

## **ETHICS OF INCLUSION:**

### **The role of social work in social transformation and innovation**

**Dubrovnik 21<sup>st</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

**School of Social Work Theory and Practice, Inter-university centre, Dubrovnik**

#### *A challenge - come to Dubrovnik*

After 25 years of the existence of Social Work at the Inter University centre, what brings us together? A conference of scholars, activists, advocates, students, practitioners and users of social work to consider and construct new pathways for the development of social work. The conference will be programmatic, comparative, critical and empowering. It will aim to set out a new manifesto for social work - a manifesto which will outline how social work can meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The last decade can be seen as a prelude to yet another milestone of social work. The financial, economic and social crisis has deeply transformed the very base of social work. The escalation of the neo-liberal regime, practices of austerity, increasing bureaucratisation and the retrenchment of state spending on welfare provision present challenges to the role, mission and calling of social work. The conference seeks to explore how social workers could act as pioneers of new forms of solidarity rather than maintaining the status quo. Or even worse, to become the watchdogs of the wealthy.

Besides the threat of growing exclusion, which now not only impacts the 'classically' marginalised but also affects mainstream groups including parts of the middle class, there are a range of other challenges. For example, challenges associated with; an ageing society; climate change; natural disasters; political and military conflicts all of which require us to consider new approaches to enacting social work practices. Deinstitutionalisation, increasing awareness of the necessity of inclusion of people with disabilities, and better protection of children's rights have already enabled us to transcend old ways of working, and of control, in some areas. Social work has become a global profession entering into new cultures and social relations.

A great social transformation process is definitely being witnessed. It is calling social work to contribute to that not for the worse but for the better. Or at least to do no harm. Social work methods were conceived in the era of abundance, in the heyday of the Welfare State, now the crisis and the new roles of social work make them inefficient. Innovations are needed to enable people to live together, to enrich each other, and to express their desires and channel them in the interests of the common good. Innovations of conviviality and coexistence. Innovations that can transverse the various plateaux of human existence.

The IUC School offers a site for dialogues in praxis at an international level to explore the new challenges and roles social work will play in addressing these issues.

**If survival depends on democracy the imperative of non-exclusion has to reign.  
There is no democracy if people are excluded. Social work is the banner of this imperative.**

**We are coming together to construct social work as:**

**A SCIENCE OF DOING  
A PROFESSION OF SOLIDARITY  
AND**

**AN ART OF REMAINING HUMAN IN INHUMAN CONDITIONS**

The conference will be:

- **PROGRAMMATIC** - it will bring people together to construct an ambitious, and proactive rather than reactive, programme for the development of social work for the coming decades.
- **COMPARATIVE** - we will compare the experiences, trends, methods and theories in several countries and regions in order to learn from each other, to make trans-border flows possible, but also to construct commonalities of social work for the future.
- **CRITICAL** - we can inform our action and work only by critical investigation of the state of the art, of the societal, historical, cultural, political and economic determinants of our work. The conference will provide an opportunity to think critically about the future direction and shape of social work internationally.
- **EMPOWERING** - in order to do what we want to do, for the transformation and innovations we want to take place; to fight exclusion – we need power, possibly a different kind of power to the that in which we had in the past – we need to explore possible coalitions and make the conference not only an empowering event but for the future of the school, a generator of the power to remain human.

To imagine and shape social work future - we will not employ the classic conference format - it will be organised along quite different lines. We do not need a fair, an exhibition of what one has been done in the past - the conference will NOT BE REPORTING ON THE PAST - it will be SHAPING THE FUTURE. Instead of the usual presentations and papers we have to come together to consider how social work practices should be repositioned to meet both the challenges, and the opportunities, of the 21st century. Instead of recounts on the monstrosities of the neo-liberal regime, the conference aims to act as a space to reform our ideas and pronounce actions that will bring about better, fairer and ethical action oriented social work. The conference will be made up of a series of, fully participative, interactive and lively workshops, assemblies and celebrations. These will facilitate Dialogue in Praxis which will generate an ambitious manifesto for 21st century social work (with good fun and comradery).

