



DRUŽBOSLOVNE RAZPRAVE

Social Science Forum



XLI / 110 / 2025

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 - Aratani, Lauren (2020): "Tsunami of Untruths": Trump Has Made 20,000 False or Misleading Claims. Report. The Guardian, 13. 7. 2020. Dostopno prek: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/jul/13/donald-trump-20000-false-or-misleading-claims> (10. 10. 2020).
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Drage bralke, dragi bralci,

Pred vami je 110., decembrska številka *Družboslovnih razprav*, s katero zaključujemo 51. letnik revije in z njim leto 2025. Številčenje ni nepomembno; nakazuje namreč na večplastno časovnost revije, ki je, če strnemo, vsako leto kompleksnejši zgodovinski artefakt, obenem pa vsakič znova posebej aktualen analitičen vektor; proizvod »svojega časa«. Družboslovke_ci seveda vemo, da časovnosti ni samo več, pač pa da tudi niso enostavno linearne. Premice prepredajo bolj ali manj zaključeni cikli, zapletajo valovi in presenečajo preseki. Tako je tudi z revijami; tudi ko po parametrih, kot so obseg, finance in trajno izhajanje, dihalo mirno in stabilno, ne vozijo po vnaprej načrtanih trasah, ampak se razvijajo, menjajo smeri in se z različnih perspektiv spogledujejo s svojimi začetki. A tudi ti začetki niso absolutni; vsako uredništvo se ne vpisuje zgolj v zgodovino revije, ampak to zgodovino intuitivno šteje tudi v okvirih lastnega mandata.

Vse to piševa zato, ker se s 110. številko aktualnemu uredništvu izteka še za dve leti podaljšani, torej skupaj petletni mandat. Urednici, člani_ce uredniškega odbora in mednarodnega uredniškega sveta, urednika recenzij knjig Klemen Ploštajner in Rok Smrdelj,¹ tehnična urednica Jasmina Šepetavc, oblikovalka Tina Cotič, postavljalka Polona Mesec, jezikovni urednik Murray Bales in jezikovna urednica Nataša Hribar ter spletni urednik Igor Jurekovič nosimo odgovornost za zadnjih 15 števil in posebno priložnostno izdajo ter vse, kar je sodilo zraven – izpostavljene tematike, korektnost recenzentskih postopkov, prenovu in uvedbo novih smernic, pravil in politik, poročila ter nenazadnje fizično in digitalno podobo revije. Ker gre za zadnjo številko, ki je nastala v tem kolektivu, meniva, da se spodobi strniti misli in na kratko poročati o vsem, kar se je skozi naš ožji pogled od znotraj reviji pripetilo, ter se zahvaliti vsem, brez katerih njenih zgodb ne bi bilo.

Če začnemo na začetku: davnega, nelagodnega in nenavadnega, s pandemijo zaznamovanega leta 2020 se je tedanjemu uredniku *Družboslovnih razprav* Marjanu Hočevanju porodila ideja o dveh sourednicah; (na)ju je videl kot dobro izbiro za svoji naslednici. Čeprav sva revijo kar dobro poznali – Tanja denimo predvsem kot avtorica in recenzentka, Natalija pa tudi kot takratna tehnična urednica – sva se na povabilo, ki mu je pritrnila tedanja predsednica Slovenskega sociološkega društva (SSD) Hajdeja Iglič, vseeno odzvali z mešanico radovednosti, počaščenosti in tudi strahu. Razumeli sva ga kot zanimiv

1. Klemen Ploštajner, ki je recenzije knjig urejal prvi dve leti mandata, je zaradi novih kariernih izzivov z letom 2023 štafetno palico predal Roku Smrdelju.

in dobrodošel izziv, berite: kot veliko odgovornost. Urednikovanje znanstvenih revij je namreč v slovenskem prostoru praviloma neke vrste »hobi, ki to ni«; v veliki meri pristočasna zadolžitev, ki ima lahko, če se je lotite s srcem in vztrajnostjo, tudi dolgoročne učinke. Ti so v veliki meri odvisni od ciljev, ki si jih zastavi samo uredništvo, to pa ves čas krmari na presečišču predlogov glavnih urednic, odzivov uredniškega odbora ter drugih namigov iz bližnje in bolj oddaljene, mednarodne akademske skupnosti.

Poglavitni cilji najinega mandata od leta 2021 – ki pa se je nato na povabilo naslednjega predsednika SSD Romana Kuharja leta 2023 podaljšal vse do konca 2025 – so bili večstranski: ohraniti in razvijati Družboslovne razprave kot v slovenskem prostoru unikatno revijo za interdisciplinarni polilog na področju humanistike in družboslovja; utrjevati status revije kot krovne revije SSD; prizadevati si za kakovost člankov, reprezentiranost avtoric_jev različnih kariernih stopenj in za mednarodni profil revije ter aktualizirati tako formate publikacij kot tudi vizualno podobo revije. Z zadovoljstvom in kančkom olajšanja lahko rečeva, da smo s predano ekipo, na katero sva se lahko vseh pet sezon vedno v celoti zanesli, uspeli nasloviti in celo doseči vse naštetu. Zato hvala Mrjanu, Hajdeji, Romanu in celotnemu Slovenskemu sociološkemu društvu ter Fakulteti za družbene vede kot soizdajatelju revije, ki potrjuje uredniške mandate, za priložnost in zaupanje; uredništvu za sodelovanje, potrjevanje, sestankovanje, podajanje pobud in nasvetov; ter več kot 120 recenzentkam_om, brez katerih članki, objavljeni v reviji, ne bi bili to, kar so, za pozorno branje, recenziranje in odzivanje na že revidirano.²

A da ne ostaneva zgolj pri splošnih obrisih in zahvalah, dodajava še kratko razlago skupne petletne poti. Plovbo sva začeli sistematično, ambiciozno in celotno. Seznanili sva se tako s pravnimi in statutarnimi zakonitostmi ter finančnimi ozadji, ki strukturno skrbijo, da lahko ladja sploh pluje, podrobneje pa sva prevetrili samo ogrodje, ki skrbi za vsebinske nastavke in nadzorniške elemente vsake od njenih delov. Ves čas sva imeli v mislih »lastnika« revije – SSD kot tisto krovno posadko, ki razvija, neguje in narekuje revijalne trende že od samega nastanka Družboslovnih razprav. Hkrati pa sva učvrščene disciplinarne temelje že v izhodišču razumeli transdisciplinarno; predpostavljali sva, da se vsaka družbena veda skladno s sodobnimi zahtevami turbulentnih družb in globalnih tenzij nujno introspektivno obrača vase, lastne omejitve in potenciale pa nadgrajuje s pogumnim, drznim in samokritičnim pogledom tudi zunaj sebe.

Zato je bila ena prvih logičnih potez, ki smo jih uvedli kot nova uredniška

2. Seznam tistih recenzentov_k, ki so izrecno dovolili_e, da njihova imena ob koncu mandata tudi javno razkrijemo, najdete na koncu tega uvodnika.

ekipa, dodatek angleškega prevoda k obstoječemu imenu revije. Od leta 2021 oz. konkretno od dvojne tematske številke 96&97 imajo tako *Družboslovne razprave* pripis *Social Science Forum*. Ta dodatek je posledično s seboj prinesel nemalo posledic; prva med njimi je gotovo to, da smo morali premisliti o novi zunanji podobi predhodne naslovnice in njenih notranjih strani.

Tako je DR/SSF začela novo obdobje tudi vizualno: začeli smo z nežno sivo-roza-belo kombinacijo, zdaj se poslavljamo z bolj udarno modro-oranžno-belo shemo. Mednarodno vidnost smo nadalje utrjevali s preobrazbo sestave uredniških odborov, ki so bili do tedaj zelo zvesti tradiciji društva, manj pa so odpirali meje onstran njegovih ekspertiz. S posvetovanjem pri predsedstvu društva ter predlogi nekaterih njegovih članic in članov je tako vse številke v zadnjih petih letih pregledal in potrjeval 20-članski uredniški odbor, sestavljen iz desetih domačih in desetih tujih strokovnjakov. Mednarodno vidnost smo ne nazadnje potrdili tudi s samim »naslavljanjem« revije; poskrbeli smo, da ima glavno uredništvo angleško različico e-poštnega naslova, enako kot tehnično uredništvo in uredništvo recenzij knjig. In končno, stik tako z domačimi kot tujimi bralci smo krepili z uvedbo rednih uvodnih nagovorov v obeh jezikih, da bi orisali, ne le kaj v posamezni številki sledi, ampak smo z njimi želeli nasloviti tudi morebitne specifike njenega nastajanja. Morda smo s tem zanemarili domačo samozadostnost, a v petih letih naše plovbe resnih kritik nad to usmerjenostjo navzven nismo prejeli.

