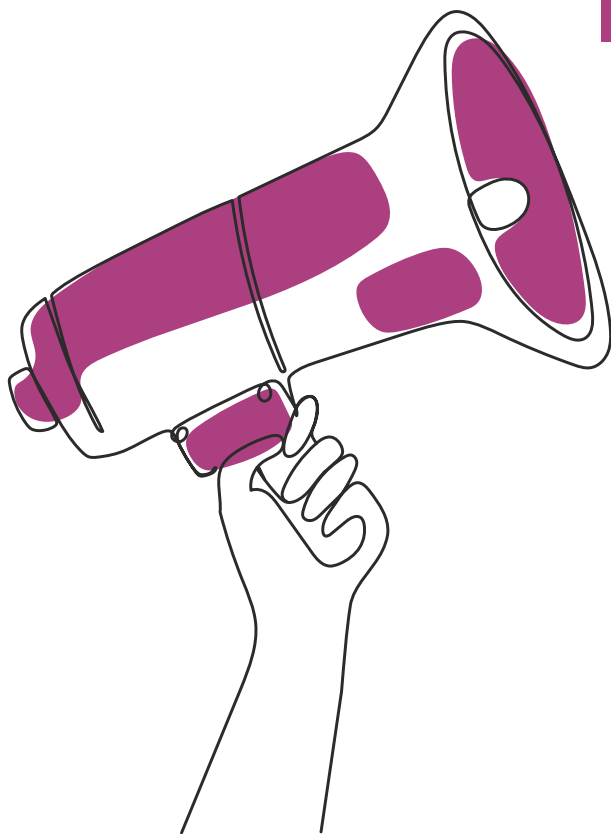




CONFERENCE:

***New Divisions, Struggles,  
and Solidarities in South East Europe***

13-14 June 2025



Conference

**New Divisions, Struggles, and Solidarities  
in South East Europe**

Belgrade, 13–14 June 2025

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Conference

**New Divisions, Struggles, and  
Solidarities in South East Europe**

Belgrade, 13–14 June 2025

Belgrade, 2025

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## **SESSION 1: NATIONALISM AND POLITICS OF MEMORY IN FORMER YUGOSLAVIA**

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### **The Politics of Memory and New Divisions in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Analysing How Competing Narratives About the 1990s Wars Deepen Contemporary Political, Ethnic, and Social Divides**

This paper examines the politics of memory in Bosnia and Herzegovina, focusing on how conflicting narratives about the 1990s wars contribute to the persistence of political, ethnic, and social divisions in the country. In a deeply fragmented post-conflict society, memory has become a site of contestation where different ethnopolitical elites instrumentalise war narratives to reinforce group identities, maintain power, and shape collective memory. Through an analysis of memorialization practices, commemorative events, educational curricula, and media discourses, the study explores how divergent interpretations of the past perpetuate distrust, hinder reconciliation, and obstruct the formation of a shared civic identity. The paper also investigates how such fragmented memory politics interact with broader nation-building processes, institutional dysfunction, and international interventions. Drawing on case studies of specific memorial sites, textbooks, and public discourses, this research highlights how memory serves both as a tool of division and as a potential space for dialogue and healing. The findings underscore the urgent need for inclusive memory practices that challenge ethno-nationalist narratives and promote a more unified vision of Bosnia and Herzegovina's future.

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**Facing the Past, Evading the Past?****How to Change Polarizing Narratives in  
Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Over the past thirty years, a prevailing belief emerged that confronting and recounting the past is the best way to address polarizing historical narratives. However, growing evidence of failures and overly optimistic expectations from transitional justice and memorialization efforts has led to calls to “leave the past behind” and “move on”. Against the backdrop of ongoing discussions about “what works” in memory studies and transitional justice, and using examples from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, we argue that silence about the past is neither realistic nor productive—harmful not only to victims but to society at large. We note that certain narratives of the past, which touch upon crucial ontological understandings of a community, inevitably persist in post-conflict societies and can result in polarizing emotional reactions that hinder societal healing and sow further division. So, the question is—not whether—but how can we remember in a way that induces solidarity rather than polarization? Offering a theoretically grounded contribution and focusing on the lived experience of wartime suffering in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, we argue that narratives about the past require careful structuring and communication to foster solidarity, empathy, and ultimately healing. We propose a four-step framework that outlines how narratives are structured (1), communicated (2), how they resonate (3), and how they are internalized (4) to understand how different narratives can shape societal healing. By attuning the reader to narrative components and communicative strategies, we show that narratives must fit within pre-existing and context-sensitive cognitive and affective templates to be credible and “stick”. We illustrate our theoretical points with reference to competing claims to victimhood and polarization, as well as empathy and solidarity, by examining war childhood narratives and those of the most egregious human rights violations such as genocide.

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## **Medieval Golden Age in Yugoslav Republics and Their Successors History Textbooks**

Elementary school history textbooks for the grade dealing with the Middle Ages from Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav republics were studied. The focus in each case was on domestic history. Particular focus was on national idealization, particularly on the fabulation of a golden age. The treatment was both across the environments, and time wise. The patterns of nationalism differed: in Croatia and Serbia national idealization was present in both periods, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Northern Macedonia it appeared during the first period, to grow with time. In Montenegro it was absent in the first period, to appear recently. In Slovenia, upon appearing in the first period, it withdrew in the second period. Kosovo textbooks in both periods were modest in substance and could not be considered to maintain the idea of a golden period. Hence, it was found that nationalism was present in most environments already under socialist Yugoslavia, but the dynamics of rise (and fall) varied. Ethnic essentialism is also present almost everywhere and in both periods.

Nationalist fabulation could be expected in the second, nation-building period, after the Yugoslav break-up, but it was thriving already before in most cases, indicating there was space for nationalist proclivities during the Yugoslav period already.



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**Nationalists Without Nationalism?  
Asymptomatic Nationalism and  
Its Citizenist Symptoms in Montenegro**

The main ethnopolitical antagonism in Montenegro – between Montenegrins and Serbs – differs from the rest of the post-Yugoslav region due to the lack of ethnic distance between the two groups. While intermarriage is considered perfectly normal, ethnicity becomes problematic only when politicized – when it becomes a basis for power struggles. Until statehood became a central political issue in the late 1990s, Montenegrin and Serb identities were neither mutually exclusive nor inherently antagonistic; with substantial overlap, they were often interchangeable. However, political polarization around the issue of state independence eventually split families apart, even dividing siblings’ ethnonationally – those favoring independence identified as Montenegrins, while those opposed identified as Serbs – creating two highly antagonistic ethnopolitical camps in the process. Since Montenegro’s independence in 2006, only Serb nationalists openly embrace the nationalist label, whereas Montenegrin nationalists reject it, instead adopting a position of “civic patriotism” and often denying the existence of Montenegrin nationalism altogether. By analyzing population census data over the past three decades of postsocialist transformation, alongside op-ed pieces by self-proclaimed “Montenegrin patriots”, this paper draws on Stuart Hall’s theory of articulation and Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot’s theory of justification to account for what I label “asymptomatic nationalism”. First, the paper focuses on the macro-level of ethnonational division in Montenegro, employing process tracing to understand why and how ethnic and other differences were linked into two (ethno)political “chains of equivalence” during the state-building process under the (semi)authoritarian regime, resulting in two opposing ethnonational identities. Second, it shifts to the micro-level through critical discourse analysis, examining how Montenegrin nationalists use “citizenism” (*građanizam*) to mask nationalist exclusion, justifying the marginalization of Montenegrin Serbs in the name of protecting “civilizational values” and a “European future” from the supposed “Balkan backwardness” they attribute to Montenegrin Serbs and their politics.

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## **Theoretical and Research Approaches to Nation and Nationalism in Monographs by Serbian Intellectuals from the Second World War to the Present**

This paper aims to analyse the theoretical frameworks found in the monographs of relevant domestic intellectuals addressing the question of the Serbian nation and nationalism from the end of World War II to the present. The analysis is based on Bakić's (2006) typology, which identifies six distinct theoretical and research approaches to the nation and nationalism: primordialism; perennialism; modernism; ethnosymbolism; interactionism; and the postmodern approach. The purpose of the analysis is to answer the question whether there is a conflict within the field. The authors of this paper hypothesize that there is such a conflict, and that the theoretical and research directions correspond to the ideological positions of the intellectuals themselves. More specifically, the paper hypothesizes that intellectuals who identify or are identified as right-wing will predominantly employ theories of primordial or multi-century existence of the nation, while intellectuals recognized as liberal will more often utilize modernist approaches. Additionally, the paper seeks to explore whether there is a dominant approach within the field and how it has evolved from the end of World War II to the present. The analysis of the theoretical frameworks in the monographs will be conducted through discourse analysis. Furthermore, an expert survey will be used to compile a list of intellectuals recognized as relevant within the field by experts. The survey will target authors whose monographs belong to the mentioned field, are included in the eNauka database. The paper addresses the field of cultural, intellectual production, and how it relates to national and ethnic struggle in the period marked by crisis, war and state and nation formation. The goal of the paper is to provide a deeper understanding of historical processes by exploring the field of intellectual production, which is deeply intertwined with the political and ideological struggles within Serbian society.

## SESSION 2: SOUTH EAST EUROPE IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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### Shared Culture, Divided Classes? Patterns of Cultural Consumption and Political Alignments Across Nine European Countries

This paper investigates how patterns of cultural consumption align with social class distinctions within and across nine countries, including Croatia and Serbia as two post-socialist cases. Using original survey data from the Horizon 2020 project (INVENT), we distinguish eight social classes following Oesch (2006), derived from the respondent's occupation variable. By analysing cultural consumption patterns, we explore how these reflect underlying class positions and social milieus and ask to which extent class-based consumption patterns resemble or diverge across countries.

