship Between (Self) Compassion & Shame and Guilt Experiences in a Sample of Albanian University Students

Abstract

The major goal of the current research is to explore the relationship among (self) compassion and shame and guilt experiences of Albanian university students. Specifically, we aim to explore what is the relationship between:

(1)   Shame experiences & the expression of compassion towards others;
(2)   Guilt experiences & the expression of compassion towards others;
(3)   Shame experiences and responding to compassion from others;
(4)   Guilt experiences and responding to compassion from others;
(5)   Shame experiences & the expression of kindness and compassion towards one's self;
(6)   Guilt experiences & the expression of kindness and compassion towards one's self.

Additionally, it is the aim of the research to explore how do shame and guilt experiences influence compassion from others and toward others as well as self - compassion.

'The Fear of Compassion Scale' of Gilbert et al. (2011) and the 'Shame and Guilt Experiences" of Malinakova et al. (2019) were used. The sample consisted of 200 students, 123 of whom were females and the remaining 77 males.

The results are still being processed and will be explained as well as compared to the contemporary findings of the field.

The research per se belongs to an entirely unexplored field in Albania where there are a few researches on shame and guilt, but (self) compassion is not studied at all.

Keywords: Shame Experiences, Guilt Experiences, (Self) Compassion, Quantitative Research

Vitor Sérgio Ferreira:

The rise of "new dream jobs" among new generations: intertwining the crises in traditional transitions to qualified work and the "playbour" enhancement

Abstract

Currently, young people are compelled to deal with the insecurity that increasingly punctuates their transitions from school to work, sometimes feeling some dissatisfaction with the more normative configurations of those paths. The virtuous relationship between type and level of education, profession, salary, and social status is no longer taken for granted, being a social belief under crisis (Alves 2008, Ferreira, Lobo & Rowland 2015). A degree no longer guarantees access and progression in a specific career, or even a job corresponding to the qualification obtained. And this is a reality that young people and their families are increasingly aware of.

In a highly competitive context of shrinking decent job opportunities in the traditionally qualified segments of labour market, young people find an increasing attraction for the segments of playbour (Törhönen, et al., 2020), i.e., activities that children and young people start to develop in the sphere of the leisure shared with peers, with potential for monetization and professionalization. These activities present themselves as promoting new forms of labour culture and organization, being valued by young people as great opportunities for self-fulfillment, self-expression, and empowerment through work.

Against this backdrop, the aim of this paper is to give a sociological and critical interpretation of the processes of social construction of these "new dream jobs" or new 'aspirational forms of work' (Duffy, 2017) among young people, intertwining: 1) the crisis in the pathways of traditional professions with a high prestige heritage, certified by higher education and strongly regulated by formal institutions, such as being a lawyer, an architect, an engineer, or a physician; 2) and the enhancement of the "playbour" segment of the job market - which can joint old professions socially renewed and symbolically revalued among young people, such as being a tattooist (Ferreira, 2014), DJ (Ferreira, 2017), or model (Ferreira, 2020), as well as new occupations arisen with the advent of Web 2.0, and the subsequent penetrating digitalization of the world, such as being a digital influencer or a gamer (Jorge 2020, Marôpo, Jorge & Tomaz 2020, Haro & Matos 2021).

The paper is theoretically inspired by the new political economy approach to youth studies (Coté 2014, Farrugia 2019, 2021), and it takes into consideration the results of previous empirical research with young people aspirants and professionals in areas such as tattooing, DJing, cooking, and fashion modeling (see website https://newdreamjobs.wixsite.com/dreamjobs/home-page), enlarging and updating the field of its theoretical hypothesis to the "playbour careers" in the digital and social media world.