Primat revije, ki sloni na sociološki skupnosti, smo vendarle zvesto ohranjali z vsako številko posebej. Zgolj bežen prelet vseh dosedanjih števil, ki smo jih uspeli izdati v teh petih letih, je namreč pokazal, da je samo ena sama izšla brez avtorja ali avtorice, ki ne bi bil tudi član_ica SSD. So se pa med avtorje in avtorice vpletli tudi nekateri tuji strokovnjaki iz različnih ne zgolj evropskih univerz, kar je morda vsaj nek skromen pokazatelj, da se je naš trud k usmerjenosti navzven sčasoma morda poplačal.

V petih letih smo vsega skupaj izdali 15 števil in še »eno več«: posebno Priložnostno izdajo ob 60. obletnici Oddelka za sociologijo FDV, UL, ki sta jo uredili Maša Filipovič Hrast in Aleksandra Kanjuo Mrčela. S to inovacijo smo v dosedanje revialne publikacije dodali še novo priložnost za širše uveljavljanje aktualnih socioloških idej in premislekov skozi daljši čas.

Poleg Priložnostne izdaje je tako v petih letih izšlo šest tematskih števil in en tematski sklop, pobudo za katere so dali_e gostujoči_e (so)uredniki_ce. Naj spomniva: leto 2021 smo začeli z dvojno tematsko številko na temo družbenopolitičnih razsežnosti pandemije covid-19, ki jo je uredil Marjan Hočevar; leta 2022 sta sledili tematski številki na temo medijskih repertoarjev mladih pod uredništvom Dejana Jontesa in Veronike Tašner ter na temo izkušenske zgodovine

socialnega dela, ki jo je uredila Darja Zaviršek. Leta 2023 je Marjan Hočevar uredil tematsko številko o vprašanju trajnosti prostorov, sfer in okolja; leta 2024 je nato namesto tematske izšla že omenjena Priložnostna izdaja, leta 2025 pa sta Gal Kirn in Natalija Majsova uredila obsežno tematsko številko o aktualnih pristopih k spominskim študijam; v letošnji zadnji sta Dejan Jontes in Anja Skapin Subanović uredila še tematski blok na temo medijskega poročanja o podnebnih spremembah.

Večina številok je poleg tematskih prispevkov in uvodnikov vsebovala redne članke. Vsega skupaj je recenzentski postopek v okviru rednih in tematskih številok ter priložnostne izdaje uspešno prestalo 76 člankov, in sicer 73 izvirnih (od tega šest kratkih) in trije pregledni znanstveni. Posebej ponosni sva, da nam je uspelo dvigniti delež prispevkov v angleščini in razširiti bazen avtorjev_ic. Kar 31 od 69 prispevkov »standardne dolžine« (se pravi 45 odstotkov vseh) v tem mandatu je namreč izšlo v angleščini, k čemur je prispevala tudi smernica »minimum dva članka v angleščini« za tematske številke, ki jo je leta 2023 sprejel uredniški odbor.

Leta 2023 smo vpeljali tudi nov format publikacij; poleg izvirnih in preglednih znanstvenih besedil standardne dolžine zdaj v obravnavo sprejemamo tudi krajša znanstvena besedila. Urednik recenzij knjig Rok Smrdelj je istega leta občutno prenovil politiko in navodila za pripravo recenzij knjig ter okrepil internacionalizacijo rubrike. Zgolj za občutek: v zadnjih petih letih je v *Družboslovnih razpravah* izšlo 55 recenzij knjig, od tega osem v angleščini – in od tega pet v aktualnem, 51. letniku revije.

Mandat torej končujemo s »polno vrečo« – ne le rezultatov, ampak tudi izhodišč za nadaljnji razvoj revije. Če je strogost recenzentskih postopkov na začetku našega mandata v spregi z aktualno diverzifikacijo slovenskega objavljalnega prostora prispevala k nekoliko skromnejšemu zanimanju za objavo, z veseljem ugotavljava, da je začetno skepso zamenjalo zaupanje; vsa ta leta smo namreč veliko vlagali v delo z avtorji_cami, posebej s tistimi na začetku kariere, in v razvoj konstruktivne recenzentske kulture. O tem, da se vloženo delo pozna, priča dejstvo, da mandat končujemo tudi z dobro bero že narejenega »na zalogo«: s pripravljeno tematsko številko za april 2026 in z osmimi novimi članki v recenzentskih postopkih. Novi ekipi predajamo še prenovljeno Strategijo objavljanja (*Publication strategy*), ki je pogoj za oddajo vloge za vnos revije v prestižno bazo Web of Science.

Zaključiva naj s povabilom k branju decembrske številke in popotnico novi ekipi. Mandat sklepamo z dinamičnim naborom. Številko odpira prispevek Lilijane Burcar (v slovenščini) z naslovom »ZDA in dostopnost abortusa: razredna diferenciacija pred odločitvijo vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Dobbs in po njej«. Avtorica v njem z zglede in v kontekstu obravnavane teme

pionirsko implementacijo historičnomaterialističnega pristopa pokaže, da ponovna kriminalizacija abortusa, ki jo posameznim zveznim državam dopušča odločitev ameriškega vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Dobbs, pomeni nadaljnje poglobljanje razredne diferenciacije v dostopnosti do abortusa. Članku sledi angleški prispevek Marije Šarić, Blanke Čop in Željke Zdravković z naslovom »(Med)spolne razlike v konfliktu med delom in družino pri zaposlenih starših na Hrvaškem«, v katerem avtorice prek kvantitativne analize obravnavajo razlike v konfliktu med delom in družino (KDD) pri zaposlenih starših mladoletnih otrok na Hrvaškem. Avtorice pokažejo, da starost in izobrazba pri moških – za razliko od žensk – ne vplivata bistveno na KDD, kar kaže na razlike v vplivu družbeno-kulturnih dejavnikov med spoloma; obenem pa analiza v nasprotju s pričakovanji razkrije, da dodatna pomoč pri skrbi za otroke v gospodinjstvu poveča KDD pri moških, kar nakazuje na kompleksnost v pričakovanih glede spolnih vlog. Rednima člankoma sledi blok treh izvirnih znanstvenih člankov v angleščini na temo medijskega poročanja o podnebnih spremembah, ki sta ga uredila in ga bosta v posebnem uvodniku tudi razgrnila Dejan Jontes in Anja Skapin Subanović.

Številka prinaša tudi štiri recenzije knjig, od tega tri v slovenščini in eno v angleščini. Gre za kritike dveh monografij in dveh zbornikov. Tibor Rutar razpravlja o monografiji Marka Hočeverja *Growth models, industrial relations institutions and labour market policies in Ireland, Portugal and Slovenia: explaining capitalist convergence and divergence*, Damir Josipović pa analizira delo Ksenije Perković z naslovom *Med prostorom in družbo: Regionalna in multikulturalna identiteta Vojvodine*. Barbara Gornik se spoprime z zbornikom *(Ne) enakost v času krize in vzpona avtoritarizmov*, ki so ga uredile Vlasta Jalušič, Mojca Pajnik in Majda Hrženjak, Andreja Živoder pa obravnava zbornik *Na ulice! Odraščanje v današnjem času*, katerega urednici sta Mirjana Nastran Ule in Eva Strmljan Kreslin. Vabljeni_i k branju!

In obljubljen popotnica? Ker prihodnosti ni mogoče napovedati, novi ekipi ne moreva prav veliko svetovati. Upava pa, da bo – v duhu kontinuitete – prevzela optimizem, delovno vnemo in entuziazem zadnjih petih let ter ga začinila z drznimi odzivi na nove razvojne izzive in vsebinske zahteve sodobnih kompleksnih družb. Novemu uredništvu vsekakor želiva uspešno krmarjenje na naslednjih skupnih poteh, vam, bralci in bralke, pa veliko užitkov ob branju decembrske številke. In ker se s tem končuje tudi koledarsko leto, za konec voščiva vsem vse dobro v 2026.