To identify underlying dimensions structuring these behaviours, we employ Principal Component Analysis (PCA), allowing for cross-country comparisons of class-specific cultural engagement. This approach will highlight shared and country-specific dynamics, particularly within post-communist contexts, where historical trajectories and socio-economic transformations may have shaped distinct consumption patterns. Our findings will contribute to understanding the persistence of class boundaries in cultural participation and provide insight into whether modern class identities exhibit converging trends across diverse national contexts. In a second step, we examine the relationship between classes' consumption patterns and voting behaviour using binary logit models.

This study engages with broader debates on cultural capital, inequality and identity, offering a comparative lens on the interplay between class and culture in contemporary European societies.

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## **Generational Income Inequality in Europe: A Decade of Change in the Digital Economy**

The advent of the digital economy has reshaped occupational landscapes, granting generational advantages, particularly for Millennials, due to their adaptability to digital innovations. This study explores income disparities among generations in Europe over a decade, using data from the European Value Survey (2008–2010 and 2017–2019). Income, measured in deciles and analyzed across demographic variables, is examined to reveal generational trends.

The findings indicate that income inequalities among generations have increased in post-communist countries but have decreased in Western Europe. Millennials emerge as the leading generation in post-communist societies, whereas Generation X retains dominance in the West. These trends suggest potential for dynamic economic development in post-communist nations, contrasting with more stabilized trends in Western Europe. The study employs statistical methods, including the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC), to evaluate generational income differences and highlights the varying impact of Human Development Index (HDI) changes across regions.

This research contributes to understanding the interplay between economic transformation and generational income attainment, providing insights into future socio-economic dynamics across Europe.

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**Transition to Peripheral Capitalism  
and Colonial Democracy  
(a contribution to the criticism of transition  
without social responsibility and renewal  
of politics as destiny)**

The paper discusses sociological and geopolitical aspects of the transition of the Serbian and Balkan societies over the last thirty years, metamorphoses of their social character, results achieved and the crossroads being faced. The focus is on the relationships between actors and systems, development strategies and models of political governance.

Relying on the results of sociological research by domestic and foreign authors, the paper points to institutional changes, achievements and failures of reforms, evolution and regression in social relations, and the generation of various forms of social disorganization and political pathology, including a wide gap between the normative and the real in the transitional society of Serbia. Changes in society and political structure are analyzed as a product of the strategy of transition without social responsibility and the neoconservative policy of the multi-party democracy, which is a form of illusory sociability, the art of populist manipulation which has once again turned politics into fate, society's peripheralization and social underdevelopment, and the emergence of colonial, controlled democracy. Along these lines, the author also considers the relations between national and state sovereignty and its collapse in Kosovo and Metohija; but also forms of non-institutional governance, the position of civil society and the emergence and role of the new social movements (environmental, student, feminist and peace).

The author concludes with a plea for a transition of transition, for a change in the development strategy and governance model in Serbia, as the key assumptions for the development of democracy and sustainable progress.

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## **Is Europe Religious? Types of Religiosity in Nine European Societies**

Several trends can be observed in the religious field of European societies: the secularization of the Christian part of the Western European population, the revitalization of religious identities among members of dominant groups in South-European societies, and the continued enormous importance of religion in minority communities across Western Europe (Bruce, 2011; Burkimsher, 2014; Stolz, 2020).

With the help of bivariate statistical analysis and multivariate correspondence analysis, this paper aims to reconstruct the types of religiosity prevalent in nine countries: France, Spain, Denmark, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Finland, Croatia and Serbia. We will also highlight the specificities of religion in post-conflict ex-Yugoslav societies, considering other important characteristics of the social context of the analyzed societies.

Various types of religiosity in these societies have been identified based on identification indicators and the intensity of practice. The respondents' religiosity analysis indicates some common characteristics in Western European societies, a transitional form of religiosity in Croatia, the stabilization of revitalized religiosity in Serbia, and the high religious practices among minority religious groups.

## SESSION 3: ANTI-GENDER MOBILIZATIONS IN THE POST-YUGOSLAV SPACE

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### Neoconservative Agendas: Tracing Anti-Gender Mobilizations in the Post-Yugoslav Space

The geopolitics of the former Eastern Europe during the Cold War has transformed in modern times into a battleground for intense neo-conservative campaigns, such as anti-gender movements. While events in Poland and Hungary have garnered significant research attention, as have to some extent anti-gender movements in Slovenia and Croatia, the rest of the former Yugoslav space remains relatively invisible, despite the emergence of similar movements there. The introductory contribution of this panel thus offers an overview and comparative perspective on anti-gender movements in the region of the former Yugoslavia.

Using comparative analysis, it seeks to identify both commonalities and specificities among the post-Yugoslav states, which share the same historical background but have experienced diverse political development paths since 1989. The post-Yugoslav region is particularly interesting because, in addition to its socialist history, it is marked by a distinctive transition to post-socialism. Due to the legacy of wars, nationalism, and militarism, (ultra)conservative policies have persistently shaped its political landscape since the 1990s.

This contribution is based on case studies from each of the former Yugoslav republics, examining the actors, repertoires of action, and discourses employed by these mobilizations. It therefore investigates the complex interweaving of nationalism, European integration processes, post-conflict dynamics, and equality policies. It uncovers the intricate relationships between these forces and explains how they have contributed to the spread of anti-gender campaigns in the post-Yugoslav space.

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## **From “Homosexual Lobby” to “700,000 Hail Marys”: The Anti-Gender Mobilizations in Slovenia**

This paper examines Slovenian anti-gender movement, which emerged in 2009 during debates on the proposed Family Code legislative reform. With time, the movement increasingly relied on the discourse of “gender theory” in order to oppose the rights of LGBTIQ+ people, particularly the rights to marriage and adoption. However, the anti-gender movement’s targets have started to expand to other gender- and sexuality-related issues (e.g., abortion).

Our objective is to capture its split into diverse directions, which nonetheless tend to oscillate around the particular notion of family, with the latter serving as the metaphor of national existence. The object of family, placed at the central stage of anti-gender agenda, is approached to in a refractory manner, which enables coalescence of diverse political actors and (sub)agendas. In this way, Slovenian anti-gender movement clusters around the following issues: 1) of marriage equality and LG(B) rights to marriage and adoption, 2) of reproductive rights and 3) more recently, of transgender rights, primarily in terms of medical and legal gender affirmation. However, despite the refraction to these three main directions, the anti-gender agenda remains loyal to its foundation, that is, to safeguard and (re)consolidate the regimes of gender and sexuality. To achieve this, anti-gender movement relies on framing its claims within two broader frames of anti-intellectualism and of ethno-nationalism. While the former represents the means by which the anti-gender movement delegitimizes the role of science, the latter reproduces the ethno-nationalist “imagining” of the Slovenian nation, a broader frame that is peculiar to Slovenian anti-gender movement in the context of the former Yugoslav republics.

Moreover, based on examining the split of Slovenian anti-gender agenda into various directions, we also examine how anti-gender actors use democratic practices and discourses to cunningly conceal their exclusionary discursive practices, and how they support the larger authoritarian processes of de-democratization facing Europe and beyond.



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## **Anti-Gender Mobilization on the Rise in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Compared to Western European countries but also to some of the former Yugoslav countries the emergence of anti-gender mobilizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been rather slow and recent. However, since 2019, when the LGBTIQ\* movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) was able to successfully organize the first Pride march (Bh. Povorka ponosa) ever held in the country, anti-gender mobilizations have increasingly come to the fore in BiH too. This does not suggest that there have not been attacks on feminist and LGBTIQ\* gatherings before or generally against the LGBTIQ\* population, like the 2008 Queer Festival Sarajevo that was brutally attacked by Wahhabi religious groups. However, since Pride 2019 the discourse opposing gender equality and sexuality rights seems to have diversified – now increasingly including anti-gender frames.

Relying on a frame analysis of media articles between November 2018 and March 2023 this paper analyzes these newly emerging anti-gender mobilizations in BiH, identifies actors, and discusses how they frame gender and sexuality in the context of debates around the Pride marches held since 2019. Its aim is further to identify specificities of the BiH case, particularly when it comes to how gender and sexuality issues continue to be instrumentalized for “ethnopolitics” (Mujkic 2008), namely the constant emphasizing of ethnic interests of the three “constituent peoples” – Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs – and their political divisions. Additionally, it discusses to what extent these actors and frames are linked to regional and transnational anti-gender mobilizations.

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**Discursive Strategies in Anti-Gender Mobilizations  
in Contemporary Serbia: Intellectuals and  
the Promotion of Gender as a Threat**

The presentation will outline our research into discursive strategies used to frame the concept and phenomenon of gender in the public sphere of contemporary Serbia. We will begin by elaborating on how the concept of gender has been interpreted in Serbia's historical context, particularly in the period following the democratic changes at the turn of the 21st century. Next, we will highlight key events that captured public attention and stirred debates related to gender and associated phenomena, such as sexuality. Specifically, these include events like the public debate surrounding the introduction of sexual education in primary and secondary schools in 2017, the debate over the concept of gender in biology textbooks in 2022, and the debate over gender-sensitive language that unfolded from 2021 to 2024. Our research involves analyzing discursive strategies employed by certain actors in the public sphere to frame the phenomenon of gender in specific ways. The findings indicate that these strategies predominantly portray gender as a threat to the Serbian state and its citizens and often depict it as originating from Western countries and international organizations. This framing positions gender as a tool for subordinating Serbia to foreign interests. The research also identifies the main promoters of this discourse as intellectuals, as well as state officials and political figures from both the opposition parties and those in power.

