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SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION OF COVID-19

12-13 May, 2023



INSTITUTE
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SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION OF COVID-19

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Dr Veselin Mitrović, Senior Research Associate at the Institute of Social Sciences in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

Dr Goran Bašić, Director and Principal Research Fellow of the Institute of Social Sciences, in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

Publisher

Goran Bašić

Dr Suzana Ignjatović, Head of the Center for Sociological and Anthropological Research, Senior Research Associate at Institute of Social Sciences in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

Editors

Veselin Mitrović

Naomi Zack

Dr Lilijana Čičkarić, Principal Research Fellow at the Center for Sociological and Anthropological Research of the Institute of Social Sciences in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

Prof. Dr Zoran Todorović, Professor at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

Prof. Dr Vladimir Vuletić, Professor of Sociology at the Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Sociology, University of Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

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Predrag Jovanović

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Prof. Dr Murat Civaner, Head of the Department of History of Medicine and Ethics and Professor of Medical Ethics and History of Medicine at the Faculty of Medicine, Uludag University, Bursa, Republic of Turkey

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
Belgrade

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION OF COVID-19

(International Scientific Conference)

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



Belgrade, New York, 12–13 May 2023

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS*

INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION OF COVID-19

Organized by the Institute of Social Sciences, Belgrade

and Lehman College, City University of New York

At the Institute of Social Sciences

and as a virtual event at the Lehman College

12–13 May 2023

* This International Conference is a part of the 2023 Research Program of the Institute of Social Sciences with the support by the Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation of the Republic of Serbia.

“Social, Economic and Political Construction of COVID-19” Day 1: 12 May 2023		
Time	Content	Form
Panel 1 Chaired by Marko Mandić		
10.00-10.05	Welcome Address	Institute of Social Sciences Representatives
10.05-10.25	M. Murat Civaner, <i>Vaccine Hesitancy and Vaccine Refusal in the Post-Truth Era: What Should be Done?</i>	Presentation
10.25-10.45	Miroslav Radenković, <i>Ethical Challenges and Considerable Hesitancy Associated with Mandatory Vaccination against COVID-19</i>	Presentation
10.45-11.05	Vladimir Vuletić, <i>The Anti-Vaxxer Movement in Serbia during the COVID-19 Pandemic</i>	Presentation
11.05-11.25	Jovo Bakić, <i>The Attitude of Far-Right Organizations toward Measures against the COVID-19 Pandemic in Serbia 2020–2022</i>	Presentation
11.25-12.05	Q&A	Rounding up Panel 1
12.05-12.20	Coffee break	
Panel 2 Chaired by Karen da Costa		
12.20-12.40	Katja Stoppenbrink, <i>Post-Pandemic Crisis Management. Why COVID-19 Is Conceptually a Crisis in the Making</i>	Presentation
12.40-13.00	Zoran Todorović, <i>Research Ethics Issues during COVID-19 Pandemics</i>	Presentation
13.00-13.20	Michael Kühler, <i>Ethical Issues of AI Use in Crises</i>	Presentation
13.20-13.40	Veselin Mitrović, <i>Chain Reaction: Disasters, Social Inequalities, and Bioethics</i>	Presentation

13.40-14.20	Q&A	Rounding up Panel 2
14.20-15.30	Lunch	
Virtual Panel 3 USA (Columbus / New York) chaired by Veselin Mitrović and Katja Stoppenbrink		
15.30-15.50	Dónal O'Mathúna, <i>The Ethics of Evidence and the COVID-19 Information Crisis</i> Ohio/Columbus (9.30-9.50 H)	Presentation
15.55-16.00	Welcome from co-organizer Lehman College New York (9.55-10.00) – Naomi Zack	Panel introduction
16.00-16.15	Maria Isabel Roldós-Prosser, <i>Understanding Health Disparities Metrics: Opportunities and Avenues to Address the Determinants and Causes – The case of the Bronx in COVID-19</i>	Presentation
16.15-16.30	Julie E. Maybee, <i>Disability, Home(lessness) and COVID-19</i>	Presentation
16.30-16.45	Michael Buckley, <i>Constructivism in Times of Political Crisis</i>	Presentation
16.45-17.00	Naomi Zack, <i>Post COVID-19 Introducing Disaster as Risk</i>	Presentation
17.00-17.40	Q&A	Rounding Up Panel 3
“Social, Economic and Political Construction of COVID-19” Day 2: 13 May 2023		
10.00-10.05	Welcome and following up	
Panel 4 Chaired by Murat Civaner		
10.05-10.25	Karen da Costa, <i>The COVID-19 Pandemic as a Disaster: How Human Rights Were Affected – with a Particular Focus on Brazil</i>	Presentation