The Directors of the School will prepare the propositions, and the participants will be expected to submit a personal statement which contains their reflections on the state of art of social work in their particular area. This should provide a short succinct personal reflection on the challenges and opportunities in their particular field or area of interest. These will be the basis of the discussions in the plenary panels, courses and thematic workshops and round up at the assemblies every day.

Each of the three days will be marked by one of the key central themes of the conference.

**CRISIS**  
**ETHICS**  
**MOVEMENTS AND INNOVATION**

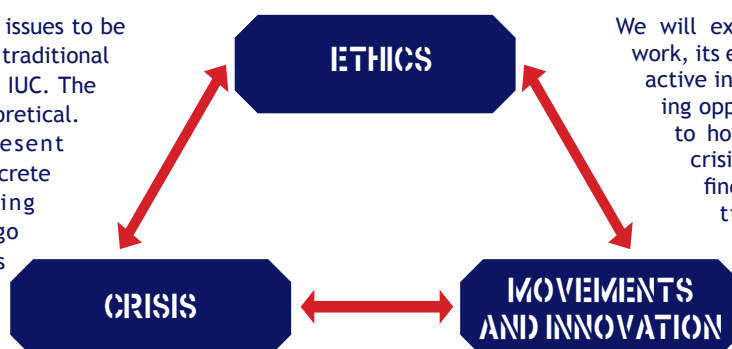
A panel of distinguished panellists will address each topic at the beginning of the day. The themes will then be picked up through the usual courses (in the morning) and special issues pertaining to the themes will be considered in the afternoon.

## Structure of the conference (basic timetable)

Time	Pre-conference events	Day 1 Tuesday Crisis	Day 2 Wednesday Ethics	Day 3 Thursday Movements & Innovation	Post conference events
Morning	Pre-conference satellite events - workshop courses, meetings (please suggest!) Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> -Monday 21 <sup>st</sup>	Plenary panel	Plenary panel	Plenary panel	Friday: Final assembly on Future of the school and Funding bids
		Course workshops	Course workshops	Course workshops	
Afternoon	Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> Welcome assembly	Lunch & posters	Lunch & posters	Lunch & posters	Post-conference satellite events - workshop courses, meetings (please suggest!) Friday 25 <sup>th</sup> -Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> .
		Challenges and innovation Thematic workshops	Challenges and innovation Thematic workshops	Challenges and innovation Thematic workshops	
		Assembly	Assembly	Assembly	

## Three main topics will be discussed

In the table we tried to list the issues to be discussed along the lines of the traditional topics of social work courses at IUC. The discussion will be not only theoretical. You are also invited to present examples of good practices, concrete ideas of how to do something new, and how to change and go forward. Prepared contributions are invited and we count on the spot ideas, debates and reflexions.



We will explore how the crisis affects social work, its ethics and what social movements are active in challenging the crisis and in exploiting opportunities. We will seek the answers to how social work ethics can resist the crisis or even ameliorate it. We will try to find a new mandate for social work in times of crisis that is embedded in movements and can be used for various social innovations. We will explore how the new mandate can provide an ethical stronghold for social work in crises.