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## **Mobilizing the Womb: Anti-Abortion Activism and the Institutionalization of the Anti-Gender Movement in Croatia**

In this presentation, we use the case of anti-abortion activism to trace the development and the institutionalization of the Croatian anti-gender movement. We show how the failures of the 1990s anti-abortion mobilizations contributed to a larger anti-gender turn in discursive and mobilizational strategies of the religious-conservative actors between the mid-2000s and early 2010s. While new anti-gender actors temporarily put abortion as an issue aside to tackle easier targets first, they returned to it when the 2012/2013 mobilizations against sex education and the 2013 mobilizations against same-sex marriage paved the way for growth and expansion and, consequently, the institutionalization of the anti-gender movement. After 2014, anti-abortion mobilizations therefore entered a new phase of proliferation of protests and discourse, and abortion became more likely to be used as an issue to secure votes and seek political office. In our analysis of the development the Croatian anti-gender movement, we pay particular attention to the legacies and continuities with the 1990s anti-abortion mobilizations, but we also specify the key shifts in the networks of actors, discourses and repertoires of action that made the new anti-abortion mobilizations a more salient issue and contributed to the institutionalization of the anti-gender movement in Croatia

## **SESSION 4: STUDENTS' PROTESTS 2024/2025: NEW STRUGGLES, NEW SOLIDARITIES**

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### **Emotions in Action: A Discursive Analysis of Social Media Messages during the 2024/25 Student Protest**

This paper examines the role of emotions in shaping and sustaining social movements, focusing on the case study of the 2024/25 Serbian student protests. The protests erupted in response to the collapse of the concrete canopy at the Novi Sad railway station, which killed 15 people and severely injured two more.

Using discourse analysis of messages published by student organizations on Instagram, the study aims to identify the dominant emotions expressed, their intensity, and their relationship to the stated goals of the protests. The analysis draws on theories of social movements that emphasize the significance of emotions in mobilizing participants, maintaining solidarity, and fostering collective identity.

The preliminary findings reveal a dynamic emotional landscape where anger, hope, and solidarity emerged as dominant emotions, each playing a distinct role in articulating demands and sustaining engagement. Anger was primarily directed at perceived systemic corruption and injustices, while hope framed the potential for transformative change, and solidarity reinforced the sense of collective agency.

By analyzing the interplay between emotional expressions and the strategic objectives of the student protests, this paper aims to contribute to a growing body of literature that underscores the importance of emotions in understanding the dynamics and effectiveness of contemporary social movements.

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<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1589-3393>[marijarradoman@gmail.com](mailto:marijarradoman@gmail.com)**„Studenti nisu na prodaju“: Student Symbolic Struggle  
between Resistance and Solidarity in Serbia (2024–2025)**

Since the late 1960s, when the worldwide student revolt had its own version in Serbia (which was then part of socialist Yugoslavia), through the widespread student protests during the 1990s against the authoritarian and repressive regime and a brief episode in the mid-2010s, students in Serbia have once again been expressing their critical views massively and publicly. Currently, the most important means of expressing student dissatisfaction is the blockade of faculties, but beyond that, specific slogans represent another very important channel for symbolically expressing the critical stance of students. This kind of public communication of student opinions and beliefs is not new, but in the case of the current protests, it certainly represents a specific feature of theirs. The main aim of this paper will be to shed light on the symbolic aspect of the current student struggles in the public sphere. We believe that this form of student struggle in Serbia is important for two reasons. On the one hand, critical engagement that oscillates somewhere between cultural jamming and DeCerteau's tactics of secondary production creates symbolic resistance to the prevailing political discourse. In a broader sense, this represents a form of democratic participation that takes on particular significance in situations where the official channels for expressing opinions and attitudes that differ from those behind positions of power and state authority are suspended. On the other hand, it is assumed that the symbolic strug-

gle of students has a strong integrative and solidarity potential within the student population itself. In order to achieve the aim of this work, mixed methods will be used, including a qualitative analysis of students' slogans and a quantitative analysis of students' attitudes towards the slogans and the protests in general.

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**Mop and Revolution: Organizing Collective Life during the 2024/24 Student Blockades in Serbia**

The immediate cause for the 2024/25 student blockades was an incident of physical violence by members of the ruling Serbian Progressive Party against students of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts (FDU) on November 22, 2024. FDU students declared a blockade on November 25, and students of the Faculty of Philosophy joined on December 2. The wave of blockades that ensued represents the largest student protests in Serbia since the 1996–1997 student demonstrations. In a wider sense, the demands put forth by the students are a response to results of consolidated neoliberalism in Serbia which has brought widespread poverty, corruption and wealth inequality to a majority of people. Like at other faculties, the blockade at the Faculty of Philosophy established a Plenum as the sole legitimate directly democratic body of all Faculty students. Critical theory offers numerous fruitful insights into this form of student self-organization, which this paper explores in conjunction with empirical data. Particular attention is devoted to the following segments: political engagement of students, democratic self-organization, the reclaiming of public spaces, and the development of solidarity. Through observation and direct participation in plenary session, working groups, and daily life on the campus, empirical data was gathered in the form of firsthand observations, notes, publicly available texts and similar materials. It is argued that student participation in the blockades has played a great role in developing critical awareness, understanding of power structures within the Faculty and the society, and learning crucial skills for collective organization and struggle through direct involvement. In conclusion, based on the presented materials and findings, the blockades and the Plenum-style model of direct democracy are analyzed as unique and particularly effective organizational forms in the fight against consolidated neoliberalism in Serbia.

## SESSION 5: OLD AND NEW CONTESTATIONS IN THE POLITICAL SPHERE

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### Anti-Enlightenment

When analysing the multitude of conspiracy theories circulating in social and official media, at their core, one can identify the denial of key ideas of the Enlightenment – trust in science and reason, autonomous morality, individual liberty, secularism and cosmopolitanism and political ideals such as tolerance and solidarity, constitutional government, and the formal separation of church and state.

Through the analysis of the works of the major figures of the Counter-Enlightenment (Joseph de Maistre, Edmund Burke, Johann Georg Hamann), postmodern critics of the Enlightenment (Michele Foucault), and the writings of obscure contemporary proponents of ultra-reactionary movements such as the Dark Enlightenment (Nick Land, Curtis Yarvin, Steven Sailer), the Alt-Right (Richard B. Spencer, Samuel Jared Taylor, Stephen Bannon), neo-Eurasianism (Aleksandr Dugin, Lev Gumilev) and similar ideas in Serbia (Dragoš Kalajić and his followers) the reconstruction of the basic ideas of contemporary anti-Enlightenment movements will be presented. Although these ideas were believed to have long been outdated, they are now widely accepted by the population, and with current political tendencies in the USA, Russia, and the EU, they are likely to dominate the world political scene in the coming years.

In the empirical part of the paper, we analyse the presence of these anti-Enlightenment ideas in respondents' reactions related to eight statements (ranging from accepting the concept of the flat Earth to denying evolution) in two large-scale surveys conducted in Serbia in 2021 and 2022 and present the distribution of supporters of these views in the social space in Serbia.



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## **Determinants of Serbian Public Opinion Concerning Serbia's Position vis-à-vis the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict**

Public attitudes about international conflicts, such as the current confrontation between Russia and Ukraine, are polarized in different countries to a different degree. Serbia is one of the countries where the public shows polarized views of the conflict. This paper tries to answer the question: How can these individual and group differences be explained?

Potential explanatory factors are numerous. Socio-demographic indicators, such as religiosity and religious denomination, as well as gender, age, and education, may be influential. Socio-psychological variables also need to be taken into account. Authoritarianism, as a pre-political psychological predisposition, could influence attitudes towards the conflict. Current political preferences, such as party identification, support for democracy, and related variables, are also likely to affect the perception of the conflict. This study examines the influence of variables representing these broad conceptual categories on public attitudes concerning Serbia's position vis-à-vis the conflict.

The data for the analyses were collected using online surveys based on a combination of random and non-random sampling methods. The results show that socio-demographic variables have a modest influence on these attitudes: indicators of religiosity proved to be the strongest socio-demographic predictors of pro-Russian preferences, although the addition of psychological and ideological variables made their impact indirect.

Authoritarianism turned out to be an important factor that transmits the influence of socio-demographics and directly influences both subse-

quent ideological factors and pro-Russian attitudes. Political identities, especially national and patriotic self-identifications, are among the strongest direct determinants. Finally, current political and ideological preferences proved to be important direct determinants and mediators of the influence of more distant factors. Here, populist orientation and pro-democratic orientation proved to be especially influential variables. Populism demonstrated its political usefulness by allowing its actors to be ideologically flexible.

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**The Phantom Menace:****A New Perspective on Right-Wing Parties in Serbia**

This study offers a slightly different perspective on the right-wing parties in Serbia. Media outlets, politicians, and even some researchers frequently highlight the alleged threat to Serbia's political stability posed by far-right parties. Such narratives argue that the rise of these parties, driven by platforms of nationalist revisionism and pro-Russian foreign policy, could have detrimental consequences for regional stability, European integration, and minority rights. This paper examines the existence of this perceived threat, starting from the hypothesis that the far-right in Serbia in current context does not constitute a political project with significant medium-term potential. The arguments presented are supported by an analysis of the attitudes and demographics of potential right-wing voters, derived from a longitudinal examination of public opinion data over the past five years, as well as an analysis of behavior and electoral performance of these parties. The argument is premised on the notion that traditional socio-economically dissatisfied groups, which would typically form the core constituency of the far-right, are in fact mobilized by the ruling populist party in Serbia. Employing the big tent approach, the ruling party occasionally resorts to radical rhetoric while implementing completely contrasting policies, both domestic and foreign. Additionally, the Serbian far-right is fragmented and often shows signs of co-optation by the hybrid regime, contributing to its inefficiency. If confirmed, these findings would lead to the conclusion that the threat from this side of political spectrum is overstated, and primarily comes from a communication strategy of the ruling party, utilizing it in order to mobilize domestic and international support (or relieve the pressure) during critical junctures.