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Keywords: Youth, labour market crisis, new aspirational labour, transitions to playbour, new labour cultures

Mgr. Lucie Cviklová, M.A., Ph.D.:

The role of the third political crisis in the Czech Republic in the post-communist social transformation and empowerment of civil society forces

Abstract

The reflections about the third political crisis in the Czech Republic draw on the number of theoretical notions such as frontstage, backstage and legitimacy issues, and also take into account also experience with the first and the second political crises. More specifically, non-transparent financing of the ODS brought about the first political crisis; secondly, involvement of lobbyist Marek Dalík to cover deputy Petr Wolf's corrupt practices under Prime Minister Topolánek resulted in the second political crisis; the actions of the ODS and executive director of the Prime Minister's Cabinet Jana Nagyová and her informal contact with 'godfathers' ended in the third political crisis. The complimentary notions of frontstage and backstage and their roles in understanding the differences between actions visible to the audience and hidden behaviour were particularly important in explaining the third political crisis which was labeled as 'Nagygate'. The exposure of backstage actions by members of the political elite, Prague 'godfathers' and other relevant stakeholders resulted in the resignation of Prime Minister Ne?as and the occurrence of the ritualization process in the form of appointment of a caretaker government with the support of Ji?í Rusnok. Contradictory actions between the public and several politicians and holders of public and the pursuit of their private material interests backstage revealed the deficiencies and lack of moral commitment to their public duties and responsibilities. It has been highlighted that while legitimation claims formulated by state structures and political society representatives related to the so called 'Nagygate' were fragmented and contradictory, the opinions of civil society representatives were unequivocally critical of the misuse of chief of staff Jana Nagyová, who had been charged with ordering military intelligence agency to spy on three people and accussed of MPs to resign in return for state-firm jobs.

Keywords: Civil Society, Czech Republic, Legitimacy, Nagygate, Political Crises

Prof. Dr. Borut Roncevic, JM holder of TIA2030 project:

Thematic session at the international conference – Jean Monnet Day / JM CoE / EU grand strategies and their implementation (2023)

Abstract

The »Technology and Innovations for Agenda 2030 – EU Global Leadership (TIA2030)« project is a dynamic initiative focused on the European Union's pivotal role in implementing the United Nations' Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With a strong emphasis on smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth through technological innovations, TIA2030 delves into the institutional, social, and cognitive foundations of this transformative process. By adopting open innovation principles and an open-source model, the project engages diverse stakeholders, including academia, policy-makers, civil society, and industry, to co-create a sustainable future.

At the annual Slovenian Social Science Conference with Jean Monnet Day, we will host a special session where we will delve into the critical theme of »EU Grand Strategies and Their Implementation.« The debate on »EU Grand Strategies and Their Implementation« will compile an exploration of the European Union's experiences and future challenges in ambitious grand strategies into tangible outcomes.

The aim of the session will be to foster collaboration among Jean Monnet coordinators and collaborate with international partners to disseminate knowledge and experience related to the project's objectives.

Keywords: EU Grand Strategies. Implementation Challenges. Lisbon Strategy. Agenda 2030. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Assistant Professor Erika D. Uršič:

Thematic session at the international conference – Jean Monnet Day / JM Module / EU and constructing an approach to Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (2023)

Abstract

The project titled »Sustainable Industry 4.0 for EU (SI4.0forEU)« addresses critical policy issues while adding academic value. It aligns with the European Commission's vision for long-term emission reductions, emphasizing a net-zero goal for Europe by 2050 and the crucial connection between energy and industrial transitions. This initiative responds to the call for a long-term vision for the EU's industrial future and complements the European Green Deal's strategy for a climate-neutral, resource-efficient, and competitive economy.

The project's thematic session for the conference, »EU and constructing an approach to Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (2023),« will invite scholars to contribute research insights, scientific reviews, and discussions. The session will cover introductory presentations, keynote speakers, and presentations by international, and national participants, and students, fostering a comprehensive dialogue on sustainable development policy coherence within the EU.

The session will begin with an introductory presentation by the Module leader, providing an overview of the Module's activities and objectives. Keynote speakers will also be featured, offering valuable insights and sparking discussions on the topics.

