

The Resisting Force of Social Work: Current Reflections in Critical and Historical Perspective (Symposium Programme)

November 7–8 2025

Faculty of Social Work, Topniška ulica 31, Ljubljana, Slovenia

DAY 1: Friday, November 7, 2025

TIME AND LOCATION	PROGRAMME
8.00–9.00 MAIN LOBBY	REGISTRATION Faculty of Social Work, Topniška 31, Ljubljana
9.00–10.00 ROOM 1	WELCOMES Darja Zaviršek , scientific chair Mojca Urek , Dean of the Faculty of Social Work Friedrich Seibel , Prof. Emeritus, University of Applied Science, Koblenz Susanne Maurer , Prof. Emeritus, University of Marburg: Re-Constructing and Re-Imagining Resisting Forces of Social Work
10.00–10.45 ROOM 1	Sarah Banks , Durham University and Kim Strom , University of North Carolina: Social work ethics as a resisting force: A conversation
10.50–11.20 ROOM 3	Group photo in front of the faculty before the coffee break COFFEE BREAK
11.20–13.00 ROOM 1	SESSION 1 Moderator: Mojca Urek Irene Messinger , University of Applied Sciences FH Campus Vienna: Social Work and Resistance: Historical Insights and Lessons from 1930s Vienna Ina Dimitrova , University of Plovdiv, Bulgaria: Psychiatric social work in socialist Bulgaria: a project that never happened Roman Baláž , Masaryk University: Beyond Heroes and Villains: The Hidden Forces Shaping Social Work History

	<p>Sólveig Ólafsdóttir, University of Iceland: “To Build Something Beautiful”: Reassessing the Legacy of Sólheimar in the Era of Deinstitutionalisation</p> <p>Meinrad Haule Lembuka, University of Tanzania: The Evolution of Developmental Social Work in Tanzania on the African Ubuntu Capacity</p>
<p>13.00–14.00</p> <p>ROOM 3</p>	LUNCH
<p>14.00–15.20</p> <p>ROOM 1</p>	<p>SESSION 2</p> <p>Moderator: Ana M. Sobočan</p> <p>Martin J. Gössl, University of Applied Sciences Graz, Academic Peer Counseling: The attempt to improve the educational situation of people with disabilities</p> <p>Branka Rešetar, University of Osijek, Croatia: Family protection in the Croatian legal and social system in the second half of the 20th century</p> <p>Tomasz Kasprzak, University of Silesia in Katowice: Deafblind studies and social work in Poland: past, present and future</p> <p>Oleksandr (Sasha) Kondrashov, Thompson Rivers University's School of Social Work, Canada: Stand with Ukraine: A Global Digital Solidarity Movement - Sustaining Community-Based Advocacy in Diaspora Through Weekly Vigils and Digital Connectivity</p>
<p>16.00–18.30</p> <p>National Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia, Celovška cesta 23, Ljubljana</p>	<p>Moderator: Darja Zaviršek</p> <p>Susan Zimmermann, Central European University, Vienna, Austria: Social work: activism, gendered vocation, profession—introductory remarks</p> <p>Darja Zaviršek: Guided tour of the exhibition SOCIAL WORK: ALWAYS NEEDED AND ALWAYS SIDELINED: Social Work in Socialist Yugoslavia and the Republic of Slovenia 1952–2025</p> <p>Joint discussion</p>
18.30	Joint walk to the restaurant
19.00	DINNER (self-paid): Slovenska hiša Ljubljančanka, Knafljev prehod 2, 1000 Ljubljana

DAY 2: Saturday, November 8, 2025

TIME	PROGRAMME
9.30–11.10 ROOM 1	SESSION 3 Moderator: Vera Grebenc Galina Goncharova , Sofia University “St. Kl.Ohridski”: Postsocialism, Ageing and Generations of Care: Bulgarian social workers’ narratives on social transformations and policy changes Timo Harrikari , University of Helsinki: Long-term historical research methodologies: opportunities, constraints, and applications Glory M. Lekganyane , North-West University, South Africa: Exploring Social Work Curriculum in the Context of Social Entrepreneurship Jeanette Copperman , Open University UK: “Warm and gentle support for women who want to be heard”: voices of Bristol Crisis Service for Women
11.10–11.30 ROOM 3	COFFEE BREAK
11.30–13.10 ROOM 1	SESSION 4 Moderator: Klara Mestek Kristina Urbanc and Marko Buljevac , University of Zagreb: The social welfare system in Croatia, human rights approach, and the identity of social work profession Nadine van der Meulen , OTH Regensburg: Either You Get Sick or You Leave!? Stressors and Relief Factors of Digitalization in Social Work Boris Zaslavsky , University of Ljubljana: The role of gender and culture in ethical decision making of social workers and their experience of moral distress – the case study of Slovenia

	<p>Jackline Bwire Achan, Uganda Christian University: The Role of Social Work in Supporting Child Protection in Uganda: Lessons from History and Current Practices</p> <p>Nadiya Kabachenko, Oksana Boyko: National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy: Grandparent family: case of Ukraine</p>
<p>13.10–14.00</p> <p>ROOM 3</p>	LUNCH
<p>14.00–15.40</p> <p>ROOM 1</p>	<p>SESSION 5</p> <p>Moderator: Sara Pistotnik</p> <p>Eglė Šumskienė, Vilnius University: History of Advocacy for Children with Intellectual Disabilities: The Case of the Baltic States</p> <p>Shaheeda Heyman and Elma Ryke, North-West University, Informal Alternative Care: Historical Perspectives and Future Directions in Social Work Practice</p> <p>Samar Zughool, University of Ljubljana: Migration as a Gender and Sexual Revolution: Arabic-Speaking Queer Community Arts and Activism in the EU Diaspora</p> <p>Vanja Branica and Gordana Berc, University of Zagreb: Reflection on continuities and discontinuities of social work development in Croatia</p> <p>Florian Sichling, University of Missouri – St. Louis: Radical repertoires: The history and role of street-level organizations in the making of asylum policy in Austria</p>
<p>15.40–16.00</p> <p>ROOM 3</p>	BREAK
<p>16.00–17.40</p> <p>ROOM 1</p>	<p>SESSION 6</p> <p>Moderator: Jelka Zorn</p> <p>Jelka Zorn and Mojca Urek, University of Ljubljana: The development of LGBTQ+ perspectives in social work education</p> <p>Sabina Pawlas, University of Silesia in Katowice: Historical Perspectives and Present Challenges of Social Work in the Field of Oncology</p>

	<p>Christine Rehlau, Erfurt University of Applied Sciences: Defending diversity against right-wing extremists and populists – recommendations for social work action</p> <p>Fabian Kessl, University of Wuppertal: Links to Collectivity: Critical Social Work & Social Pedagogy in 21st Century</p> <p>Michael Rasell, University of Innsbruck: Addressing the lack of democracy inside social work and social services</p>
17.40–18.00	CLOSING
ROOM 1	Reflection and future plans
TBD	Dinner



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