Natalija Majsova in Tanja Oblak Črnič,
(še zadnjič kot) sourednici DR/SSF

Ob koncu mandata se posebej zahvaljujeva več kot 120 recenzentom_kam, ki ste s svojo konstruktivno kritiko sooblikovali_e revijo v zadnjih petih letih – za razliko od avtorjev_ic in urednic anonimno. Imena tistih recenzentk_ov, ki niso dale_i soglasja za objavo, ostajajo anonimna.

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Aidan Cerar | Irena Bačlija Brajnik |
| Aleksandra Kanjuo Mrčela | Irena Šumi |
| Alenka Krašovec | Irina Souch |
| Alenka Švab | Iztok Šori |
| Aleš Črnič | Jana Javornik |
| Aljoša Pužar | Jana Mali |
| Ana Hafner | Jasmina Šepetavc |
| Ana Kralj | Jasna Podreka |
| Ana Marija Sobočan | Jernej Kaluža |
| Andrew Calabrese | Jochen Töpfer |
| Andrej Kohont | Jon Mansell |
| Andrej Škerlep | Jožiča Čehovin Zajc |
| Andreja Trdina | Katja Čičigoj |
| Andreja Vezovnik | Katja Jeznik |
| Andreja Živoder | Katja Kobolt |
| Anja Skapin Subanović | Klement Podnar |
| Blaž Lenarčič | Ksenija Šabec |
| Boris Mance | Lea Bombač Tavčar |
| Boris Ružič | Lenart Škof |
| Breda Luthar | Ljubica Jelušič |
| Brina Malnar | Luka Kronegger |
| Byoung Yoong Kang | Maja Vehar |
| Damjan Lajh | Majda Hrženjak |
| Darja Zaviršek | Marianne Achiam |
| Dejan Jontes | Marjan Hočevnar |
| Vesna Dolničar | Marjan Smrke |
| Drago Kos | Marjan Svetličič |
| Elisabetta Zurovac | Marjan Šimenc |
| Gal Kirn | Marko Hočevnar |
| Hajdeja Igljč | Marko Lovec |
| Helena Jeriček Klanšček | Marko Ribač |
| Igor Jurekovič | Martin Pogačar |
| Igor Vobič | Maruša Pušnik |
| Ilija Tomanič Trivundža | Maruška Nardoni |

Maša Filipovič Hrast
Mateja Grego
Mateja Jeraj
Mateja Sedmak
Matjaž Ličer
Milica Antić Gaber
Mirjana Ule
Miroљjub Ignjatović
Mirt Komel
Mitja Hafner Fink
Mojca Šorn
Natalija Majsova
Nika Šušteršič
Nikos Ntounis
Nina Perger
Nina Vodopivec
Otto Gerdina
Peter Stanković
Tadej Praprotnik
Primož Krašovec
Rastko Močnik
René Reinhold Schalleger
Robert Bobnič
Roman Kuhar

Samo Kropivnik
Samo Pavlin
Samo Uhan
Sanja Berčnik
Sanja Horvatinčič
Sara Atanasova
Sara Pistotnik
Saška Roškar
Slavko Kurdija
Tanja Kamin
Tanja Oblak Črnič
Tanja Rener
Tina Kogovšek
Tomaž Pušnik
Urška Tuškej Lovšin
Valentina Hlebec
Velimir Veselinović
Veronika Bajt
Veronika Tašner
Vesna Leskovšek
Vlado Kotnik
Zarja Muršič
Zdenka Šadl
Zdravko Mlinar

Dear readers,

Before you is the 110th, December issue of *Social Science Forum*, the last addition to the journal's 51st volume and the final issue of 2025. And all these numbers hold meaning: they testify to the multifaceted temporality of the journal, which every year is both an increasingly historical artifact, and a timely analytical vector; a product of 'its time'. As social scientists, we are well aware that temporalities are not only multiple, but also not exactly linear; they tend to be entangled with more or less complete cycles, and complicated by waves and surprising intersections. The same is true of academic journals. Even when they appear calm and stable measured by parameters such as size, finances, and publication rhythm, they do not follow predetermined paths, and instead develop, change direction, and reflect on their beginnings from different perspectives. Still, even these beginnings are not absolute; each editorial team injects itself into the journal's history, while intuitively considering this history within the framework of its mandate.

We are writing all this because, with issue 110, the current editorial board's 2-year extension (bringing its overall term to 5 years) is coming to an end. The editors, members of the editorial board and international editorial council, book review editors Klemen Ploštajner and Rok Smrdelj,¹ technical editor Jasmina Šepetavc, designer Tina Cotič, typesetter Polona Mesec, language editors Murray Bales and Nataša Hribar, and web editor Igor Jurekovič are responsible for the last 15 issues and 1 special edition, along with everything all these publications have entailed – the topics covered, the fairness of the review process, the revisions to publication guidelines and the introduction of new rules, and policies, reports and, last but not least, the journal's physical and digital image. Since this is the last issue to be produced by this team, we believe it is appropriate to summarise our thoughts and briefly report on everything that has happened concerning the journal from our perspective, and to thank everyone who has made all of the mentioned elements possible.

Let's start at the beginning. In the distant, uncomfortable and unusual year of 2020, marked by the pandemic, then editor of *Družboslovne razprave* Marjan Hočevar came up with the idea of two co-editors who, he believed, would be appropriate successors to his term. Hajdeja Iglič, then president of the Slovenian Sociological Association (SSD), agreed to his proposal. Although we were already quite familiar with the journal – Tanja primarily as an author and

1. Klemen Ploštajner, who edited book reviews for the first 2 years of his term, handed over the baton to Rok Smrdelj in 2023 due to new career challenges.

reviewer, and Natalija also as the technical editor at the time – we responded to his invitation with a mix of curiosity, honour and fear. We understood the proposal as an interesting and welcome challenge, yet also a great responsibility. As a rule, editing academic journals in Slovenia is a kind of a ‘hobby that isn’t really a hobby’; it is largely a leisure activity that, if approached with heart and perseverance, can produce long-term impacts. The latter largely depend on the goals set by the editorial board, reflecting the ideas of the editors-in-chief, responses of board members, and other suggestions from the local and international academic community.

The main goals of our mandate from 2021 – later extended until the end of 2025 on the invitation of the next SSD president, Roman Kuhar, in 2023 – were multifaceted: to maintain and develop *Družboslovne razprave* as a unique Slovenian journal for interdisciplinary dialogue in the humanities and social sciences; to consolidate the journal’s status as the SSD’s flagship journal; to work toward maintaining high quality standards, improve the representation of authors in different career stages, and the international profile of the publication, and to update both the publication formats and visual image of the journal. It is with satisfaction and a touch of relief that we can say that, with our dedicated team that we have been able to rely on completely in all five years, we have managed to address and even achieve all of the above. Therefore, we would like to thank Marjan, Hajdeja, Roman, and the entire Slovenian Sociological Association, as well as the Faculty of Social Sciences as co-publisher of the journal (and confirms the editorial mandates) for the opportunity and for their support; the editorial board and international editorial council for their cooperation, approval, meetings, initiatives, and advice; and the over 120 reviewers without whom the articles appearing in the journal would not be what they are, for their careful reading, reviewing, and responding to what has already been reviewed.²

Aside from outlining the general contours of the mandate and expressing gratitude to everyone involved, we wish to use this ‘finishing line’ of the editorial to offer a brief overview of our collective 5-year journey. We began our voyage systematically, ambitiously and holistically. We made ourselves familiar with the legal and statutory requirements and financial background to structurally ensure the ship can sail at all, and examined in detail the framework that supports the content of each of the journal’s sections. Throughout, we had in mind the journal’s ‘owner’ – SSD – as the umbrella crew that has been developing, nurturing, and dictating journal trends since its inception. At the same time, we understood the

2. A list of those reviewers who expressly consented to the public disclosure of their names at the end of their term of office can be found at the end of this editorial.

established disciplinary foundations as transdisciplinary from the outset; we assumed that, in line with the contemporary demands of turbulent societies and global tensions, every social science necessarily turns introspective, while also building on its own limitations and potential with a courageous, bold and self-critical view beyond itself.

Accordingly, one of the first logical steps we took as the new editorial team was to add an English translation to the journal's existing name. Since 2021, more specifically since the 96&97 double issue, *Družboslovne razprave* has been subtitled *Social Science Forum*. This addition had a few consequences, the first being the need to rethink the publication's design.

