



## THE BREAKTHROUGH OF THE SOCIAL Practical Utopias, Wisdom and Radical Transformations - Social work @IUC: Lessons Learned and Future Challenges

Dubrovnik 2 – 6 September 2019

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

### *A challenge - come to Dubrovnik*

The conference will celebrate 30 years of social work courses at the IUC in Dubrovnik.

The aim of the conference is to reassert the role of social work in societal change and to explore political, organisational and ethical issues through the lens of emancipation and social transformation.

To do so participants will revisit historical sources and envisage new pathways, possible roles and responsibilities of social work in order to enrich utopias with practical purpose through forms of wisdom and by reinvigorating our anti-oppressive mandate.

Social work needs to establish strong alternatives that are extremely important in times of rising nationalisms, abrogation of human rights and decaying solidarity. These alternatives should use the tools and stories of social work in order to encourage and enable people to believe that another world is possible and work towards building it together.

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

Civilisation rests on the social - it needs to break through so we can carry on through imminent crises

We are coming together to construct social work as:

THE WISDOM OF DOING  
A CALL FOR SOLIDARITY  
AND  
THE ART OF REMAINING HUMAN IN INHUMAN CONDITIONS



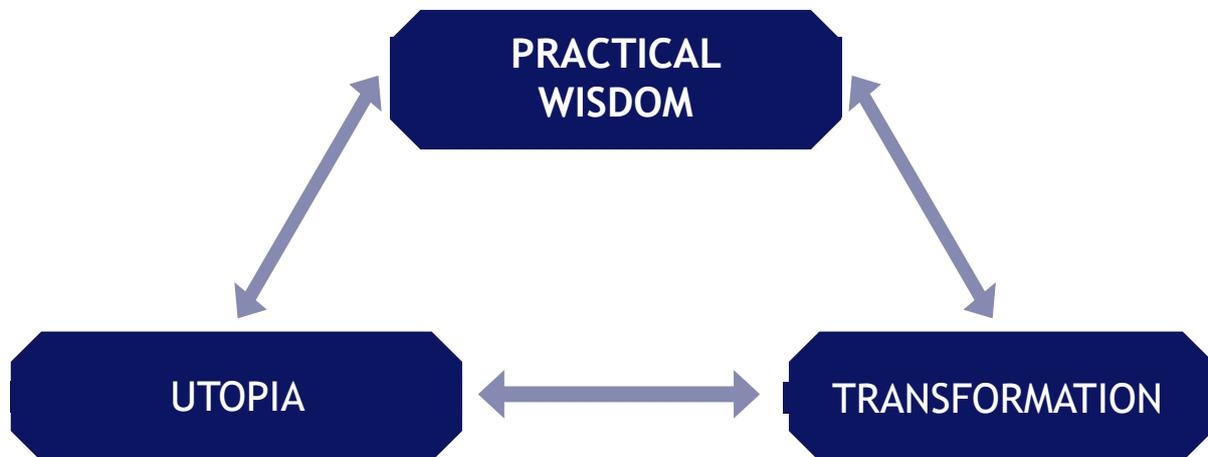
The conference will address the state of the art in: the theory and practice of social work; address new ways of formulating and implementing social policy; examine key challenges in working with children and families; explore new approaches to children in conflict with law, present possibilities for community work and community action; confront issues of old age; and investigate the possibilities for and obstacles to deinstitutionalisation. It will be:

- **PROGRAMMATIC** - bringing people together to construct an ambitious, and proactive rather than reactive, programme for the development of social work in the coming decades.
- **COMPARATIVE** - comparing 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** - informing action through critical investigation of the state of the art, and 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 transformations and innovations we want to take place, and to fight exclusions - we need power, possibly a different kind of power to the power that we had in the past. We need to explore possible coalitions and make the conference not only an empowering event but one that sets the direction for the future of the school, as a generator of the power to remain human.

# MAIN TOPICS

Three main topics will be discussed.

We will explore how radical social transformations affect social work, its ability to visualise its practical utopias and its wisdom to connect the various social forces. We will seek the wisdom needed to steer the transformations socially and build transversal and achievable goals. We will try to articulate the vision of how to employ the social work tools, traditional and employ new ones to engineer new and transformative collaborations across the disciplinary line in the time of change.



Below we list the issues to be discussed along the lines of the topics. 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.