# Keywords for the topics in the courses (morning sessions)

Course	Crisis - Tuesday	Ethics - Wednesday	Movements & Innovation - Thursday
<b>Theories and Methods</b>	<p>Unsuitable knowledge, role of watchdog. Retreat into counselling, bureaucracy and 'workshops' - dominance of sociological and psychological theories</p> <p>Lack of participation of users and dominance of professional discourses ; continuation of the notion that 'professionals know best'</p> <p>Criminalisation of social workers.</p>	<p>Freedom vs. security - dignity of humanity</p> <p>Ethics of direct social work - taking side of the weak.</p> <p>Action, doing. Producing a better life. Assuring access to resources. Reappropriation.</p> <p>Expecting giving from service users too.</p>	<p>Reappropriation of social work, mandate within the movements and communities.</p> <p>Construction of the taxonomy and syntax of social work and care.</p> <p>Social work assemblies and cooperatives.</p> <p>Programme of bailing out the people. Conserving social rights, defending human dignity, common welfare - reclaiming community.</p>
<b>Social Policy</b>	<p>The problems of hegemonic neo-liberal economic thought. The social impacts of austerity and, in particular, its translation in the Southern European semi-periphery. The crisis of the European social model, social reproduction and care.</p>	<p>Solidarities in the fight for social justice across time and space.</p> <p>The need for a more humane ethics of care. Rights-based approaches in an age of flexibility.</p> <p>Translation, post-coloniality and new ethico-political projects.</p>	<p>Protests, plenums and social justice. Transnational movements against austerity.</p> <p>Beyond social innovation. New wave of post-NGO social movements in South East Europe and their connections to 'radical' social work. Users movements, autonomy and a politics of intersectionality</p>
<b>Spirituality</b>	<p>Individualism, westernisation and globalisation corrode connections between people.</p> <p>Technological advancement over human relationships - simplistic paradigm of cause and effect binary thinking.</p> <p>Arrogance to numerous indigenous and inclusive paradigms - depleting the planet, world becoming soulless.</p>	<p>Spirit of social work in action.</p> <p>Ecofeminism: oppression of women, indigenous nations, wildlife, erosion of resources - result of neoliberal regimes - social work becoming totalitarian control not tool of social change.</p> <p>Various fundamentalisms disable social work - appreciation of difference signposts for a new paradigm of new community based, appreciative transcultural planetary citizenship.</p>	<p>Inquiry approach - hope, participation - creation of new humanity - beyond race, nationality, class and gender - uniqueness of cultures, beliefs, orientations, contexts.</p> <p>Importance of indigenous knowledge, co-creating development of safe local sustainable communities.</p>
<b>Community</b>	<p>Decay of traditional communities, new cross-boundary communities.</p> <p>Social work and development.</p> <p>Community work - victim of managerialism.</p> <p>Environmental degradation, disasters, people's resilience. Limited resources for engagement in crisis, lost trust.</p>	<p>Individualistic vs. collective ethics. Contradictions of community based care and community development.</p> <p>Empowerment, justice, and autonomy - community resources.</p> <p>Community ethics vs. regulatory discipline.</p> <p>Control vs. liberation. Ownership of common goods - influence over the future.</p>	<p>Community as a common - right to be included.</p> <p>Alliances with communities, movements.</p> <p>Connecting social work and everyday life.</p> <p>New communities and communitarian identity: self-sustaining, grass rooted, entrepreneurial - eco-communities, escape attempts, independent life in the community.</p> <p>Collective responsibility, respect for diversity of life - sublime community.</p>
<b>Old age</b>	<p>Myths and realities of demographic changes.</p> <p>Old age low incomes and poverty.</p> <p>Prolonged work age.</p> <p>Abuse and stigma of being old.</p> <p>Paternalism of institutional care; care as burden for family caregivers.</p>	<p>Value of life. Death and finality.</p> <p>New forms of intergenerational solidarity. New pillar of social security.</p> <p>Creativity of the old.</p> <p>Hidden euthanasia - lack of community care.</p> <p>Technological control; exclusion from everyday life; lack of control over life</p>	<p>Old age activism.</p> <p>Intergenerational cooperation.</p> <p>Long-term care.</p> <p>Old age as heritage.</p> <p>Cooperatives of long-term care; users' research, ICT for old age.</p>
<b>Children</b>	<p>Children in poverty.</p> <p>Children in labour.</p> <p>Children at war.</p> <p>Lack of education - gender issues (girls).</p> <p>'The lost generation' - young people without education and future prospects.</p> <p>Immigrant children and young asylum seekers - safety, exclusion, inclusion.</p>	<p>Safeguarding children's rights.</p> <p>Children's freedom of expression vs. parental access to information (confidentiality).</p> <p>Loyalty conflicts - children and parents.</p> <p>Tension between participation and protection.</p>	<p>Implementation of the UN Convention of Children's Rights in national legislation.</p> <p>Securing children's participation.</p> <p>Children's ombudsman.</p> <p>Organisations to work for the best interests of the child.</p> <p>Protection, care and education of children in war and other crises.</p>
<b>Children in Conflict with the Law</b>	<p>Impact of austerity - retrenchment of universal services</p> <p>Cost of criminal justice - exploring legitimacy and effectiveness of stigmatising, costly interventions - potential for child-friendly, diversionary, positive approaches.</p> <p>Private providers of rehabilitative services (voluntary sector, community groups vs. large multinational companies).</p>	<p>Ensuring children's voices are foregrounded. Participatory, partisan approaches that evidence base of what really works.</p> <p>Practitioners, academics, users working together to champion an ethical approach in resolving knotted issue of young people and risk.</p> <p>Risk, needs and rights.</p> <p>Criminal responsibility of children (age, nature and response)</p>	<p>Participatory, engaging approaches, central role of users in decisions regarding rehabilitation and futures. Also for 'involuntary' users (court orders).</p> <p>'Children first' rights movements.</p> <p>Policy and practice transfer between different jurisdictions, internationally.</p> <p>Synergies of theory, research and movements - Dialogues in praxis to transform youth justice?</p> <p>Restorative and transformative justice.</p> <p>Community youth justice - women and justice.</p>
<b>Precariousness</b>	<p>Loss of social guarantees, 'stable instability' (the individual's experience of social and cultural uncertainty), marginalisation, exclusion and disaffiliation of social groups, 'social vulnerability'...</p>	<p>Inclusive Ethics and Ethics of the Other as counter-strategies to neoliberal imperatives to be efficient.</p> <p>Social Sustainability and social consciousness as a societal and ethical task.</p>	<p>The tasks of a modern welfare state in the age of globalisation.</p> <p>Participation and empowerment-strategies to foster social cohesion and sustainability.</p>
<b>Deinstitutionalisation</b>	<p>Internationally accepted policy, but still millions of people interned.</p> <p>Long-term care insurance and services.</p> <p>Institutionalised regimes in community services or institutions without walls.</p>	<p>Imperative of non-exclusion.No closure and no restraint.</p> <p>Right to live in the community.</p> <p>'Mental' and 'legal' capacity', guardianship and free will.</p> <p>Intricacies of the right to be mad, supported in one's recovery journey.</p> <p>Ethics and aesthetics of old age, disability, deviance.</p> <p>Issues of criminal responsibility and insanity.</p> <p>Individual and collective responsibility.</p>	<p>Production of new solidarity.</p> <p>Care not only 'in the community' - also 'by the community'.</p> <p>Seamless, capillary services.</p> <p>Direct &amp; community funding.</p> <p>Peer support workers.</p>