Keywords: Eco-efficient industrial systems, Sustainable Industry 4.0, Industrial Ecology, Policy coherence, Sustainable development

Simona Kukovič, Jelena Joksimović:

Transformation towards a Transparent and Trustworthy Public Administration: Reporting on Ceremonial Gifts

Abstract

The tradition of ceremonial gift-giving between political leaders and other officials of the state is a long-standing practise and a strong element of peaceful diplomatic relations. The exchange of gifts in pre-modern diplomacy is often portrayed as particularly central and important to the practise. However, when reading about modern diplomacy, much less attention is paid to the exchange of gifts and its importance is downplayed, but they are still very carefully chosen and (still) a lot of money is spent on them. The exchange of gifts, even if made by individuals, is not considered a personal exchange, as these individuals represent the state or an institution and the gifts are therefore considered state or public property. The exchange of gifts is not limited to the supranational and national or state levels, but also to other levels of government (e.g. regional and local) and, in the broadest sense, concerns all officials in public and government institutions. Institutions, ministries, public entities and state companies are therefore subject to special rules and instructions for accepting gifts (e.g., they may only be given up to a certain amount). These rules are about integrity and, in many cases, giving and accepting gifts is prohibited to avoid any kind of preferential treatment or even corruption. In other cases, every gift must be reported and evidenced in a database monitored by the respective state institution or commission.

In this paper authors examine the reporting of ceremonial gifts in the case of the Republic of Slovenia, including all public and state entities. Through an in-depth statistical analysis, we attempt to investigate the dataset of reported gifts to see if we can detect some discrepancies or anomalies in the reporting by public officials and their family members. We hypothesise that the reporting of gifts received is essential to ensure integrity and trust in administrative and political institutions and public officials, where mere reporting is not enough, but the quality of reporting is also important in terms of accuracy and fair assessment of gifts. In the first part of the paper, we focus on the normative framework that applies in the Republic of Slovenia regarding receiving and reporting ceremonial gifts. The second part contains a comprehensive analysis of the data collected in the gift reporting database managed by the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption.

Keywords: ceremonial gifts, reporting, public administration, transparency and trust, Slovenia

Prof. dr. Mateja Rek:

Trends in parents' digital media education practices in Slovenia

Abstract

Digital media have become a regular part of children's every day. Even infants and toddlers are using newer digital technologies, such as interactive and mobile media, on a daily basis and are a target of intense marketing. As children are growing up, the extent of their use of digital devices, such as television, computers, tablets, game consoles and smart phones, is also increasing significantly. Young children lack ability to use media and maturity in making beneficial choices or to recognise positive and negative aspects of digital media consumption and contents. They often base their media related choices on a sense of fun, comfort, pleasure of consumption and popularity promoted through mass media agenda setters. They are vulnerable to the risk of developing unwanted behaviours because of poor media habits choices. This can significantly affect many aspects of their lives, such as health, behavioural addictions, disturbances of psychological development, self-perception and relationships, educational success, violence, etc.

In a very early age of childs development, which is a focus of our research, parents play a significant role in socialising, upbringing and educating children about various aspects of life. They also significantly influence a child's knowledge of the digital media through examples, conversations and experiences. They themselves are role models that children imitate. The aim of this paper is to explore media education practices among parents of young children in Slovenia. The author derives the data and their interpretation from her own empirical research into the dimensions of media education and literacy, which were carried out as part of the Infrastructure program on media literacy in Slovenia. Analisys is based on data collected using survey on a national representative pattern of preschool and primary schooll (1-6th grade) childrens' parents. The surveys, using the same questions were conducted twice sofar, 6 years apart, so they also enable us to do the longitudinal analysis and see trends in media education practices of Slovene parents.

Keywords: parents, young children, digital education, media education, media literacy

Dušan Lužný, Jan Váně, Jan Jan Kaňák:

Universities in crisis? The Impact of Academic Capitalism on the Czech Social Sciences and Humanities