## **SESSION 6: ENVIRONMENTAL AND LABOUR CONFLICTS ON THE PERIPHERY**

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## **Participation, Conflicts and Community**

### **Engagement in Mining Areas:**

#### **The Case of Bor and Majdanpek\***

The aim of this paper is to identify the motivations for community participation or lack thereof in the process of creating planning documents in mining areas. Based on the conducted research, the issues that concern residents the most within their local community will be addressed. An assessment of the local population's interest in public participation in the creation of planning documents will also be provided, along with the key reasons why they do not engage more in this process. It will also explore whether and why the population feels more comfortable expressing their opinions anonymously or through direct representation. The survey was conducted during July and August 2024 with a random sample of 300 respondents. Additionally, an analysis of secondary sources on community engagement in the local context of Bor and Majdanpek will be presented.

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## **„Colony“ as Glue? Postcolonial Framing in Present-Day Serbia and Its Political Implications**

References to Serbia as a colony have recently gained prominence in public discourse, especially after the protests against the Rio Tinto's lithium mining project, which catalyzed the proliferation of the "colony" trope. Although the use of postcolonial framing, even in the absence of a history of formal colonization, has lately become widespread across postsocialist Eastern and Central Europe, in Serbia it is characteristically employed by actors spanning diverse segments of the political spectrum. In this presentation, our aim will be twofold. First, on the basis of a corpus made up by 62 media pieces mentioning "colony" and "colonialism", we will seek to identify different meanings ascribed to the concept of colony, by focusing on three key themes: manifestations of Serbia's colonial status, perceived colonizers (EU, US, Russia, China), and the actors using this rhetoric. Second, we will examine the connection between the different ways "colony" is articulated and the various demands for inclusion and exclusion within the political community. Our analysis will be driven by Jeffrey Alexander's civil sphere theory. The main research question is whether the use of the "colony" trope, in addition to being used to label, exclude, and create divisions, can also serve as an impetus for civil repair. Specifically, if "colony" represents a polluting symbol of the loss of self-governance, can it also spark a return to autonomy as collective value and, by joining different constituencies together, inspire the fight for civil values and social justice?

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## **Periphery in Movement: Organizing Against Rio Tinto in Serbia**

This paper initiates a conversation on how contemporary Eastern European peripheralization and the hegemony of the energy extractivist model impact civil action, introducing the concept of Periphery in Movement. Periphery in Movement seeks to expand beyond traditional civil society and social movement studies by addressing forms of organizing that build an incomplete and often tenuous territorial resistance. Through contested convergences and alliances among diverse civil actors, it aims to bring material disruptions to extractivist projects. We combine approaches from political economy, civil society studies, and social movement studies to establish this concept through three core specificities. The first specificity is the power imbalance, which we identify as the defining characteristic of Periphery in Movement, positioning it in opposition to corporate interests, the European Union, and national elites. The second specificity is the conflictual convergence of actors, spanning a diverse spectrum of civil actors who have undergone significant ideological and practical transformations from the Yugoslav Wars to the present. The third specificity focuses on the “how” of Periphery in Movement, examining the new repertoire of actions it employs. We develop this theoretical framework by analyzing Serbia’s ecological movement against the mining corporation Rio Tinto in the context of resistance to lithium extraction, bringing environmental pollution and loss of territories. The concept of Periphery in Movement is inspired by attempts to describe movements in Latin America that have emerged against the extractivist model as a form of “Society in Movement.” Unlike the Latin American concept of Societies in Movement, which often offer prefigurative elements in their organization against extractivism, movements in Eastern Europe bear a burden of past (and present) developments of civil society, including neo-colonial transitional “democratization” through civil society, its soft and hard repressions by both international funders and national state, and its peripheral geopolitical position in Europe in territorial resistance.

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<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8538-3474>[zmanic@f.bg.ac.rs](mailto:zmanic@f.bg.ac.rs)**Precarious Working Conditions  
for Foreign Workers in Serbia:  
A Content Analysis of Online Articles from Daily  
Newspaper *Danas* about the Linglong Factory\***

This study aims to analyse the precarious working conditions experienced by foreign workers in Serbia at the Linglong tyre factory in Zrenjanin. It seeks to elucidate the nature of these conditions, particularly for labourers from Vietnam and India, in the context where numerous regulatory violations, misuse of public authority, and a blatant disregard for human rights have already marked the Linglong factory. The authors employ a content analysis method, focusing on secondary sources due to constraints in direct data collection from the foreign workforce. The empirical material of the research is articles accessed through a targeted query “Linglong workers” on the website of the daily newspaper *Danas*. The temporal scope of the analysis extends from October 2021 to October 2024, coinciding with significant media coverage of migrant workers’ hardships during the construction and inauguration of the factory. The primary units of analysis focus on article themes and concepts that reflect temporal, organisational, social and economic dimensions of precarity, such as the confiscation of passports, inhumane living conditions, irregular remuneration, unpaid overtime, failure to remit social contributions, denial of sick leave, prohibition of paid annual leave, obstruction of independent trade union organisation, and instances of belittlement. Additionally, the analysis seeks to evaluate the orientation associated with

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these themes and concepts, categorising them as positive, negative, or neutral. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the precarity and multilayered vulnerability of migrant workers in Serbia, particularly within the foreign investment framework. By focusing on the Linglong factory as a case study, the research illuminates the broader implications of precarious labour conditions in global supply chains.



## SESSION 7: LAWS, RIGHTS AND/V.S. SOCIAL REALITY

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### **Minority Multidimensionality: Perceived Political Minority Status & (Un)Deservingness of Protection\***

The protection of minority rights is a fundamental normative and democratic principle. Yet, its disregard persists in various forms of discrimination, global conflict and socio-political disparity—even in advanced democracies. The bulk of scholarly investigation into the matter has focused on top-down processes related to the development and implementation of laws and policies aimed at protecting minority rights, leaving the bottom-up processes related to citizens' support for such laws and policies underexplored. This is likely due to the fact that existing data suggest that citizens' support for minority rights is high and stable—leaving little to investigate. However, I argue that existing measures of support for protecting minority rights suffer from two important shortcomings: minorities are often discussed in abstract terms and support for protecting their rights is often gauged in unconstrained ways. To address these oversights, this paper empirically investigates which specific characteristics influence citizens' consideration of political minority status using a customized conjoint and perceived deservingness of protection by leveraging a trade-off framing. The results—based on surveys fielded in France, Hungary, Belgium and Switzerland—reveal that political minority status is readily recognized on the basis of numerical considerations, as well as considerations of social dominance/ subordination. However, citizens appear to be mostly unwilling to protect the rights of these political minorities—even when multiple characteristics compound their minority status. While these findings highlight important differences in attitudes towards minorities between Eastern- and Western-Europeans, they ultimately reveal that—when pressed—citizens' commitment to liberal principles of democracy might be more fickle than previously believed.

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<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3032-5984>[mila@ius.bg.ac.rs](mailto:mila@ius.bg.ac.rs)**From the Bottom to the Top:  
Legal Skepticism in Serbia**

Various empirical studies conducted over the last two decades consistently indicate that two sets of values and attitudes coexist in Serbia: support for the rule of law and legality, and skepticism about the legal system and the courts. The latter includes low trust in courts and other public institutions, the belief that the law is not neutral but rather an expression of the interests of powerful groups and individuals, and a reluctance to go to court due to the high costs, lengthy proceedings, lack of trust in the judicial system, and corruption. Legal professionals (practicing lawyers and judges), show a lack of trust in judicial institutions, whereas business people do not perceive laws and courts as effective channels to challenge government decisions and achieve justice or protect their interests. These findings imply that the legal system is a field of contestation and struggles.

To clarify these findings further, we aim to conduct exploratory qualitative research (in-depth interviews and focus group discussions) to explore narratives about the law, legal system, and judiciary. This includes perceptions of law, judges, prosecutors, and politicians, the importance of law in everyday life, and the connections between law and politics. Thus, we will be able to identify elements of legal consciousness (understood as a cognitive image of law that is constructed through the life experience of people) and how it is shaped by the social context.

The research will be conducted with three groups of respondents: (1) citizens from lower socio-economic positions (with lower education and lower material status), (2) citizens from middle and higher socio-economic positions (with higher education and higher material status), and (3) businesspersons (owners or managers of small and medium enterprises).

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<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0422-4226>[marija.stefanovic@crt.rs](mailto:marija.stefanovic@crt.rs)**From Solidarity to Control: Principles of Exchanges in Informal Networks in Southeast Europe**

The complexity of the interplay between informal and formal practices is perhaps most evident in everyday life, where formal systems—such as institutions, laws, and regulations—can legitimize and enable informal practices (Hanson, 2018; Ledeneva, 2016; Cvetičanin, Spasić, Gavrilović, 2014). At the same time informal practices represent ways of bypassing the formal aspects of the system in achieving certain goals (Ledeneva, 2018; Round, Williams, 2010; Polese et al., 2018). The central premise of this paper is that the interconnectedness of the formal and informal spheres of everyday life — through mutual constraints as well as the creation of new opportunities — can be conceptualized as a continuum, ranging from practices of solidarity to practices of control.