Radical social transformations		
Globalisation, digitalisation, Risk, violence, security, demographic changes Natural and political catastrophes, economic crises, post-Austerity, Authoritarian neoliberalism, inequity, immobility, precarisation Deinstitutionalisation hiccups, social movements, long-term care, rebel cities, trade unions ....suggest and propose your topic	<b>Wisdom of interfaces</b> Local and indigenous knowledge, Ethics, (Un)reason, free will and solidarity; Welfare state, social management, politics, activism, intersectionality and emotions Education, learning in action, health for all, SW in conflict with law, legal and social process ....suggest and propose your topic	<b>Practical Utopias of SW</b> Everyday Utopia, reloading and restrengthening SW tools, users emancipation, Comparative SW, intersectional old age, childhood and youth, family, disability, mental health, Universality of provision, new communities, social media, protection of freedom, Contesting 'proceduralism', 'projectisation', restraint People centred methods ....suggest and propose your topic

One of the 'products' of the conference will be that we will issue the Breakthrough of the Social Manifesto. The keywords above transformed into a text serving as a groundwork for the manifesto may be found at:

<http://dialogueinpraxis.net/>

You are welcome to comment on it in advance!

To imagine and shape social work future 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.***

We have to come together to consider how social work practices should be repositioned to meet both the challenges, and the opportunities, of the 21<sup>st</sup> 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 a transformative, visionary and transversal 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 21<sup>st</sup> century social work (with good fun and comradery).

Each of the three days will be marked by one of the key central themes of the conference. The topics will be introduced by a plenary lecture and a panel at the beginning of the day. The themes will then be picked up through the ensuing parallel sessions (in the morning) and special issues pertaining to the themes will be considered in the afternoon.

## Structure of the conference

Each conference day will begin with a **plenary lecture** introducing the main topic of the day. It will be followed, after a short break, by a panel where panellists will comment on the lecture and add to it. The panel will be an interactive one, with participants being encouraged to take the floor and steer the discussion.

After the first, plenary, part there will be **parallel sessions**. In these sessions, participants (around four per session) will present their papers, resonating with the topic of the day but, of course, going into other directions were appropriate.

In the afternoon, there will be **thematic workshops** on special topics, reflecting the day theme in its special occurrence. The workshops are a more interactive form, which can be staged by an individual participant, or a group introducing related topics. These, however, should be conceived to happen in a lively and interactive manner. Short videos, role plays, and other interactive forms of engagement are strongly encouraged.

The day will finish with an **assembly/plenum**. This will be a thematically open-ended gathering (within reason!!) of all the participants to reflect and report on the day's topic, presentations, panels and workshops allowing for both personal and collective processing of the key messages and the formulation of relevant actions for the future. There will also be a welcome assembly on Monday evening.

## Diagram of timetable

Time	Preparation Day	Day 1 Tuesday <b>Radical Social Transformations</b>	Day 2 Wednesday <b>Wisdom of Social Work Interfaces</b>	Day 3 Thursday <b>Practical Utopia of Social Work</b>	Post conference workshops
9.00 - 9.45		Opening – plenary	plenary: Noemi Lendvai	plenary: Iain Fergusson	Optional side events: workshops, seminars, book launches etc.
9.45 - 10.00	Optional side events: workshops, seminars, book launches etc.	Break	Break	Break	
10.00 - 11.00		Panel	Panel	Panel	
11.00 - 11.15		Break	Break	Break	
11.15 - 12.45		3-4 parallel sessions (based on courses or transversal topics)	3-4 parallel sessions (based on courses or transversal topics)	3-4 parallel sessions (based on courses or transversal topics)	
12.45 - 13.15		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
13.15 - 14.45		3-4 parallel Thematic workshops	3-4 parallel Thematic workshops	3-4 parallel Thematic workshops	
14.45 - 15.00		Break	Break	Break	
15.00 - 16.00		Assembly	Assembly	Assembly	
19.00 - 20.00		Welcome assembly			

## 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.



**1<sup>st</sup> June 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 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.

## Abstracts

Participants are invited to submit abstracts of their contributions to the morning parallel sessions, 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 30<sup>th</sup> August to Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> - or after the conference from Friday 6<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 8<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.



## Information

For further information, please, consult the web pages:

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

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

Or contact for the conference contents and organisation:

[dialogueinpraxis@fsd.uni-lj.si](mailto:dialogueinpraxis@fsd.uni-lj.si)

For accommodation, applications and technical information write to the IUC

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

## Fee

Conference fee is

90 euros,

60 euros for students -

payable to the IUC at the time of the conference.

Persons with no substantial income free.

You can find the application forms and abstract forms on the web page of IUC:

<http://www.iuc.hr/conference-details.php?id=333>

## Conference organisers

### Programme committee

Vito Flaker, University of Ljubljana; Steve Case, Social and Policy Studies Unit, Loughborough University, UK; Vera Grebenc, University of Ljubljana; Birte Heidkamp, University of Oldenburg, Germany, Jana Mali, University of Ljubljana; Ksenija Napan, Massey University, New Zealand; Branka Rešetar, University of Osijek; Linda Rothman, HAN-University, Netherlands, Nina Schiøll Skjefstad, Sør-Trøndelag University College, Trondheim, Norway; Paul Stubbs, Institute of Economics, Zagreb; Ana Štambuk, University of Zagreb, Croatia; Nino Žganec, University of Zagreb.

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