Thus, DR/SSF also entered a new visual era: we started with a soft grey-pink-white combination, and now are saying goodbye with a more daring blue-orange-white colour scheme. We added to the journal's international visibility by transforming the editorial board's composition, which previously had been very loyal to the Slovenian Sociological Association's tradition, but less open to expanding beyond its areas of expertise. In consultation with the Association's presidency and based on suggestions made by some of its members, all issues over the last 5 years were reviewed and approved by a 20-member editorial board made up of 10 experts representing Slovenian institutions, and 10 representing foreign ones. Finally, we also confirmed the journal's international visibility by 'addressing' the journal itself, assuring that the main editorial office has an English version of its e-mail address, as do the technical and book review editors. Finally, we strengthened our contact with both domestic and foreign readers by introducing regular introductory addresses in Slovenian and English to outline not only what follows in each issue, but also to highlight any special features or circumstances that have shaped the issue. Perhaps we have disrespected the tradition of Slovenian self-sufficiency with these efforts, but in the 5 years of our journey we have not received any serious criticism for this outward orientation.

Nevertheless, each issue has been conceived with the local sociological community – the journal's 'home base' – in mind. A quick scan of all the issues we have managed to publish over these 5 years shows that but a single one was published without an author who was an SSD member. However, some foreign experts from various universities, not just in Europe, were also included among the authors, perhaps providing a modest indication that our efforts to reach out to the outside world may have paid off.

In 5 years, we have published a total of 15 issues and '1 extra': a Special Edition commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Department of Sociology at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, edited by Maša Filipovič

Hrast and Aleksandra Kanjuo Mrčela. This new feature of special editions is designed to increase the journal's existing publication opportunities and help promote current ideas in sociology, as well as its history, among the broader interested public.

Alongside the Special Edition, six thematic issues and one thematic block initiated by guest editors were published in the past 5 years. Let us recall: we began 2021 with a double thematic issue on the socio-political dimensions of the COVID-19 pandemic, edited by Marjan Hočevar. In 2022, this was followed by thematic issues on the media repertoires of young people, edited by Dejan Jontes and Veronika Tašner, and on the experiential history of social work, edited by Darja Zavišek. In 2023, Marjan Hočevar edited a thematic issue on the sustainability of spaces, spheres, and the environment; in 2024, the aforementioned special edition was published instead of a thematic issue, while in 2025, Gal Kirn and Natalija Majsova edited an extensive thematic issue on current approaches to memory studies. In this year's final issue, Dejan Jontes and Anja Skapin Subanović edited a thematic block on media reporting concerning climate change.

The vast majority of issues contained regular articles in addition to thematic contributions and editorials. A total of 76 articles successfully passed the peer review process for regular and thematic issues and the Special Edition, including 73 original articles (6 of which were short) and 3 review articles. We are particularly proud of having managed to increase the proportion of articles in English and expand our pool of authors. As many as 31 of the 69 "standard length" articles (i.e., 45% of the total) in the past 5 years were published in English. To facilitate multilingualism, a guideline of "at least two articles in English" for thematic issues was adopted by the editorial board in 2023.

In 2023, we also introduced a new publication format. On top of original and review scientific texts of standard length, we now also accept shorter scientific texts for consideration. In the same year, book review editor Rok Smrdelj significantly revised the policy and guidelines for preparing book reviews and strengthened the internationalisation of the section. Just to give you an idea: in the last 5 years, *Družboslovne razprave* published 55 book reviews, 8 of which were in English – 5 of them in this volume of the journal.

We are therefore concluding our term with a 'full bag' – not simply of results, but also of starting points for the journal's further development. While the strictness of the review process at the beginning of our term, combined with the current diversification of the Slovenian publishing scene, contributed to the somewhat modest interest in publication, we are pleased to note that the initial scepticism has been replaced by trust. Over the years, we have invested heavily in working with

authors, especially those early on in their career, and in developing a constructive review culture. The fact our efforts have paid off is shown by the fact that we are ending our term with a good stockpile of work already done: a thematic issue for April 2026 is ready, and eight new articles are in the review process. We are also handing over to the new team a revised Publication Strategy, which is a precondition for submitting an application for the journal to be included in the prestigious Web of Science database.

Let us conclude with a warm invitation to read the December issue and a farewell to the new team. We end our term with a dynamic selection. The issue opens with an article by Lilijana Burcar (in Slovenian) entitled "Abortion access in the USA: class differentiation before and after the Supreme Court's overruling of Roe". Here, the author demonstrates, through an exemplary and, in the context of the topic under discussion, pioneering implementation of the historical-materialist approach, that the recriminalising of abortion, which the US Supreme Court's decision in the Dobbs case allows individual states to do, means a further deepening of class differentiation in access to abortion. The article is followed by an English contribution by Marija Šarić, Blanka Čop and Željka Zdravković entitled "(Inter)gender variation in work–family conflict among employed parents in Croatia", in which the authors use quantitative analysis to examine differences in work–family conflict (WFC) among working parents of minor children in Croatia. The authors show that age and education in men – unlike in women – do not significantly affect WFC, which indicates differences in the influence of socio-cultural factors between the sexes. At the same time, contrary to expectations, the analysis reveals that additional help with childcare in the household increases WFC among men, indicating the complexity of expectations regarding gender roles. The regular articles are followed by a block of three original scientific articles in English on the topic of media reporting on climate change edited by Dejan Jontes and Anja Skapin Subanović, who will also discuss it in a special editorial.

In addition, the issue includes four book reviews, three in Slovenian and one in English. These are reviews of two monographs and two anthologies. Tibor Rutar discusses Marko Hočevar's monograph *Growth models, industrial relations institutions and labour market policies in Ireland, Portugal and Slovenia: Explaining capitalist convergence and divergence*, while Damir Josipović analyses Ksenija Perković's work (in Slovenian) entitled *Med prostorom in družbo: Regionalna in multikulturalna identiteta Vojvodine*. Barbara Gornik tackles the anthology *(Ne)enakost v času krize in vzpona avtoritarizmov (Inequality in Times of Crisis and the Rise of Authoritarianism)*, edited by Vlasta Jalušič, Mojca Pajnik and Majda Hrženjak, while Andreja Živoder reviews the anthology *Na ulice!*

Odraščanje v današnjem času edited by Mirjana Nastran Ule and Eva Strmljan Kreslin. We wish you pleasant reading!

And the promised farewell? Since the future cannot be predicted, we cannot offer much advice to the new team. Nonetheless, we hope that, in the spirit of continuity, it will take over the optimism, work ethic, and enthusiasm of the last 5 years and spice it up with bold responses to the new development challenges and content requirements of modern complex societies. In any case, we wish the new editorial team every success in steering the ship on our future shared journeys, and hope that you, our readers, enjoy reading the December issue. And, since this also marks the end of the calendar year, we would like to wish everyone all the best for 2026!

*Natalija Majsova and Tanja Oblak Črnič,
(for the last time as) co-editors of DR/SSF*

As our term comes to an end, we want to express our special thanks to the more than 120 reviewers who, with their constructive criticism, helped shape the magazine over the last 5 years – *anonymously*, unlike the authors and editors. The names of those reviewers who did not give their consent for publication remain anonymous.

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Aidan Cerar | Breda Luthar |
| Aleksandra Kanjuo Mrčela | Brina Malnar |
| Alenka Krašovec | Byoung Yoong Kang |
| Alenka Švab | Damjan Lajh |
| Aleš Črnič | Darja Zaviršek |
| Aljoša Pužar | Dejan Jontes |
| Ana Hafner | Vesna Dolničar |
| Ana Kralj | Drago Kos |
| Ana Marija Sobočan | Elisabetta Zurovac |
| Andrew Calabrese | Gal Kirn |
| Andrej Kohont | Hajdeja Iglíč |
| Andrej Škerlep | Helena Jeriček Klanšček |
| Andreja Trdina | Igor Jurekovič |
| Andreja Vezovnik | Igor Vobič |
| Andreja Živoder | Ilija Tomanić Trivundža |
| Anja Skapin Subanović | Irena Bačlija Brajnik |
| Blaž Lenarčič | Irena Šumi |
| Boris Mance | Irina Souch |
| Boris Ružić | Iztok Šori |

