

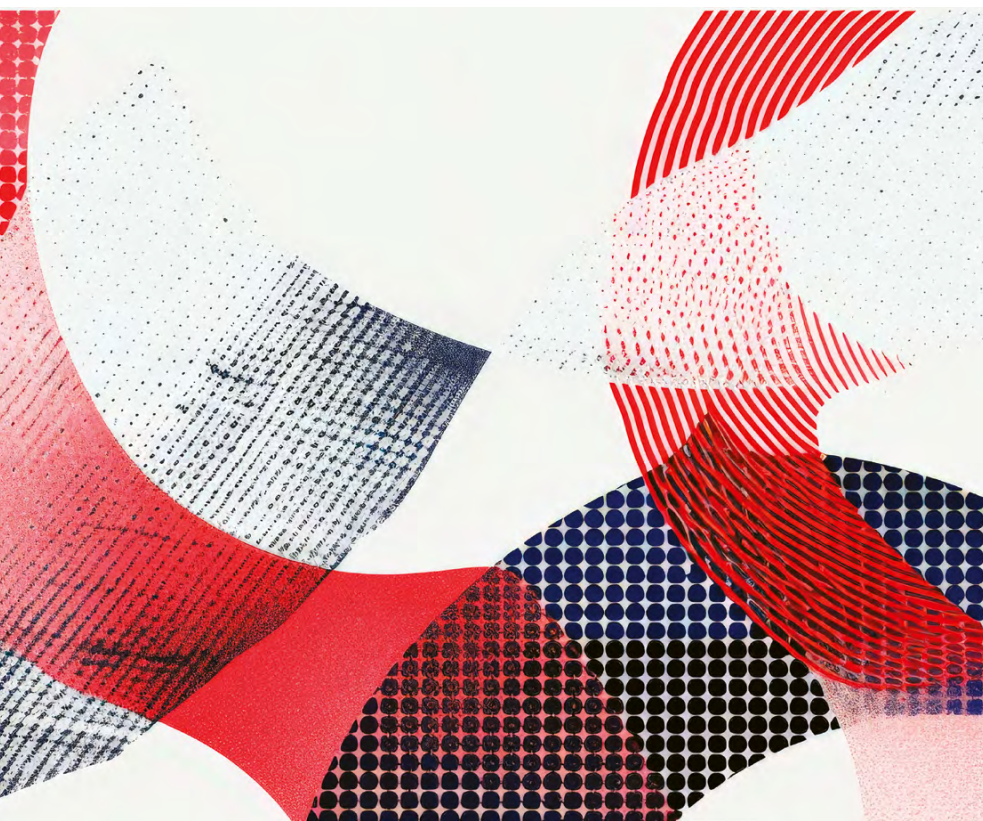
INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

GENDER EQUALITY IN THE POST-YUGOSLAV SPACE:

Challenges, Policies, and Perspectives

MAY 21–22, 2026

Great Hall of the Institute
of Social Sciences



Organized by

Institute of Social Sciences

Supported by

Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation

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INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

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FOREWORD

With great pleasure and gratitude, we present the Book of Abstracts for the International Scientific Conference **“Gender Equality in the Post-Yugoslav Space: Challenges, Policies and Perspectives”**, to be held in Belgrade on May 21 and 22, 2026. In light of current trends and dominant narratives, a crisis of the idea of gender equality is evident, as are social conditions that cause slow progress, undermine achievements, and call into question gender equality as a social goal.

Recognizing that scientists are tasked with understanding social phenomena, explaining their causes, and interpreting them within defined social contexts, as well as identifying the ways and mechanisms for addressing specific social issues based on theoretical knowledge and established scientific methods, the Institute of Social Sciences, an institute of national importance, is organizing a conference to gather researchers from the area of the former Yugoslavia. In this way, we aim to contribute to better understanding of gender equality in the contextual conditions of our countries, and point out the directions for the necessary changes. The conference provides interdisciplinary insight into theoretical and conceptual issues, identifies practical challenges, and defines proposals for improving the situation in the field of gender equality.

Gender equality is a strategic development goal in the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda and in the European Union’s political agenda. In this context, it is a social value that guides efforts to improve social position and raise the quality of life. The conference is a forum for debating concepts and approaches, exchanging examples of both positive and negative practices, and considering ways to address specific issues and remove barriers that impede progress toward greater gender equality.

The different positions of the post-Yugoslav states in relation to the European Union result in uneven developments in this area. Therefore, the conference focuses on a critical examination of the existing policies and practices, the exchange of experiences, and reflection on concrete mechanisms for overcoming structural and other obstacles that still limit the achievement of gender equality.