## Thematic workshops (afternoon sessions)

The afternoon sessions will follow on from the day's theme. However, they will focus on one, specialised or otherwise circumscribed topic. These afternoon themes will be proposed and designed by the participants in advance - if you have an idea for consideration, send a proposal for a workshop (for abstract details see below). The topics listed in the table below are just to provide an illustration and will not necessarily be on the programme.

Crisis	Ethics	Movements & Innovation
Catastrophes, Political and military conflict, Financial and economic crisis, Practices of Austerity, Changing role of the welfare state ....suggest and propose your topic	Guardianship and free will, Participatory working and democracy, Bureaucratisation, Old and new ethical dilemmas ....suggest and propose your topic	Supporting new forms of solidarity, Objectification and self-actualisation, Invented and recreated communities, Innovations and methods ....suggest and propose your topic

## Assemblies

At the end of each day there will be an assembly; plenary sessions where participants will report and reflect on the previous proceedings, but also give ideas for the following sessions, for the future of the Dubrovnik School, and social work in general. There will also be a welcome assembly on Monday evening.

## Satellite events

If there is substantial interest, an option to organise workshops as pre- and post-conference satellite events by individual courses and interested participants will be available! These can be workshops, courses, seminars, interest group meetings, working groups etc. They will take place either before the conference - from Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September to Monday 21<sup>st</sup> - or after the conference from Friday 25<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 27<sup>th</sup>.

## APPLICATIONS

You can find the [application forms on the web page of IUC](http://www.iuc.hr/conference-details.php?id=242):

<http://www.iuc.hr/conference-details.php?id=242>

You will need to submit the [personal statement](#) downloaded from the site.

If you would like to [contribute to a session](#), [propose a thematic workshop](#) or a [satellite event](#) you need to download the appropriate forms from the IUC web page of the conference <http://www.iuc.hr/conference-details.php?id=242>

Please, send them AS ATTACHED DOCUMENTS TO [iuc@iuc.hr](mailto:iuc@iuc.hr) after you fill out the application form.



Conference fee is 75 euros, 50 euros for students - payable to the IUC at the time of the conference.  
Persons with no substantial income free.

