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## THE BREAKTHROUGH OF THE SOCIAL

**Practical Utopias, Wisdom and Radical Transformations – Social Work @ IUC: Lessons Learned and Future Challenges**

*Conference*

*Dubrovnik, 2–6 September 2019*

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

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 chil-

dren 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.

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 where 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 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.

For further information, please, consult the web pages:

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

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