10.25-10.45	Zorica Mršević, <i>Gender Aspects of the COVID-19 Crisis</i>	Presentation
10.45-11.05	Milica Topalović, <i>Challenges of the Social Protection System in the Republic of Serbia Caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic in Working with Unaccompanied Minor Migrants</i>	Presentation
11.05-11.25	Bert Gordijn, <i>COVID-19 and the Ethics of Human Challenge Trials</i>	Presentation
11.25-12.05	Q&A	Rounding up Panel 4
12.05-12.20	Coffee break	
Panel 5 Chaired By Veselin Mitrović		
12.20-12.40	Bojan Todosijević; Olivera Komar; Zoran Pavlović; Dragan Stanojević, <i>Irrational Beliefs about COVID-19, Authoritarianism, and Politics in Serbia and Montenegro 2020</i>	Presentation
12.40-13.00	Iskra A. Nola; Ana Borovečki, <i>Public Health and Sociological Determinants of the COVID-19 Pandemic Measures</i>	Presentation
13.00-13.20	Đurđica Stankovć, <i>The Impact of COVID-19 on Green and Digital Transformation in the Republic of Serbia</i>	Presentation
13.20-13.40	Slađana Ćurčić, <i>Rethinking Human Security in the Post-COVID-19 World – Lessons Learned from the Humanocentric Approach to Health Security</i>	Presentation
13.40-14.20	Q&A	Rounding up Panel 5
14.20-14.30	General overview of the meeting	Closing discussion
14.30	Lunch	

Bojan Todosijević

Institute of Social Sciences
Belgrade, Serbia

Olivera Komar

University of Montenegro
Podgorica, Montenegro

Zoran Pavlović

University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy
Belgrade, Serbia

Dragan Stanojević

University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy
Belgrade, Serbia

Irrational Beliefs about COVID-19: Authoritarianism and Politics in Serbia and Montenegro in 2020

Already the first definition of the concept of authoritarianism, incorporates elements of irrationality in the authoritarian subject's social and political attitudes. Authoritarian individuals are described as prone to superstition, beliefs in world conspiracies, etc. Later conceptions, e.g. Altemeyer's Right-Wing Authoritarianism scale, have tended to downplay the importance of irrational beliefs.

This paper aims to examine the role of authoritarianism in understanding individual differences in readiness to accept conspiracy theories concerning the COVID-19 pandemic and how this relationship is associated with political attitudes. One of the most striking features characterizing the current pandemic is the widespread 'popularity' of various conspiracy theories as explanations of the origin, spread, policies implemented to contain the spread of, and possible treatments for COVID-19. Such beliefs have undermined the systematic efforts of societies to adequately respond to this challenge. We hypothesize that authoritarianism can help in understanding the interaction between irrational social attitudes and politics.

The analysis is based on data from Serbia (two national-level public opinion surveys), and Montenegro (one comparable survey), conducted between April and September 2000. The results demonstrate that authoritarianism indeed predicts readiness to accept conspiracy beliefs concerning the COVID-19 pandemic, and therefore influences health related attitudes. On the other side, authoritarianism influences irrational beliefs and political attitudes independently.

Keywords: Authoritarianism, COVID-19, Conspiracy Beliefs, Politics, Serbia, Montenegro