## INFORMATION

For further information, please, consult the web pages:

<http://dialogueinpraxis.fsd.uni-lj.si/>

<http://www.iuc.hr/>

For accommodation, applications and technical information write to the IUC

[iuc@iuc.hr](mailto:iuc@iuc.hr)

Or contact for the conference contents and organisation:

Vito Flaker: [vito.flaker@fsd.uni-lj.si](mailto:vito.flaker@fsd.uni-lj.si)

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# WRITTEN CONTRIBUTIONS AND MATERIALS

To achieve *dialogue in praxis* we will solicit papers from the participants in advance. We will prepare *State of the art and future direction papers* for the topics otherwise covered by IUC courses and publish them on the web page of the Dialogue in Praxis

(<http://dialogueinpraxis.fsd.uni-lj.si/>)

and IUC (<http://www.iuc.hr>).

All the participants will be asked to submit *personal statements* on the state of the art and future of social work. Other contributions are also possible within morning courses, and posters. Afternoon sessions will be suggested by the participants and be advertised in advance.



## General outline of the contributions

The contributions will have to answer, at different lengths regarding their nature, the following issues:

- **STATE OF ART** - portraying the basic outline of social work (in the particular area) - with a focus on policy and practice developments in the field
- **CONTRADICTIONS AND CHALLENGES** - summary of contradictions in the field and some of the key challenges which social work in this area face
- **PROGRAMME FOR THE FUTURE** - ideas, schemes and innovations (real or potential) or sites for innovation as we look to the future.

**Each participant is expected to provide at least a short personal statement along these lines.**

**Contributions deadline and planned web publishing**

**25<sup>th</sup> May is the deadline for all abstracts!**

We will process the abstracts and contributions and publish them on the Dialogue in Praxis web page when they are fit for publishing - *State of the art and future direction papers mainly* in May, other materials during June and July. Attempts to analyse and synthesise the abstracts will be made and published before the conference. We will make all materials available as a printed publication at the conference.



## Personal statements

Every participant will hand in with their application his or her *personal statement* regarding what he or she considers important for the state of being and future of social work. In a short form abstract we ask you to answer the above questions - on the state of art, contradictions and future directions of social work. Statements can relate to social work in general or on the specific area or topic that you are particularly interested or working at. Be creative and critical!

The idea is that every participant will have an opportunity to express his or her major concerns, ideas and proposals for action. At the same time this will allow everybody to have an overview of what others are thinking and proposing. This will enable the workshops to start in a dialogical and creative way. Personal statements will be reviewed and published in advance.



## Abstracts

Apart from the required personal statements, participants who want to, are invited to submit abstracts of their individual contributions to the morning courses, either posters that will be exhibited in the halls of the venue and/or proposals for the afternoon thematic workshops. These abstracts will be reviewed by the course directors and if in line with the planned workshops and accepted, the participants will be given the opportunity to present them in the proceedings.



## Proposals for thematic workshops

For the afternoon thematic workshops participants can propose events, which they will offer and organise. The proposed workshops have to have a title and in an abstract form (max. 750 words) provide the idea, topic, summary and mode of the workshop. The workshops need to be planned around the basic topics of social work future and programmes.



## Proposals for satellite events

There is a space and time to hold pre- or post-conference events. These can take place from Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September to Monday 21<sup>st</sup> or from Friday 25<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 27<sup>th</sup>. They can take any form or have any purpose - scientific meetings, course gatherings, workshops or any other sort of activity. Interested parties have to submit proposals expressing interest, duration and dates of the event, possible participants and the purpose and content of the gathering.

## Conference organisers

Vito Flaker, University of Ljubljana; Steve Case, University of Swansea; Vera Grebenc, University of Ljubljana; Juha Erkki Antero Hämäläinen, University of Eastern Finland; David Kergel, University of Oldenburg; Jana Mali, University of Ljubljana; Ksenija Napan, Massey University, New Zealand; Eileen Oaks, Massey University, New Zealand; Christine Rehkla, University of Erfurt; Paul Stubbs, Institute of Economics, Zagreb; Torill Tjelflaat, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU); Joe Yates, Liverpool John Moores University; Nino Žganec, University of Zagreb.