Based on an analysis of 104 interviews with citizens from Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*, Serbia, and Croatia, this study examines the mechanisms of solidarity and control within informal networks, the sanctions they impose, and actors' motivations. The main findings are that informal practices can be arranged on a continuum where the starting point is solidarity networks and the end point is control networks. Sanctions along the continuum are initially mild, internalized and predominantly moral, while moving through the continuum to the endpoint, they become increasingly externalized and severe, and the expectations for reciprocal service increase. Similarly, motivations align with the continuum, and at the starting point, altruistic motives dominate, while at the endpoint, individual interests and power dynamics take precedence. This study highlights how informal practices in Southeast Europe both bridge and deepen societal divisions, reflecting ongoing struggles while simultaneously fostering new forms of solidarity.

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\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

## **SESSION 8: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND POLITICAL MOBILISATION IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE**

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### **Reclaiming Solidarity: The Interplay of Education, Culture, and Resistance in Contemporary Social Movements**

The contemporary geopolitical landscape reflects the urgent need for sustainable networks of solidarity and action in light of global crises, from genocides in Palestine and Sudan to students' protests in Serbia and the EU's crackdown on migrant solidarity. Following the events of October 7th, 2023, students worldwide have mobilized to reclaim their campuses, demanding divestment from arms companies and an end to complicity in the genocide of Palestinians. Government responses have been marked by violence, including police brutality and unlawful detentions, yet a collective call for a new social paradigm is emerging against the backdrop of late-stage capitalism. Furthermore, there has been a historical neglect of social unrest in South-East Europe by both Western media and academia, especially regarding the ongoing student protests in Serbia and the subsequent events that unfolded after the tragedy in Novi Sad on November 1st 2024. University and secondary school students in Croatia and Bosnia have shown strong solidarity with their Serbian peers, with public support for their demands steadily rising. The recent involvement in protests of both Serbian secondary school students and farmers indicates a widening of support-base for these movements.

This paper aims to investigate the critical relationship between culture and education in fostering networks of solidarity and resistance, particularly in the context of recent global social movements. It critiques the forces that commodify education and culture, undermining spaces for collective and critical thinking, and raises important questions such as: what opportunities exist for sustainable organizing that brings alternatives, both in theory and practice? How can we ensure that our struggles do not create new divisions and tensions that reinforce existing power structures? Integrating data gathered from interviews, media coverage, and the cultural practices of students, researchers, professors, and the community in Serbia and the UK, the paper will assess progress in community organizing and reimagining educational spaces.

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**Bosnia's Missed Revolution? Digital Activism,  
Class Struggles and Politics of Event in  
"Justice for David" Social Movement**

"Justice for David," the most significant social movement in post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina, began with the mysterious death of a young man named David but rapidly exposed deeper divisions and class-based struggles in the region. By reclaiming Banja Luka's central square—a contested "place of power"—protesters confronted state-sanctioned injustice and highlighted what many participants described as the "ghettoization of citizens." This struggle for public space served as a decisive stand against entrenched hierarchies, while digital activism on the guerrilla-like Facebook page "Justice for David" galvanized support, nurtured grassroots solidarity, and generated a sense of collective identity online.

Drawing on Badiou's notion of an Event as a radical break, Žižek's emphasis on disruptive engagement with hegemonic ideology, and Deleuze's concepts of rhizomatic micro-activism and "becoming," this study investigates how the movement momentarily ruptured Bosnia's post-socialist order. Class tensions surfaced as activists used digital platforms to reveal underlying inequalities, culminating in public showdowns with a paternalistic political apparatus. In so doing, "Justice for David" transcended local, ethno-kleptocratic borders and resonated with broader struggles across Southeast Europe, offering insights into how emergent forms of resistance challenge authoritarianism, illiberalism, and social fragmentation in the region.

Utilising data from social media analytics, on-site observations, and interviews, I show that "Justice for David" fused on-the-ground protests with a provocative online presence that redefined activism in a post-war context. Yet, despite its explosive potential to foster new solidarities and transform power relations, the movement ultimately became a "missed revolution," unable to deliver the radical change it initially promised. This paper underscores an urgent gap in sociological research: given its scale and resonance, "Justice for David" demands further scholarly scrutiny to illuminate how grassroots mobilisations can disrupt—but also risk being co-opted by—existing structures of power in contemporary post-Yugoslav sociopolitical landscape.

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## **Reaffected, Reengaged? Exploring New Political Mobilizations in Serbia**

In recent years, we have witnessed the advancement of political disaffection and disengagement processes across nearly all European countries. Research indicates that this trend is also present in Serbia (Jarić, 2005; Spasić, 2005, 2008; Golubović, 2007; Pešić, 2017; Džunić and Golubović, 2018; Petrović and Stanojević, 2020). Findings from a 2018 study (Pešić, Birešev, Petrović Trifunović, 2021) reveal a relatively low level of external and internal political efficacy among Serbian citizens, a low level of institutional trust, and moderate levels of political participation compared to other European societies.

Building on these findings, the aim of this study is to examine whether, five years later (2023), there have been changes in the level of political participation among Serbian citizens, particularly in terms of direct, protest-oriented activism. The hypothesis underpinning this inquiry is that new forms of political mobilizations, involving emerging issues, such as environmental risks or pleas against violence, and a higher degree of emotional engagement, have led to an increased willingness among citizens to engage in direct political action. Additionally, the study aims to determine whether the evolving context of political mobilization is related to an increase in internal political efficacy.

The analysis will be conducted on the European Social Survey data (Rounds 9 and 11) and other relevant data sources.

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## **Citizens vs. Elites: Symbolic Battles over the Uses of Political Crises in Bulgaria**

Bulgaria has emerged as a regional “champion” in the multiplication and diversification of political crises, experiencing seven elections within 3.5 years, an ongoing inability to form a stable government, and numerous failed reforms. In this context, crisis has become the “new normal.” This paper explores the following question: How do citizens and elites navigate, exploit, or fail to address political crises, and what are the challenges and implications of the symbolic politics of crisis?

The paper is structured in three parts. The first part outlines the theoretical framework and introduces a conceptual cluster based on crisis, post-democracy, and national populism. It traces the conceptual history of crisis, from the notion of “the end of history” to its emergence as a mega-metaphor for contemporary society. The analysis highlights three key interpretations of crisis: crisis as a cultural malaise, crisis as social critique, and crisis as a new way of life. The author develops the concept of “post-democratic crisis,” which rests on three pillars: mega-leadership, post-democracy, and post-truth.

Populism is defined according to Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser (2013) as a political approach characterized by nativism and authoritarianism. The author argues that Bulgarian national populism can be better understood through a triad of identitarianism, post-secularism, and statism. Post-democracy, drawing on Colin Crouch’s (2004) conceptualization, is presented as a condition in which democratic institutions formally persist but are increasingly hollowed out, with the engine of development and change shifting away from democratic spaces toward narrow, non-transparent private economic and political circles.

The second part of the paper examines four significant political crises in Bulgaria. The selection of these crises is based on three criteria: their emblematic nature and their role in marking key transitions and trends in Bulgaria’s post-communist development; their diversity in type; and the varying configurations of elites and citizens as winners or losers in each crisis.

The conclusion maps these crises along two key axes: democracy versus post-democracy, and civic activism versus national-populist mobilizations. This analysis highlights the symbolic battles between citizens and elites over the interpretations and political utility of crises.

## SESSION 9: GENDER, VIOLENCE AND MEDIA

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### **Between Rights and Rhetoric: The Erosion of Women's and LGBTQ+ Rights in Romania, Hungary and Poland**

In recent years, several countries in Central and Eastern Europe have experienced the rise of political movements with distinctly illiberal agendas. These movements frequently and firsthand target women's and LGBTQ+ rights, leading to significant setbacks in these areas and contributing to broader trends of democratic backsliding.

Our study focuses (1) on the evolution of abortion and LGBTQ+ legislation in Romania, Hungary, and Poland, using a comparative approach and (2) the political narratives driving this backsliding, employing content analysis. While the findings reveal a notable regression in Hungary and Poland's legal frameworks, Romania's setbacks are more evident in practice than in formal legal changes. Building on Farris's concept of femonationalism, this paper aims to analyze the evolution and framing of the 'anti-gender' movement, revealing the underlying mechanisms driving democratic backsliding and the rise of far-right ideologies in the region.



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**Violence Against Women in Politics on Social Media:  
The Case of Slovenia**

In this study we explore the escalating concern of gender-based violence and misogyny targeting women in politics within the realm of social media. Rather than contributing to the further democratization of public and political spaces, social media platforms have become conduits for the dissemination of hate speech, aggression, violence, and misogyny against women engaged in politics at various levels, be it either local, national, or international. This study endeavors to address the critical questions surrounding violence against women in politics on social media and examines the associated risks and consequences for women at different stages of their political careers, including parliamentarians and those initiating their political journeys.

Employing critical discourse analysis, our research delves into the discourse on Twitter during the two months leading up to the Slovenian parliamentary election in April 2022. Through the meticulous examination of over 300 hand-collected Tweets in the Slovenian language, we aim to elucidate the impact of Twitter discourse on pre-election events and assess the extent of violent and misogynistic content directed at women actively participating in the election campaign. Our findings reveal that misogynistic and violent attacks on Twitter manifest in diverse forms of expression, targeting women with high prospects of achieving favorable election results and those expressing critical views towards the government.