Jana Javornik
Jana Mali
Jasmina Šepetavc
Jasna Podreka
Jernej Kaluža
Jochen Töpfer
Jon Mansell
Jožiča Čehovin Zajc
Katja Čičigoj
Katja Jeznik
Katja Kobolt
Klement Podnar
Ksenija Šabec
Lea Bombač Tavčar
Lenart Škof
Ljubica Jelušič
Luka Kronegger
Maja Vehar
Majda Hrženjak
Marianne Achiam
Marjan Hočevnar
Marjan Smrke
Marjan Svetličič
Marjan Šimenc
Marko Hočevnar
Marko Lovec
Marko Ribač
Martin Pogačar
Maruša Pušnik
Maruška Nardoni
Maša Filipovič Hrast
Mateja Grego
Mateja Jeraj
Mateja Sedmak
Matjaž Ličer
Milica Antić Gaber
Mirjana Ule
Miroљjub Ignjatović
Mirt Komel
Mitja Hafner Fink
Mojca Šorn
Natalija Majsova
Nika Šušteršič
Nikos Ntounis
Nina Perger
Nina Vodopivec
Otto Gerdina
Peter Stanković
Tadej Praprotnik
Primož Krašovec
Rastko Močnik
René Reinhold Schalleger
Robert Bobnič
Roman Kuhar
Samo Kropivnik
Samo Pavlin
Samo Uhan
Sanja Berčnik
Sanja Horvatinčič
Sara Atanasova
Sara Pistotnik
Saška Roškar
Slavko Kurdija
Tanja Kamin
Tanja Oblak Črnič
Tanja Rener
Tina Kogovšek
Tomaž Pušnik
Urška Tuškej Lovšin
Valentina Hlebec
Velimir Veselinović
Veronika Bajt
Veronika Tašner
Vesna Leskovšek
Vlado Kotnik
Zarja Muršič
Zdenka Šadl
Zdravko Mlinar

Lilijana Burcar

ZDA IN DOSTOPNOST ABORTUSA: RAZREDNA DIFERENCIACIJA PRED ODLOČITVIJO VRHOVNEGA SODIŠČA V ZADEVI DOBBS IN PO NJEJ

IZVLEČEK

Prispevek pokaže, da odločitev ameriškega vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Dobbs junija 2022, ki omogoča ponovno kriminalizacijo in prepoved abortusa v ZDA, vodi v poglobljanje že obstoječih razrednih neenakosti med ženskami pri dostopanju do UPN. Na osnovi historičnomaterialističnega pristopa pokažemo, da so ZDA v zadnjih petih desetletjih od sprejetja odločitve vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Roe proti Wadu sistematično omejevale dostop do abortusa med ženskami z nizkimi dohodki in kratile njihovo reproduktivno avtonomijo. Ponovna kriminalizacija abortusa, ki jo posameznim državam dopušča odločitev vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Dobbs, pomeni nadaljnje poglobljanje razredne diferenciacije v dostopnosti do abortusa. Kriminalizacija abortusa je in bo nesorazmerno ter najbolj prizadela finančno šibke skupine žensk, medtem ko bodo premožnejše svojo reproduktivno avtonomijo lahko še vedno uveljavljale s potovanji v tujino ali v druge ameriške države, ki abortusa ne prepovedujejo.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: ZDA, abortus, razredna diferenciacija, Hydov amandma, Roe, Dobbs

Abortion access in the USA: Class differentiation before and after the Supreme Court's overruling of Roe

ABSTRACT

The article demonstrates that the 2022 US Supreme Court decision on Dobbs deepens class differentiation among women in the USA in their access to abortion. Relying on the historical materialist approach, we show that the USA have

continuously limited access to abortion since its decriminalization on the federal level in 1973 by systematically targeting low-income women and violating their right to reproductive autonomy. The bans on abortion implemented in the wake of the Supreme Court's decision on Dobbs will further exacerbate the already existing inequalities in abortion access and reproductive autonomy between the poor and the rich women, with the latter being affected least as they will be able to afford interstate travel or travelling abroad in order to secure access to legal and safe abortions.

KEY WORDS: USA, abortion, class differentiation, Hyde Amendment, Roe, Dobbs

1 Uvod¹

Leta 1973 je ameriško vrhovno sodišče v primeru Roe proti Wadu sprejelo razsodbo, s katero je na zvezni ravni legaliziralo abortus. Sklicevalo se je na 14. amandma ameriške ustave, ki govori o pravici posameznice do zasebnosti, tj. do nevmesavanja države v zasebne prostore in intimno življenje njenih državljanek in državljanov (Feldt 2004: 123; McBride Stetson 2001: 252, 253). ZDA pravice do abortusa niso nikoli posebej zapisale v svojo zvezno ustavo. Prav tako na zvezni ravni niso nikoli sprejele ustreznega zdravstvenega zakona, ki bi pravico do abortusa štutil vsaj na splošni formalnopravni osnovi. Šlo je zgolj za odločitev zveznega vrhovnega sodišča, kar pomeni, da jo zlahka razveljavi to isto sodišče z drugačno sestavo sodnikov in sodnic, kar se je dejansko zgodilo 24. junija 2022 (Burcar 2022: 2). Vendar se v ZDA napad na pravice žensk do svobodnega odločanja o vstopu v materinstvo v nasprotju s splošnim prepričanjem, ki ga danes širijo predvsem liberalni mediji, ni začel pod konservativnimi ameriški administracijami, svoj višek pa dosegel leta 2022 z odločitvijo vrhovnega sodišča in takojšnjo prepovedjo abortusa na zahtevo v skorajda polovici ameriških zveznih držav, ki so imele že pripravljene t. i. sprožilne in druge omejitvene zakone.² Vse od legalizacije abortusa na zvezni ravni dalje, kot pokažemo na osnovi historičnomaterialističnega pristopa, so namreč tako demokratske kot republikanske administracije po letu 1973 sprejele vrsto ukrepov in zakonskih

1. Prispevek je nastal v sklopu raziskovalnega programa Medkulturne literarnovedne študije, št. P6-0265, ki ga sofinancira Javna agencija za raziskovalno dejavnost Republike Slovenije.
2. V obdobju med 1973 in 2022 so različne ameriške države vpeljale kar 1381 različnih omejitev, od tega skorajda polovico v desetletju pred Dobbsom. Tik pred letom 2022 so se iztekle v verižno sprejemanje t. i. sprožitvenih zakonov na ravni posameznih držav, s katerimi so te lahko nemudoma prepovedale abortus takoj po sprejetju odločitve vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Dobbs (Guttmacher Institute, US states have enacted, 21. 6. 2022).

aktov, s katerimi so v skladu s svojo merkantilistično politiko načrtno in sistematično omejevale dostopnost UPN na zahtevo. Tarča so bile manj premožne skupine prebivalstva, še zlasti tiste, ki tvorijo večinski bazen nizko plačane in že v izhodišču osiromašene ali pa vse bolj prekarizirane in brezpravne delovne sile. Na ta način so ZDA manj premožne, predvsem siromašne in revne zaposlene skupine žensk kljub formalnopравни dekriminalizaciji abortusa (in kontracepcije) vse od sedemdesetih letih prejšnjega stoletja dalje sistematično prikrajševale za pravico do svobodnega odločanja o rojstvu otrok in jih omejile ali onemogočile pri uveljavljanju njihove reproduktivne avtonomije.

Temeljno oviro pri uresničevanju pravice do reproduktivne avtonomije predstavlja dejstvo, da je bila v ZDA vse od legalizacije abortusa dalje umetna prekinitev nosečnosti (UPN) na zahtevo skupaj s kontracepcijskimi sredstvi plačljiva.³ Na tej osnovi so vse demokratske in konservativne administracije po letu 1973 na perfiden način vzdrževale in še vedno vzdržujejo razredno razslojenost med ženskami pri uveljavljanju pravice do svobodnega odločanja o rojstvu otrok. Še več: s svojimi interventnimi amandmaji, odloki in predsedniškimi ukazi so dostopnost abortusa na zahtevo za ekonomsko najbolj ranljive skupine v celoti izničile že desetletja pred ponovno kriminalizacijo abortusa na zvezni ravni leta 2022. Takoj po odločitvi ameriškega vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Roe proti Wadu so namreč demokratske in republikanske administracije poskrbele za ukinitve in prepoved subvencioniranja stroškov posega v okviru zveznih zdravstvenih shem, namenjenih najrevnejšim med najrevnejšimi in drugim ranljivim skupinam žensk; hkrati pa niso odpravile kontracepcijske revščine, ampak so jo kvečjemu le še zaostrovale (Burcar 2024). Na ta način so izpodkopale reproduktivno avtonomijo manj premožnih žensk, da bi jih brez neposredne prepovedi abortusa tudi po letu 1973 čim več prisilile v neprostovoljno materinstvo. Ponovna kriminalizacija abortusa na zvezni ravni 24. junija 2022, kot pokažemo v zadnjem delu razprave, pomeni stopnjevanje te politike, saj bo nesorazmerno in najbolj prizadela finančno šibke skupine žensk. Medtem si bodo premožnejše tako kot pred letom 1973 pomagale s potovanji v tujino ali z odhodi na poseg v druge ameriške države, ki niso sprejele t. i. sprožilnih zakonov in plačljiv abortus na zahtevo še vedno dovoljujejo.