The conference's comprehensive approach includes four equally important segments, within which the selected abstracts are classified. In the first section, concepts and cognitive frameworks are discussed; in the second, legal and institutional contexts of gender equality; in the third, economic aspects; and in the fourth, issues of gender equality in political life and in the creation of public policies.

Gender equality, as a complex and multidimensional social phenomenon, requires interdisciplinary understanding and analysis, as well as consideration of the specific social contexts in which it is realized or challenged. Progress toward its improvement implies a strong connection between interdisciplinary scientific knowledge and the intersectoral formation of policies capable of responding to contemporary challenges. In this sense, the abstracts presented in this book contribute to deepening insight into the complexity of contemporary processes that shape gender equality in the post-Yugoslav space. Their contribution is reflected in the identification of structural and contextual limitations, as well as in pointing out potential directions for improving policies and practices, which opens up space for further reflection and empirical research on this socially relevant issue.

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THE ROLE OF RURAL TOURISM IN THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Rural tourism is a form of tourism that takes place in rural areas. It is characterized by sustainability, direct contact between tourists and hosts, a smaller scale, local identity, the authenticity of the experience of getting to know the local community, as well as a contribution to the local economy and the diversification of rural household income. The essence of rural tourism is reflected in connecting visitors with everyday activities in the village (staying in rural households, participating in agricultural activities). Encompassing various sub-types (rural, agro, eco, ethno or gastronomic tourism), in addition to its economic role, rural tourism also has an important social dimension in the form of incentives to remain in the countryside, especially for women, through their increasing participation in the development of local entrepreneurship and decision-making. In this context, rural tourism represents an important instrument of sustainable local development and social inclusion, as well as a mechanism for the economic empowerment of women in rural areas. In the context of gender inequalities, particularly pronounced in rural areas, women are faced with limited access to resources, the labour market and the decision-making process. This paper explores how rural tourism can contribute to overcoming structural barriers by improving the position of women in rural areas, valorising the visibility of their work in the form of economic empowerment through the development of local entrepreneurship. Since the economic empowerment of women in rural areas does not exclusively involve increasing their income, but also expanding their influence in decision-making processes, the paper seeks to offer insight, through an interdisciplinary approach, into the potential of rural tourism as a lever for achieving gender equality, as well as to highlight the challenges arising from the traditional roles, insufficient institutional support and limitations that accompany this process.

Keywords: Rural tourism, economy, empowerment, women

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SURVIVAL AND MARGINALIZATION: THE IMPACT OF UNREGISTERED WORK IN THE CONDITIONS OF APPARENT TEMPORALITY ON MIGRANT WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES AFTER THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA***

This study explores the complex dynamics of women's migration in and within the post-Yugoslav space, with a particular focus on temporary labour migrants and forced migrants, especially those working in private households (e.g., care and cleaning) and the unregistered work that accompanies this phenomenon. In the context of violent conflicts of the 1990s, as well as enormous political and economic challenges, many women became forced migrants or emigrated as a survival strategy in the conditions of high unemployment and low wages.

In the cases of two countries – Slovenia and Serbia – the research analyses how these women have used agency and navigated different socio-economic and legal contexts, marked by limited access to social and economic rights and/or precarious employment. By analysing the data from empirical interviews with earlier forced migrants from ex-Yugoslav countries in Slovenia and Serbia, as well as reviewing the policy, significant challenges, such as legal invisibility, deskilling, exploitation, and the overlapping of gender and migration policies have been identified. Findings show that the temporary and often unregistered nature of work significantly increases vulnerability, limits access to social protection, and perpetuates gender inequality. Conversely, when it comes to men, who traditionally work in sectors where unregistered work is more visible (e.g., construction), the loss of the ability to economically

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*** This paper is the result of collaboration among the authors within COST Action CA21143 *Transnational Family Dynamics in Europe (TraFaDy)*. and is as part of the 2026 Research program of the Institute of Social Sciences, which is supported by the Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation.

provide for their families can also lead to significant distress and increased vulnerability.

The research additionally examines the impact of these conditions on personal, family, and professional aspects of life. It also indicates that the attitude of migrant women towards irregular work migration as a “chosen” temporary form of vulnerability has influenced the prolongation of the cycle of dependence and marginalization. The paper also proposes recommendations for improving their rights and social integration. The results highlight the need for policies that address the specific needs of these women and promote a more inclusive approach to gender equality in post-Yugoslav societies.

Keywords: Women, migration, undeclared work, temporariness, Slovenia, Serbia



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