The overarching objective of these violent and misogynistic activities transcends mere psychological harm and the instillation of fear; rather, their aim is to induce a sense of inferiority, dissuading women from active political participation and compelling them to retreat from the public sphere into the private domain. This research contributes to a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted challenges women in politics face within the digital realm and underscores the imperative for concerted efforts to mitigate the adverse effects of online violence on political engagement.

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## **From Medusa to #Metoo: Different Discourses About Sexual Violence and Their Impact on Women Who Have Experienced Sexual Violence Today**

This work aims to explore diverse narratives about sexual victimization and their influence on contemporary understandings of sexual violence and its classification within criminal-legal systems. The paper examines pre/anti-feminist narratives about rape alongside the feminist perspective on sexual violence, which has significantly contributed to the criminalization of various forms of sexual victimization. Despite international legal frameworks and recommendations emphasizing the importance of consent in defining sexual violence, much national legislation continues to frame sexual violence through the lens of force and the victim's resistance. This approach conflicts with research findings on the lived experiences of sexual violence survivors. The study employs content analysis and comparative analysis of various sources on sexual violence, as well as an evaluation of their influence on modern legal frameworks regulating sexual violence. Findings reveal that, despite feminist contributions, myths about sexual violence persist, shaping societal and criminal justice responses to women survivors of violence.

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## **Who Speaks Louder? Network Analysis of Intimate Citizenship Debates in Slovenian Mass Media**

Contemporary right-wing populist and neoconservative actors often criticize mass media, labelled as “mainstream media,” as being dominated by “privileged” voices that fail to represent “the people.” Social media, by contrast, is viewed as a tool for bypassing editorial structures and directly engaging with the masses. This perspective is shared by neoconservative anti-gender actors and their supporters, who in contemporary intimate citizenship debates oppose equality policies, particularly in sexual and reproductive rights. Research confirms that social media provide an effective “opportunity structure” for advancing anti-gender agendas. However, their presence and visibility in mass media discourse remain under-explored. To address this gap, we employed a network approach, widely applied in social media analysis, to comprehensively map the right-wing populist and neoconservative voices featured in mass media reporting, their visibility, statements, and associated discourses. We focus on Slovenia, where anti-gender mobilizations emerged remarkably early compared to other countries in the region, beginning in 2009. This early emergence makes Slovenia a particularly relevant case study. By applying a network approach, we analyse 3,122 articles discussing intimate citizenship issues from three Slovenian print media outlets (Delo, Mladina, Reporter) published between 2015 and 2023. Our findings reveal that while supporters of equality policies include a greater number of organizations and actors,

opponents, though fewer, produce more statements and are quoted more frequently. Moreover, statements from equality advocates mainly originate from NGOs and scholars, while anti-gender discourses are largely driven by political parties, with left-wing parties notably absent. Anti-gender actors strategically frame their positions using human rights language to obscure discriminatory rhetoric, facilitating their inclusion in “mainstream” media discourse. Based on the results, we reflect on the structural mechanisms that contribute to the disproportionate prevalence of anti-gender voices over equality advocates, highlighting how editorial practices, media logic, and strategic framing shape their visibility and influence.

## **SESSION 10: URBAN TRANSFORMATION, SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND EROSION OF DEMOCRACY**

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### **How Does Radical Urban Transformation Change the Symbols of Belgrade?**

A city's identity is based on a heterogeneous set of elements, among which material symbolism is very important since it is the basis of the visual representation and the city's silhouette. Nas's typology of symbolism was modified for the analysis of medium-sized cities in Serbia and then applied to examine the urban identity of Belgrade.

In the last fifteen years, several housing projects have been started in Belgrade, and the Belgrade Waterfront Project (BWP) stands out because it radically transformed the existing urban structure by gentrifying a large centrally located area in the city. The paper's main aim is to analyze the perception of urban change and its impact on the city's identities based on three empirical studies conducted from 2018 to 2024 by the Institute for Sociological Research. Findings based on the first qualitative research (2018/19) show that Belgrade is positively evaluated as not a standardized tourist location. During that period, BWP was in the first phase of construction. In the second online survey (2021), members of the academic community in Belgrade criticize the commercialization of the city space and the direction of its development. The third online survey (2024) includes the student population, which was assumed to have a more positive attitude towards contemporary urban changes. However, this hypothesis was not confirmed. Namely, social science and humanities students don't recognize and don't accept BWP as a symbol of the city.

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**Autocratization-Driven Urban Transformation:  
The Case of Novi Sad**

Autocratization is on the rise, undermining democratic institutions and reshaping socio-political landscapes worldwide. This paper situates urban transformation within this broader trend, examining the dual role of cities as both authoritarian “strongholds” and “islands of resistance.” The paper argues that, particularly in countries facing advanced democratic erosion, such as Serbia, urban transformation should be reconceptualized. It proposes a shift away from the prevailing focus on neoliberalism and economic exploitation, toward an emphasis on autocratization and political domination. To lay the groundwork for this reconceptualization, the paper explores how urban spaces, institutions, discourses, and actors contribute to both democratic erosion and resilience. In doing so, it links contemporary urban transformation directly to the process of autocratization. As a case study illustrating the relevance of this new approach, the paper presents preliminary empirical findings from Novi Sad, a second-tier city in Serbia, focusing on the Novi Sad Waterfront urban megaproject and other infrastructure projects that exemplify democratic erosion and provoke democratic contention.

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## State-Sponsored Unhomeliness: Housing Precarity and Privatism in Serbian Social Housing Estates\*

This paper examines the lived realities of housing precarity within Serbia's social housing estates, focusing on the concept of unhomeliness. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in two Serbian social housing estates, it explores how marginalized inhabitants navigate the erosion of stability, privacy, and living conditions. The findings reveal how systemic neglect and institutional failures compound vulnerabilities, fostering pervasive instability and alienation. Social housing, intended as a solution to housing needs, emerges as a paradoxical site where shelter is provided yet insecurity, unhomeliness and marginalization persist. Through the lens of *unhomeliness*, the analysis reveals the emotional and material toll of precarious housing, such as utility disconnections, overcrowding, and structural neglect. The article situates *unhomeliness* as both a structural and experiential phenomenon, emphasizing how the erosion of welfare housing policies and lack of privacy undermine the basic functions of a "home." Introducing the concept of *precarious privatism*, it sheds light on the tension between inhabitants' efforts to create autonomy and dignity in their homes and the challenges they face. This analysis advances understanding of housing inequality and resilience among marginalized communities in post-socialist contexts, offering a critical perspective on the interplay between systemic neglect, individual agency, and the contested meanings of home.

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## **SESSION 11: POST-SOCIALIST ACADEMIA: CHALLENGES, BARRIERS AND CONFLICTS**

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### **Challenging Gender Inequality in Academia: Uncovering Structural Barriers**

The persistence of gender inequality in academia remains a significant challenge despite increasing attention and ongoing efforts to address this problem. This presentation addresses the persistent problem of gender imbalance in academic institutions, where deeply ingrained stereotypes and the perception of science as a male-dominated field continue to hinder progress. While the initial focus was on individual women, understanding of the structural barriers faced by women has recently shifted to an examination of societal and institutional factors. In this presentation, we argue that comprehensive structural reforms are needed to advance gender equality in science. In doing so, we draw on Joan Acker's theory of gendered organizations and Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of symbolic power, cultural capital, social capital and habitus. These concepts shed light on the mechanisms that perpetuate gender inequalities in academic institutions. The presentation highlights the need for institutional and cultural change and emphasizes that gendered organizations are complex and multi-layered. Targeted interventions are called for that address both structural inequalities and the broader cultural context, including mentoring, diversity initiatives and inclusion. The discussion also highlights the importance of the European Commission's Gender Equality Plan, which provides a solid framework for promoting sustainable gender equality. By integrating structural and cultural changes, the plan provides a strategic approach to promoting gender equality in academia, with a focus on implementation and continuous monitoring to ensure long-term impact.



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### **“The Anarchists of the Lecture Platform”: How Neoconservative Mobilizations Undermine Science to Fight Equality Policies**

Over the past decade, Europe and the world have witnessed a rise in neoconservative mobilizations against “gender ideology,” targeting not only equality policies but also bolster contemporary de-democratization processes. Building on anti-intellectualism and de-legitimization of science, these mobilizations particularly target fields that tend to challenge and denaturalize fundamental social categories – social sciences and humanities –, including gender, making these fields vulnerable of being judged and evaluated by the principles of existing symbolic dominations, interested to ensure their own reproduction, rather than autonomous principles of academic fields. These attacks are particularly pronounced in Slovenia, where the academic community is identified as a key ally of feminist and progressive movements. This association can be traced back to the 2012 marriage equality referendum, during which advocates strategically foregrounded scientific findings and academic expertise. Since then, social science scholars have become primary targets of anti-gender attacks, solidifying the delegitimization of knowledge as a core strategy of Slovenian anti-gender mobilizations. To capture the increasing complexity and consolidation of this strategy, we analysed right-wing media content from the emergence of anti-gender mobilizations in Slovenia (2009) through key events such as the marriage equality referendums (2012, 2015), the enactment of full marriage equality (2022), and recent debates up to 2024. Findings show that neoconservative anti-gender mobilizations in Slovenia aim to delegitimize social sciences and humanities by directly or indirectly delegitimizing academic structures and institutions as an extension of “ruling regime”; by perceiving social sciences and humanities

as biased, politicised, ideological, and non-scientific; and by delegitimizing scholars to undermine their credibility. The findings additionally show that de-legitimization is *selective*, as neoconservative mobilizations do aim to support their agenda by relying on and mobilizing the scientific claims, either by selectively appropriating scientific findings conforming their agenda, or by selectively interpreting scientific findings to make them fit into their agenda.