Prispevek izhaja iz historičnega materializma, pri čemer za teoretično osnovo jemlje socialistični feminizem in teoretični okvir, ki sem ga razvila v monografiji *Kapital in reproduktivne pravice: zahodne kapitalistične države* (2022). Prispevek

3. V zvezi s sistemsko politiko omejevanja dostopnosti kontracepcije v ZDA glej Lilijana Burcar (2024): ZDA in omejevanje reproduktivne avtonomije žensk: razredno razslojevanje dostopnosti kontracepcije (pred Dobbsom).

analitično razdela in sintezno poveže različne etape sistematičnega omejevanja dostopnosti do abortusa za revne zaposlene in osiromašene ženske v sodobni zgodovini ZDA, in sicer takoj po sprejetju odločitve vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Roe proti Wadu leta 1973, ki je prinesel legalizacijo posega na zvezni ravni, ter z razčlenitvijo posledic odločitve vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Dobbs junija 2022, ki je posameznim državam omogočila takojšnjo prepoved abortusa. S poudarkom na razredni analizi posredno osvetljuje pasti liberalnega, tj. novodobnega meščanskega feminizma, ki govori abstraktno zgolj o pravici do izbire, dostopnosti abortusa pa ne povezuje s finančnimi preprekami in omejitvami, kot sta neobstoj univerzalnega zdravstvenega zavarovanja ali izvzem kritja stroškov posega iz zdravstvenega zavarovanja Medicaid za revne ženske po sprejetju Hydovega amandmaja. Metodološko prispevek temelji na sistemski analizi problematike omejevanja in izničenja pravice do abortusa za revne ženske v ZDA pred Dobbsom ter sintezni obdelavi s sociološkega vidika še nerazčlenjenega in razpršenega materiala, ki se nanaša na učinke odločitve vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Dobbs po letu 2022 na reproduktivno avtonomijo revnih žensk, katerih pravica do abortusa je bila kratena in sistematično omejena še pred Dobbsom. Kot primarna literatura in izhodišče za sintezno analizo služijo podatkovno in tematsko razdrobljena poročila organizacij, kot sta Planned Parenthood (PP 2025), National Partnership for Women and Families (2024), Centra za reproduktivne pravice (CCR 2010, CCR 2022) ter dveh osrednjih ameriških fundacij za promocijo in monitoring reproduktivnih pravic žensk v ZDA, in sicer Guttmacher instituta (Hasstedt 2015; Boonstra 2016; Guttmacher 2021; Guttmacher 2022; Kirstein in dr. 2022; Nash in Guarnieri 2023; Lopez 2024; Maddow-Zimet 2025) in Kaiser Family Foundation (Sobel in dr. 2019; KFF 2021a; KFF 2021b; Gomez idr. 2022; Salganicoff in dr. 2014; Salganicoff idr. 2020; Salganicoff in dr. 2024).

2 Hydov amandma: neposredna oblika napada na reproduktivno avtonomijo revnih žensk po legalizaciji abortusa leta 1973

Ameriški kongres je v drugi polovici leta 1976, tj. le tri leta po odločitvi vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Roe proti Wadu in legalizaciji abortusa na zvezni ravni, potrdil t. i. Hydov amandma. Imenovan je bil po njegovem predlagatelju, republikanskem senatorju Henryju Hydu, veljati pa je začel januarja 1977. Hydov amandma je prepovedoval kritje stroškov umetnih prekinitvev nosečnosti v okviru zdravstvenih zavarovalnih shem, ki so namenjene zdravstveni oskrbi revnih in se jih financira iz zveznih proračunskih sredstev (Feldt 2004: 9). Šlo je za premišljeno

potezo, da bi se izničilo reproduktivno avtonomijo revnih žensk, odvisnih od socialnega zdravstvenega programa Medicaid, ki ga v ameriškem kontekstu neobstoječe mreže javnega zdravstva in osnovnega zdravstvenega zavarovanja v omejeni obliki za določene skupine najrevnejših financira ameriška vlada neposredno iz zveznega proračuna. Hydov amandma je vsem revnim ženskam, zavarovanim v okviru zvezno subvencioniranega zdravstvenega programa Medicaid, odvzel pravico do kritja stroškov UPN na zahtevo (Salganicoff in dr. 2020: 1). Kaj je to pomenilo za dostopnost posega za revne ženske, pričajo naslednji primerjalni statistični podatki. Takoj po legalizaciji abortusa na zvezni ravni je bila leta 1973 v okviru programa Medicaid opravljenih več kot tretjina vseh zakonitih umetnih prekinitev nosečnosti v ZDA, in sicer 270.000 od skupno 616.000 (Towey in dr. 2005: 4). Po sprejetju Hydovega amandmaja je bilo leta 1977 v okviru programa Medicaid opravljenih le še 2100 posegov, do leta 1979 se je to število ustalilo pri 4000 stroškovno kritih posegih letno (Hayler 1979: 320). Povedno je, da je od Medicaid zdravstvenega zavarovanja za osebe z nizkimi dohodki odvisna vsaka peta ameriška ženska v rodni dobi (15–49 let), kar pomeni 17 milijonov žensk (Planned Parenthood Action Fund 2025). Posledično vse do današnjih dni Hydov amandma deluje kot tiha oblika »dejanske prepovedi abortusa« oziroma odvzemanja legalnih možnosti pristopa k umetni prekinitvi nosečnosti na zahtevo za revne ženske v ZDA (Salganicoff in dr. 2020: 5; Morcelle 2021: 2). To je tudi v tistih ameriških državah, ki po odločitvi ameriškega vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Dobbs po letu 2022 niso ponovno kriminalizirale in prepovedale abortusa na zahtevo.

Hydov amandma je kritje UPN iz zveznega proračuna za revne ženske, zavarovane v okviru programa Medicaid,⁴ najprej izjemoma dovoljeval samo v primeru, če je bilo zaradi nosečnosti ogroženo življenje ženske (Arons in Agénor 2010: 7). Šele leta 1978, v obdobju Carterjeve administracije, je ameriški kongres tej izjemi dodal še možnost subvencioniranega kritja posega v primeru »hitro prijavljenega posilstva ali incesta« (ibid.). Med letoma 1978 in 1979 pa še v primeru, če bi nosečnost imela za posledico »hudo in dolgotrajno okvaro fizičnega zdravja ženske« (NLRH 2011). Leta 1981 je bilo ponovno prepovedano kritje stroškov posega, če je bila nosečnost posledica posilstva ali incesta (NLRH 2011), kar je ostalo v veljavi vse do leta 1994. Ameriško vrhovno sodišče je namreč

4. V Medicaid je vključenih 11,1 milijona belih žensk (5,6 milijona v rodni dobi), 5,7 milijona latinoameriških žensk (3,6 milijona v rodni dobi), 4,4 milijona afroameriških žensk (2,6 milijona v rodni dobi) in 1,4 milijona staroselk (pribl. 650.000 v rodni dobi) (NPWF 2024). Od leta 2014 je vstopni cenzus dohodek, ki ne sme presežati 134 odstotkov zvezno določenega praga revščine.