Abstract

Alongside the major and global crises, there are hidden crises that take place in specific sectors of society but can have serious consequences for society and individuals as a whole. Examples include the changes taking place in the functioning of the academy and science, particularly in the humanities and social sciences. After the collapse of the communist regime, Czech society underwent a rapid transformation towards democracy and capitalism. The same applies to the field of science and higher education, and a great deal of academic freedom has opened up for the Czech humanities and social sciences. Unlike the natural, technical and medical sciences, the social sciences and humanities were persecuted and destroyed for much of the 20th century - the fascist and communist regimes in several waves destroyed the intergenerational continuity in these sciences, which are based on critical thinking. After 1989 and the Velvet Revolution, individual disciplines began to be rebuilt. At the same time, however, academic capitalism, based on the ideology of neoliberalism, has emerged in many countries, introducing the principles of market economics and competition into academia. The social sciences and humanities, weakened by discontinuity and persecution, were forced to compete for financial resources and to reassert their very raison d'être. Some politicians, technocrats in industry, and colleagues in the natural sciences have and continue to raise the question of what the humanities and social sciences are for. The distrust has been manifested in the area of funding, both institutional funding and salaries.

The paper identifies the basic principles of academic capitalism in Czech science, both at the level of institutions and at the level of individuals. It will show how the general principles of science funding in the Czech Republic lead to a preference for technical and natural science disciplines and to a restriction of social sciences and humanities. The paper will analyse the consequences of these principles on the existence of selected disciplines (e.g. social work) and on the problems of planning and evaluation of academic careers. In conjunction with an analysis of doctoral degree programmes, it will identify the current germs of a future crisis that threatens the very existence of some disciplines, but also the entire field of social sciences and humanities. The paper will thus seek to find ways in which the social sciences and humanities can emerge from this crisis strengthened.

Keywords: academic capitalism, Czech Republic, crisis of the social sciences and humanities

Janja Mikulan, Martina Malinović:

Vulnerability and resilience to radicalisation and violent extremism in Slovenia: Perceptions from the local level

Abstract

The scale of radicalisation and social polarisation is becoming one of the greatest challenges to security and democratic values at local, national and EU level. Several practices from around the world show that local authorities and communities play a crucial and most effective role in identifying and preventing radicalisation. This paper will explore the perceptions of selected local authorities and other local actors in Slovenia (teachers, youth, and social workers, etc.) regarding vulnerability and resilience to radicalisation and violent extremism. It will also explore the perceptions of local stakeholders regarding their own role in identifying and preventing radicalisation and provide an overview of existing local prevention activities (general prevention, at-risk groups and individual prevention).

Keywords: Radicalisation, violent extremism, vulnerability, resilience, Slovenia

Janja Lozar:

Addressing the everchanging demand for innovation and change: Bringing Artificial Intelligence into industry by developing skills of students and employees

Abstract

Addressing the everchanging demand for innovation and change: Bringing Artificial Intelligence into industry by developing skills of students and employees

Assist. Janja Lozar, School of Advanced Social studies in Nova Gorica and Faculty of Information Studies in Novo mesto

Technology has been a significant part of our lives for decades now. Industry 4.0 is making a transformative influence on various sectors: healthcare, automotive industry, manufacturing, tourism, etc. It is inevitable for industries to embrace and adopt new technologies to remain competitive in this rapidly changing business world. AI is becoming an integral part of human life, influencing various aspects.

Many people are just beginning to understand what AI is, what it can do, and how it operates. Due to this lack of understanding, there is a prevalent fear of the unknown and about the apocalyptic predictions of AI robots taking over the world. It is crucial to educate people about the use of AI, especially highlighting the positive outcomes it can bring, such as reducing costs, saving time, and conserving energy.

Based on interviews with executives, we identified the gap between business and technology implementation. Based on the gathered knowledge about the main gaps three teaching scenarios were developed, to pilot test the training activities for HEI students. Teaching scenarios were developed, enabling managers to learn about the importance of data, data selection, basic algorithms, and AI learning processes. Students will get acquainted with case scenarios and will get the possibility to develop basic chatbots using freely available online tools.

The main aim behind all activities is to provide managers with basic knowledge and skills to comprehend where AI can optimize their business, reduce costs, and save energy. It's important to note that implementing AI doesn't necessarily entail job reductions but rather a transformation, where repetitive labor can be reshaped into something more creative and less time-consuming.

Keywords: artificial inteligence, industry 4.0, technology, teaching scenario

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