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**The Racial Question in Contemporary Postsocialist Academia between Alleged Neglect and the Enforcing of Mere Hostilities, Stereotypes, and Overstatements**

Developments in decolonial and critical race theory have gone totally out of proportions on the international academic scene, while on the national not so many academics seem to be aware of the matter or engage in it. How could we explain this? The paper seeks to answer whether the claims about silence regarding the racial question in post-socialist countries originate in observable facts of inequalities in social relations, structures, politics and demographics, or rather are mere academic overstatements? The assumptions of racism and whiteness come very easily, even though race is one of the most controversial scientific concepts. Often, current developments are framed in stereotypical generalisations, particularistic and subjective stances and accusations of hate towards and/or lack of direct involvement of racial minorities, rather than providing the facts, and are based on problematic essentialist and racist assumptions. A number of scholars (Čarna Brković, Catherine Baker, Jelena Savić, etc.) are talking about racism as whiteness in a post-socialist context and the problem of the invisibility of racial minorities, providing varieties of something we might call academics activism. The latter is supported by abstract theoretical claims of the fatalistic totality of white people's racism, making no distinctions regarding real colonial engagement, ethnic and racial differences among white people, etc. The methodology of this research will be based on critical conceptual analysis, literature review and case study (Serbia). It aims at identifying academic sources and educational and policy initiatives in the last few decades that are examples of raising direct agency of Roma people, as the most often debated and funded racialised minority in educational and academic activities, and of their visibility in numerous initiatives that have been ignored and neglected by critical race scholars themselves. The latter tend to transplant academic concepts from foreign scholarship for the sake of becoming part of current international debates rather than speaking to the different racial minorities themselves and detecting their engagements, forms of presence and needs in the local context. The

paper will aim at interpreting this phenomenon of contemporary critical theorists' attempts to extractivise their own competitive victimhood positions and its contradictory manifestations in the scholarship on and from the postsocialist region. Lacking any detectable effects or motivation to build solidarity with any other type of minority or subjugation, it therefore appears as double negation that undermines itself.

## SESSION 12: RETHINKING MIGRATIONS IN/OUT SOUTH EAST EUROPE

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### **Migration Out of Necessity or Sufficiency: A Case Study of Circular Migrants from Serbia**

The concept of circular migration, much like the broader concept of migration itself, is highly diverse in its content and lacks a single, universally accepted definition. Scholars emphasize various facets, often linking it to temporary, seasonal, or return migration. While circular migration is not new in academic discussions, it has recently gained attention among policymakers, who now see it as a long-awaited solution to demographic and economic challenges. In political and public discourse, circular migration is often framed through the developmental lenses of a “triple win” model: individuals gain personal and professional opportunities; developed countries address labor shortages; and developing nations benefit from exporting surplus labor and strengthening global competitiveness through returning citizens. This promising narrative has also reached Serbia. In this context, we explored key questions: Who are Serbia’s circular migrants, and do they migrate out of opportunity or necessity? To explore these questions, qualitative research was conducted with circular migrants from three medium-sized Serbian cities — Čačak, Užice, and Smederevo — as part of the Population Development Facility, a joint initiative by the UNDP and the Ministry for Family Welfare and Demography. The study aims to shed light on the motivations behind their decisions to leave and return, as well as their circular migration practices. The concept of circular migration employed in this research focuses on two key dimensions: circular migrants are defined as individuals who work abroad temporarily or permanently, but return to Serbia regularly to reside for certain periods. The research results indicate that, while the benefits of circular migration for participants are undisputed, the group is polarized in terms of their motives, patterns of movement, and practices abroad. Moreover, many circular migrants face various forms of exploitation, which often go unnoticed by proponents of the triple-win narrative.

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## **Immigration between Needs and Fears – Attitudes of Serbian Citizens toward Immigrants**

This paper aims to examine the attitudes of the Serbian population toward immigration in the context of depopulation and labor shortages, which are becoming more significant problems. Depopulation in Serbia, as well as throughout Europe, represents one of the most pressing problems of contemporary society. According to the latest census in 2022, Serbia has entered the final stage of population aging, which, along with low fertility rates observed since 1970, brings about many social issues. Additionally, there is a noticeable rate of emigration of young, working-age people, which affects the narrowing of this group, which is crucial for the revitalization of society and the population. The problem arising from this unfavorable population trend, aside from the issue of its renewal, is the lack of workforce. This first became evident in manual labor jobs and those in lower social positions, and now there is an increasing number of foreign nationals occupying such roles in Serbia. It is expected that similar trends will emerge in all sectors of employment. Developed countries in Western Europe and the United States have responded to depopulation and the threat of labor shortages by developing migration policies that encourage immigration, primarily from countries that form the geopolitical semi-periphery. This raises the question of the justification and feasibility of such policies in Serbia. Aside from various other challenges, such as the attractiveness of Serbia to foreigners, there is also the question of the readiness of the Serbian population to integrate foreigners. Encouraged by this, we will analyze several dimensions of attitudes towards migrants, such as feelings of the economic and symbolic threat posed by immigrants, and willingness to allow different types of immigrants into the country, preferred criteria for accepting migrants. For this purpose, we will use data from the 9th, 10th, and 11th rounds of the European Social Survey.

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## **Diasporas as Actors in Peace Processes and Post-Conflict State Reconstruction in South East Europe**

This study explores the role of diasporas as active participants in peace processes and post-conflict state reconstruction in Southeast Europe. The central research question investigates how diaspora communities contribute to rebuilding societies and fostering reconciliation in post-conflict contexts, particularly in Southeast Europe – region marked by complex ethnic and political challenges. The methodology combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches. It includes in-depth interviews with key diaspora representatives involved in peacebuilding, as well as case studies from the region. The research also draws on both historical and contemporary data to assess the evolving role of diasporas in mediating conflicts and supporting state reconstruction. Preliminary findings suggest that diasporas play a critical role in providing financial and logistical support and promoting political change, cultural exchange, and influencing public policy in host countries and countries of origin. In the context of Poland, the Polish diaspora in Southeast Europe, particularly in countries like Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina was actively engaged in peacebuilding efforts, humanitarian aid, and fostering intercultural dialogue. Examples include the activities of Polish NGOs and communities, which are involved in humanitarian efforts, especially in conflict-affected areas.

The study highlights the intersection of migration, national identity, and state-building processes, emphasizing the multi-faceted contributions of diasporas in peacebuilding and stability. This research offers a perspective on how diasporas can act as agents of social solidarity and conflict transformation, extending beyond traditional political frameworks and providing new insights into post-conflict reconstruction in Southeast Europe.

## SESSION 13: GENDER AND IDENTITY IN CONTEXT

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## **Should We Ghost Goffman?**

### **Self-Presentation on Instagram**

### **among High School and University Students**

The primary goal of the research is to better understand how our respondents wish to present themselves on the social media platform – Instagram. We used content analysis as the method. A purposive sample consisting of 100 university and high school students was selected. Our study focused on their Instagram accounts, specifically their posts on this social media website. The database was created during 2024 and 2025. Based on the collected empirical data, several questions arise. Is Goffman's sociological theory still relevant in the contemporary context of social media? If so, in what way? What are the limitations of this theory, and what is its potential reach and impact when analysing social media content? Lastly, how can Goffman's theory be applied outside of 'face-to-face' interactions?



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**Refiguring Belonging:  
Aesthetic Practices and Identity**

This paper investigates how beauty practices function as pathways to aesthetic European citizenship in Kosovo, a state aspiring to European Union membership. Since declaring independence in 2008, Kosovo has pursued a Europeanisation agenda focused on cultivating neoliberal values among its citizens. In this context, women's engagement with beauty practices, including cosmetic surgery, represents a significant "work of refiguration" aimed at embodying notions of 'Europeanness' and 'modernity'. Using qualitative interviews and ethnographic observations, this paper examines how these aesthetic choices transcend personal expression to become a means of negotiating belonging within a socio-political framework that links bodily aesthetics to ideals of neoliberal citizenship. By exploring the intersection of gender, identity, and state-driven transformations, the paper highlights how the female body serves as a site for the reconfiguration of identities within broader Europeanisation processes.

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## **Gender Disinformation and the Role of Macedonian Media in Perpetuating Patriarchal Norms**

This paper explores the role of online media in perpetuating gender disinformation in North Macedonia, where traditional patriarchal norms significantly influence public attitudes and social structures. Gender disinformation, characterized by false or misleading narratives targeting women, reinforces harmful stereotypes, contributes to the normalization of gender-based violence and undermines efforts toward gender equality. The rise of the anti-gender movement in the country and across South-East Europe has further intensified these issues, shaping public opinion and leading to the withdrawal of key policies advancing gender equality. While the rise of the anti-gender movement has amplified these issues in recent years, they represent a continuation of older divisions rooted in patriarchal traditions present in the region.

Focusing on the intersection of media practices and the anti-gender movement, this paper examines how Macedonian online media use sensationalist reporting, lack of critical investigation and unverified sources to spread or even create disinformation. These narratives disproportionately target women in politics and activism, eroding their credibility and reinforcing systemic inequalities. The paper analyzes how such practices foster cultural norms that normalize gender-based violence and perpetuate patriarchal values.

Using qualitative content analysis of both original media content and published analyses of media reporting, the paper identifies patterns in Macedonian media that sustain these harmful dynamics. The findings highlight the urgent need for gender-sensitive reporting, enhanced journalistic standards and accountability mechanisms to counteract the spread of disinformation and its social impact. The paper will offer a critical lens for understanding the interplay between media, disinformation and patriarchal norms in North Macedonia and (probably) the broader South-East European context.