leta 1980 odločilo, da državno kritje stroškov posega iz zveznega proračuna v primeru posilstva in incesta za revne ženske ni upravičeno. Do vključno leta 1993 je bila zato umetna prekinitev nosečnosti v okviru programa Medicaid stroškovno krita in dostopna samo, če je bilo ogroženo življenje ženske (Arons in Agénor 2010: 7). Šlo je za dvojno nehumano obravnavo revnih žensk. Ni jim bila le odvzeta pravica do brezplačnega pristopa k UPN na zahtevo, kar bi jim omogočilo, da se svobodno odločajo o rojstvu otrok in razmiku med njimi, ampak tudi v primeru spolnega napada. To je pomenilo obliko popolnega ponižanja in sistemsko degradacijo revnih žensk na raven drugorazrednih državljanek. Šlo je za nazorno obliko vsiljevanja prisilnega materinstva za vsako ceno med ženskami, ki ne pripadajo politično-ekonomski eliti. To je pomenilo redukcijo revnih žensk na brezosebne in nemočne stroje za rojevanje. Leta 1994, v času Clintonove administracije, je kongres revidiral Hydov amandma, a le do te mere, da so revne ženske, zdravstveno zavarovane v okviru programa Medicaid, postale ponovno upravičene do zvezno subvencioniranega brezplačnega posega v primeru posilstva in incesta poleg že dovoljene postavke ogroženosti življenja (NLRH 2011). Vendar je leta 1997 kongres tudi slednjo in ključno postavko skorajda povsem izničil, saj jo je zožil le na skrajno robne primere, to je, ko je ženska »v neposredni in največji stopnji nevarnosti«, da izgubi življenje, če se ji zaradi »fizične anomalije, fizične poškodbe ali bolezni«, ki izvira iz nosečnosti, takoj ne odpravi plodu (Arons in Agénor 2010: 7; NLRH 2011; Towey in dr. 2005: 4). Hydov amandma ni nikoli ponovno dopustil subvencioniranja umetnih prekinitev nosečnosti iz zveznega proračuna v primeru, da je ogroženo zdravje ženske, kar ostaja v veljavi še danes z izjemo šestnajstih ameriških držav (USAFacts 2024) in pomeni resno oviro pri nudenju temeljne zdravstvene oskrbe revnim ženskam. Kot izpostavlja Planned Parenthood, Hydov amandma temelji na podajanju »nepravičnega in neresničnega sporočila, da abortus ni ‚prava‘ zdravstvena oskrba« (Silverman 2016). Pri tem pa »utrjuje razredno prepričanje, da si ženske z nizkimi dohodki ne zaslužijo enakega dostopa ali dostojanstva kot ženske z višjimi dohodki« (Silverman 2016). Po navedbah instituta Guttmacher je vsaka četrta ženska, zavarovana v okviru programa Medicaid, zaradi Hydovega amandmaja, ki ji odreja možnost pristopa k brezplačnemu posegu na zahtevo, proti svoji volji prisiljena nadaljevati z nosečnostjo in plod donositi (Guttmacher 2021). Ker Medicaid krije v polni meri vse druge zdravstvene posege, gre tudi za svojevrstno institucionalno obliko stigmatizacije umetne prekinitve nosečnosti in revnih žensk, ki bi želele opraviti umetno prekinitev nosečnosti (Guttmacher Institute 2021).

Hydov amandma je leta 1980 posebej potrdilo še ameriško vrhovno sodišče. Odločilo je, da amandma domnevno ne posega v reproduktivno avtonomijo

revnih žensk, ki živijo iz rok v usta, in domnevno ne krati pravice revnih žensk do svobodnega odločanja o rojstvu otrok. Sprevrženo je interpretiralo, da vlada s Hydovim amandmajem, tj. z odtegotvanjem kritija stroškov UPN zavarovanim ženskam v programu Medicaid, domnevno ne postavlja preprek do pristopa k UPN. S t. i. »neenakim subvencioniranjem abortusa« – to je le v primeru ogroženosti življenja ženske in spolnega napada, ne pa tudi v primeru ogroženosti zdravja ženske in okvare ploda (kaj šele abortusa na zahtevo) – naj bi po mnenju vrhovnega sodišča kvečjemu »spodbujala alternativno dejavnost, ki šteje za javno korist« (Justia, US Supreme Court, <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/448/297/>). Torej spodbujala naj bi v največji meri zasebno zdravstvo in plačljivost zdravstvene oskrbe med revnimi ženskami, kar naj bi bilo v nekakšno neoliberalno javno korist. Hkrati je vrhovno sodišče enako sprevrženo razglasilo, da pravice ženske do svobodne izbire »ne spremlja« in se zato nanjo tudi ne more vezati »ustavno zagotovljena upravičenost žensk do finančnih sredstev, da bi se lahko poslužile celotnega spektra [po Roe vs Wadu] zaščitenih možnosti izbire« do svobodnega vstopanja v materinstvo (Boonstra 2016: 47–48; Olson 2018: 661). S to potezo je vrhovno sodišče razglasilo, da pravica do abortusa ni socialna pravica, kot tudi ne univerzalna pravica vseh žensk, še posebej če so revne in vključene v program Medicaid. Tej večinski odločitvi vrhovnega sodišča so nasprotovali štirje sodniki. Izpostavili so, da je Hydov amandma uperjen proti revnim ženskam, katerim z odtegotvanjem pravice do polno subvencioniranega posega v okviru zdravstvenega zavarovanja Medicaid odvzema pravico do svobodne izbire, tj. pravice do abortusa (Boonstra 2016: 48, CRR 2010: 18). V Hydovem amandmaju so prepoznali »legalno prisilo« za revne ženske, da za razliko od premožnejših, ki si lahko privoščijo visoko ceno UPN, rojevajo otroke proti svoji volji (CRR 2010: 18–19). Do enakega zaključka so prišli odvetniki Centra za reproduktivno zakonodajo in politiko, ki so leta 1980 pred vrhovnim sodiščem sprožili pritožbo proti Hydovemu amandmaju. Izpostavili so, da so »omejitve«, ki jih v načinu upravičenosti do subvencioniranja UPN prinaša Hydov amandma, »zasnovane tako, da vplivajo na odločitve žensk z nizkimi dohodki, postavljajoč jih v brezizhodni položaj, zaradi česar so prisiljene roditi« (Cooper 2002).

To so prepoznala tudi nekatera državna sodišča ameriških držav, ki so v 13 državah odredila, da te ne smejo upoštevati Hydovega amandmaja. Namesto tega morajo te države neodvisno od zveznega proračuna iz lastnih državnih proračunov v celoti financirati dostop do UPN na zahtevo med revnimi ženskami v okviru programa Medicaid. K temu ukrepu so prostovoljno, brez intervencije državnih vrhovnih sodišč, pristopile še štiri druge države (Havaji, Maryland, New York in Washington). Medtem je na drugi strani po sprejetju Hydovega amandmaja, ki je ukinil financiranje UPN na zahtevo med revnimi ženskami

iz zveznega proračuna, do leta 2010 kar 32 držav in leta 2021 že 34 držav skupaj z okrožjem Kolumbija usvojilo Hydov amandma še na ravni svojih lokalnih državnih proračunov (Guttmacher Institute 2021; Carriòn in Duffy 2022: 1). To pomeni, da na celotnem ozemlju ZDA še pred sprejetjem odločitve vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Dobbs revne ženske v okviru programa Medicaid v kar 35 državah, vključno z Zveznim okrožjem Kolumbija, niso imele nikakršne možnosti dostopa do brezplačnega abortusa na zahtevo, ki bi bil financiran iz lokalnih državnih ali iz zveznih proračunskih sredstev. Pred sprejetjem odločitve v zadevi Dobbs je to neposredno prizadelo kar 7,8 milijona žensk v rodni dobi med 15. in 49. letom starosti, leta 2024 pa že 8,9 milijona žensk, saj je stopnja revščine v ZDA skokovito narasla (Guttmacher Institute 2021; Salganicoff in dr. 2024). Če bi pred letom 2022, tj. pred sprejetjem odločitve v zvezi z Dobbs, prišlo do odprave Hydovega amandmaja, bi pravico do polnega kritja stroškov posega na zvezni ravni v vseh teh postavkah, ne le v primeru ogroženosti življenja ženske, skupaj pridobilo vsaj 14,2 milijona žensk v rodni dobi, vključenih v program Medicaid (Salganicoff in dr. 2020: 5).