## **SESSION 14: GENDER AND LABOUR IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE**

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## **Invisible Household Labour and Digital Solutions: Gender Divisions in Mental Labour and the Role of Artificial Intelligence**

In Croatia, the “mental labour” of family obligations and household management – a largely invisible cognitive and emotional effort involving anticipating needs, organizing schedules, and ensuring tasks are completed – falls disproportionately on women. Rooted in traditional gender roles, this unequal burden perpetuates socio-economic inequalities and cultural norms. This presentation explores how innovative digital technologies, especially those powered by artificial intelligence (AI) could reduce mental labour of women and mitigate these persistent gender inequalities.

Tools such as ChatGTP, virtual assistants and predictive planning applications can transform household management by sharing the mental labour more equitably among household members, reducing the reliance on women and fostering greater collaboration. However, AI tools often reflect and amplify existing patriarchal structures, risking reinforcement of stereotypes and inequalities. This raises crucial questions about whether these technologies will alleviate or exacerbate the unequal burden of domestic labour.

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining interviews with AI experts, an online survey, and a qualitative study of employed mothers' use of AI-based tools in everyday life. It explores perceptions and experiences with digital and AI technologies in household management, identifying patterns of adoption, perceived usefulness, and barriers to integration. The research addresses key questions: Can AI tools reduce the burden of mental labour for women, or do they reinforce existing inequalities? How do socio-economic and cultural contexts in Croatia shape the adoption and impact of these tools, particularly for employed mothers?

By situating its analysis within broader discussions on gender and technology, this research examines the dual potential of AI to disrupt or reinforce gendered divisions in household management. It highlights the transformative role these technologies could play in advancing gender equity while critically analysing how structural socio-economic inequalities and cultural norms influence their accessibility and efficacy.

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## **Corporate Social Responsibility in the Republic of Serbia: Potentials for Reducing the Gender Dimension of Precarious Work**

The last decades have been marked by social and economic trends that have had a dual impact on the position of women in the labor market. On one hand, the employment rate of women has increased, while on the other hand, women in contemporary societies face multiple burdens—balancing work in the formal economy with fulfilling caregiving roles and performing unpaid labor within the family sphere. Globalization and the accompanying labor market flexibilization have led to the emergence of new social risks, some of which, such as balancing work and parenting, disproportionately affect the rise of precarious forms of work among women compared to men. These include temporary and occasional work, fixed-term contracts, part-time work, work in the informal economy, and similar arrangements.

Ensuring decent work, flexible working arrangements, inclusive employment policies, educational and professional empowerment programs for women, parental support programs, and similar measures represent key steps that economic entities, particularly businesses, can take to advance the social security and well-being of women in the labor market. In line with the above, this paper aims to address the research question: How can the private sector contribute to addressing the precarious working conditions of women, particularly in the context of balancing work

and parenting? Therefore, the focus of this paper is the gender dimension of precarious work in the Republic of Serbia, with objectives that include: describing and analyzing the characteristics of women's precarious work, examining the impact of precarious working conditions on women's social security, and exploring opportunities to improve women's working conditions through corporate social responsibility practices within the national context.

The methodology is based on content analysis of relevant documents, including previous research, policy and legal documents, statistical and other reports related to the subject matter. The findings of this research indicate that precarious work among women is present in all dimensions of labor market insecurity in the Republic of Serbia. Furthermore, there is pronounced gender inequality in the labor market, which affects the provision of women's social security throughout their life course in all relevant areas of social security. The findings further highlight the need for deeper research on this issue, amendments to the regulatory framework, fostering a partnership between the state and the market, and strengthening the role of the private sector in addressing the gendered dimensions of precarious work.

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## **Women, Work, and Worry: The Gendered Nature of Job Insecurity in Serbia**

Job insecurity has become a significant research focus due to global economic transformations that have reshaped labour relations since the 1970s. While prior studies often linked subjective job insecurity to non-standard employment, its gendered dimensions remain underexplored, particularly in post-socialist contexts. This study examines perceptions of job insecurity among employed men and women in Serbia. Two theoretical frameworks are assessed: the male breadwinner model, which predicts higher job insecurity for men, and the multiple roles model, which assumes no significant gender differences in job insecurity. Additionally, this study explores whether job insecurity is exacerbated for single mothers and examines how being the primary breadwinner in a family impacts perceptions of insecurity. Using data from two waves of European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) (from 2015 and 2024) and applying linear regression models, the findings reveal that women report higher perceived job insecurity than men. This contrasts with earlier research emphasizing men's heightened vulnerability due to their traditional roles as primary breadwinners. Neither framework adequately explains the Serbian context. Instead, the results suggest that women's increased job insecurity is linked to structural labour market inequalities, where women face disproportionately higher risks of unemployment and systemic barriers to stable employment. Additionally, single mothers and primary breadwinners experience amplified subjective job insecurity, further highlighting the intersection of gender and family roles in shaping labour market experiences. Finally, these findings show the insufficiency of dominant theories in capturing the gendered experiences of job insecurity in transitional economies.

## SESSION 15: EDUCATION IN SERBIA

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### **International Education in Serbia: Chances and Challenges**

This article focuses on analyzing the importance of international education as a key factor in societal development, with a special emphasis on the challenges faced by policymakers as well as universities in maximizing the benefits of student mobility. Through historical context, publicly available data, and empirical research, the paper highlights how international education, as a central driver of social and economic progress, remains essential for the ongoing development of nations. The authors point out that countries investing in this phenomenon and encouraging research focused on development are at an advantage on the global stage. According to World Trade Organization data, these countries are leaders in international trade flow, capital and foreign direct investment. These strategies include encouraging student mobility through educational exchanges and attracting students from developing countries. In addition to education, these nations use student mobility as a means to expand social capital, create national ambassadors, lobbyists for national interests, and centers for the exchange of ideas. When it comes to Serbia, this process will be analyzed both in a historical perspective at the national level, and within the broader transformation of global education that entails the Bologna reform and the emphasis on the importance of international student mobility for the Bologna type of education. Serbia is aware of the benefits of attracting foreign students, but faces challenges regarding coordination and implementation of a strategy to engage internationally educated students in the country's projects. The main challenge identified in this text is the lack of a clear strategy and coordination regarding international education, which hinders the full exploitation of these resources. Data from the empirical research supports this thesis. The data we use were collected in the project "International migration of students in the context of Serbia and (re)construction of identity: key issues and elements for public policies".



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## **Correlation between Civic Knowledge and Trust in Institutions: What Does ICCS 2022 Say about Serbia?**

The International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) is the international survey concerning primary school students' understanding of main civic and citizenship concepts, but it also explores their attitudes, values and behaviors toward participation in schools, local community and at national and global levels. Among other attitudes, the study measures trust in civic institutions. Serbia took part in this survey for the first time in 2022. Secondary analysis of data from previous ICCS waves reveals a significant correlation between civic and citizenship knowledge and trust in civic institutions. Furthermore, it has been observed that this correlation varies across countries in terms of its direction. The correlation depends on the social context and it is negative in countries with higher perceived corruption and low scores on indices of government efficiency. Considering that Serbia is characterized as a low-trust society in terms of institutional and interpersonal trust, we aimed to test whether civic and citizenship knowledge is correlated with trust in institutions and if so, to explore which group of countries this correlation falls into. In order to do so we analyzed data from ICCS 2022 for all 25 participating countries. This study examines 14-15 years old primary school students. Results reveal a statistically significant weak correlation. Furthermore, two groups of countries were identified: one with a negative correlation and the other with a positive correlation. The strongest negative correlations were observed in Colombia and Brazil, while the strongest positive correlation is noticed in the Netherlands and Norway. Serbia is among European countries with the strongest negative correlation. It is worth noticing that, based on the same dataset, we found that countries with a negative correlation tend to have lower social capital index and lower Freedom House score of freedom compared to countries with a positive correlation. Based on the analysis, we conclude that correlation between civic and citizenship knowledge and trust in institutions reflects the level of stability and democracy in society, suggesting that Serbia is still far away from fully realizing democratic ideals.

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**Gender, Language and Nation in Serbian Textbooks for Students in Minority Classes**

The research deals with textbooks for higher grades of elementary school for the subject Serbian as a non-native language. It is a compulsory subject for primary and secondary school students who attend classes in one of the minority languages in Serbia. The reform of the curriculum of this subject has changed the concept of learning the state language by introducing two levels of knowledge, and by applying a communicative approach instead of the previously represented grammatical approach. The reform took place gradually, from 2018 to 2021, in the same period when the currently suspended Gender Equality Law, which became known to the general public due to the controversy surrounding gender-sensitive language, was prepared and entered into force. However, the same Law mandates that curricula and textbooks should exclude gender-stereotyped, sexist content, and include content related to gender equality in order to overcome gender stereotypes and prejudices. Starting from this intention of the legislator, this research observes the construction of nation and gender through an intersectional perspective: using feminist critical discourse analysis, it interprets forms, primarily gender (in)sensitivity of language forms, and contents such as the representation and characterization of female and male characters in literary works, their roles and activities in readings that represent everyday situations in textbooks of Serbian as a non-native language. Since they are part of the Serbian society, but not (completely) of the linguistic and national community, students who learn Serbian as a non-native language are subject to a curriculum aimed at introducing them to important aspects of the Serbian language, society and culture. This research serves to explore the gender aspects of the hidden curriculum, that is, the implicit messages about gender patterns and the position of women and men in Serbian society that these textbooks send.



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