Po ponovni kriminalizaciji abortusa na zvezni ravni v odločitvi Dobbs, ki je začela veljati 24. junija 2024, je do danes abortus v celoti prepovedalo 14 ameriških držav. Od 36 držav, ki abortusa niso eksplicitno prepovedale, jih kar 19 skupaj z okrožjem Kolumbija sledi Hydovemu amandmaju (Salganicoff in dr. 2024). Po podatkih fundacije Kaiser v teh državah živi 35 odstotkov ameriških žensk v rodni dobi, zavarovanih v okviru programa Medicaid. Te države torej po letu 2022 niso prepovedale abortusa, vendar sledijo diskriminatornim omejitvam Hydovega amandmaja. To pomeni, da 5,5 milijona žensk v rodni dobi nima pravice do kritja posega na zahtevo, kot tudi ne v primeru okvare ploda ali v primeru, da je zaradi nosečnosti ogroženo njihovo zdravje, čeprav so zdravstveno zavarovane v okviru Medicaid (Salganicoff in dr. 2024). Medtem je po sprejetju odločitve v zadevi Dobbs nadaljnjih 3,4 milijona zavarovank programa Medicaid v rodni dobi pristalo v 14 državah, ki od leta 2022 v celoti prepovedujejo abortus z morebitno izjemo, če je zaradi nosečnosti ogroženo življenje ženske. To pomeni, da kar nadaljnjih 21 odstotkov žensk v rodni dobi, zavarovanih v okviru programa Medicaid in prebivajočih v teh državah, pravice do kritja stroškov posega iz zdravstvenega zavarovanja nima več niti v primeru, da je nosečnost posledica spolnega napada (Salganicoff in dr. 2024). Gre za izbris ene od dveh ključnih, že tako omejujočih postavk, na katerih sloni Hydov amandma, in za svojevrstno povrnitev v obdobje pred letom 1994, a prek drugega mehanizma. Če namreč pred letom 1994 Hydov amandma ni dopuščal kritja stroškov UPN zavarovankam Medicaid, če je bila nosečnost posledica spolnega napada, je po letu 2022 za to poskrbela odločitev v zadevi

Dobbs vrhovnega sodišča v tistih državah, ki so prepoved abortusa nemudoma posvojile. Hydov amandma, tako pred kot po sprejetju odločitve v zadevi Dobbs, prizadene skorajda 60 odstotkov vseh zavarovank, vključenih v Medicaid, saj jim odvzema pravico do kritja stroškov posega kljub zdravstvenemu zavarovanju (Boonstra 2016: 49–50; Salganicoff in dr. 2024). To za ženske z nizkimi dohodki ali pod pragom revščine pomeni temeljno in večinoma nepremostljivo oviro pri uveljavljanju pravice do reproduktivne avtonomije in pravice do abortusa. S temi posegi je bil za ranljive skupine ameriških žensk dostop do teh pravic in oblik zdravstvene oskrbe različno stopenjsko izvotljen ter izničen že desetletja pred sprejetjem odločitve vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Dobbs junija 2022.

Od uvedbe Hydovega amandmaja pa vse do danes demokratska stranka v času trajanja svojih predsedniških mandatov v Beli hiši in v obdobjih, ko je imela večino v ameriškem kongresu, torej v zadnjih petih desetletjih, ni naredila nič, da bi amandma razveljavila. To bi lahko storila zlahka, kajti amandma je treba v okviru sprejemanja tekočega zveznega proračuna vsako leto znova potrditi ali preprosto zavrniti (Martin 2022). Prav demokratska stranka je leta 2014 Hydov amandma celo razširila na novo veliko skupino revnih zaposlenih žensk, ki so z Obamovo reformo prvokrat dobile pravico do zasebnih polic zdravstvenega zavarovanja in ki jih po novem do določene mere subvencionira država. Obamov izvršni ukaz številka 13535 zasebnim zavarovalnicam, ki izdajajo zvezno subvencionirane zdravstvene zavarovalne police za ženske z nizkimi dohodki v okviru programa ACA, skladno s Hydovim amandmajem dovoljuje kritje stroškov UPN le v primeru, če je ogroženo življenje ženske, in v primeru, če je nosečnost posledica spolnega napada na žensko. Izrecno pa prepoveduje kritje stroškov v primeru UPN na zahtevo, kar predstavlja večino primerov, in nadalje v primeru okvare ploda in ogroženosti zdravja ženske (The White House, Executive Order 13535, 24. 3. 2010). Tako je med letoma 2010 in 2019 v okviru Obamove reforme, ki je prinesla državno delno subvencioniran pristop k zasebnim zavarovalniškim shemam, dostop do zdravstvenega zavarovanja pridobilo 10 milijonov žensk. Kar sedem milijonov od desetih milijonov žensk, zavarovanih v okviru programa ACA, je žensk v reproduktivni dobi, za katere je Obamov predsedniški ukaz, s katerim je bil Hydov amandma vgrajen v Obamovo veliko zdravstveno reformo, izničil pravico do zdravstvenega kritja UPN na zahtevo (ibid.). Vse to za manj premožne, revne zaposlene ženske po letu 2014 z nastopom Obamove reforme predstavlja sistemsko obliko kratenja reproduktivne avtonomije in pravice do svobodnega odločanja o rojstvu otrok. Skupaj prizadene vsaj 18 milijonov ameriških žensk v rodni dobi.

3 Posledice Hydovega amandmaja: cenovna nedostopnost UPN za revne zaposlene in siromašne skupine žensk, zavarovanih v okviru programa ACA ali Medicaida

Po podatkih inštituta Guttmacher in drugih raziskovalnih ustanov je kar tri četrtine vseh žensk, ki jim uspe pristopiti k abortusu v ZDA, revnih zaposlenih žensk in siromašnih žensk (NCRP 2022).⁵ Gre za skupine osiromašenih in revnih zaposlenih žensk, katerih skupni družinski dohodki so pod zvezno določenim pragom revščine in se v najboljšem primeru vzpenjo do njegovega dvestoodstotnega praga, ki ne omogoča dostojnega preživetja (D’Innenczo in Olson 2022). Ta potreba po abortusu med ekonomsko razopolnomočenimi je primarno posledica kontracepcijske revščine. Kajti za revne zaposlene je tudi po sprejetju reforme ACA najbolj učinkovita kontracepcija še vedno (do) plačljiva (Jones in dr. 2002). Zvezni socialni sklad Title X, ustanovljen leta 1970 in namenjen kontracepcijski oskrbi selektivno izbranih najrevnejših med popolnoma osiromašenimi, pa je vse od ustanovitve dalje sistematično in načrtno podhranjen ter v zadnjem desetletju in pol tudi infrastrukturno zdesetkan. V 33 različnih ameriških državah se je število ustanov, ki so bile pripravljene izvajati program, samo leta 2019 zaradi Trumpovih restrikcij zmanjšalo za kar 981 ali za četrtino (Dawson 2020). Raven učinkovitega financiranja kontracepcijskega programa Title X je bila na prehodu v 21. stoletje skorajda 60 odstotkov nižja kot leta 1980 (Towey in dr. 2005: 7). Posledično je bilo na prehodu v 21. stoletje kar 11,5 milijona odraslih revnih žensk in revnih zaposlenih žensk ter 4,9 milijona žensk, mlajših od dvajset let, brez kakršnekoli oblike kontracepcijske oskrbe (prav tam). Iz tega tudi izhaja, da imajo siromašne in revne zaposlene ženske večjo stopnjo (nezaželenih) nosečnosti od premožnejših. To je 133 na 1000 revnih žensk oziroma 115 nosečnosti na 1000 žensk z nizkimi dohodki za razliko od premožnejših, med katerimi je 66 nosečnosti na 1000 žensk. Med slednjimi je, kot še izpostavlja Jones s sodelavkami, stopnja abortivnosti le 16-odstotna v primerjavi s 33-odstotno stopnjo med revnimi ženskami, in to kljub množičnim preprekam, ki jih morajo revne ženske premostiti, da bi prišle do posega (Jones idr. 2002). Danes se število žensk, ki potrebujejo državno subvencionirano obliko kontracepcijske, giblje okrog 20 milijonov,⁶ prejema pa jo le devet milijonov žensk

5. Od tega jih ima kar 49 odstotkov nižje dohodka od zvezno določenega praga revščine, 26 odstotkov pa jih životari na pragu revščine (NCRP 2022).

6. Od tega je po zadnjih razpoložljivih podatkih 10,1 milijona belskih žensk, sledi 5,1 milijona Latinoameričank, 3,7 milijona Afroameričank in 1,8 milijona žensk, ki pripadajo drugim etničnim manjšinam (Frost in dr. 2019).

v rodni dobi (Frost in dr. 2019). Zgovoren je podatek, da za devet milijonov žensk, ki se jim uspe prebiti v subvencionirane programe kontracepcijske oskrbe, dostop do kontracepcije pomeni, da se letno izognejo dvema milijonoma nezaželenih in nenačrtovanih nosečnosti, od tega največji delež odpade na 1,5 milijona koristnic programa Title X, tj. kar 755.000 preprečenih nezaželenih nosečnosti letno (Frost in dr. 2019; Darney in dr. 2022: 498). Skoraj deset milijonov revnih in revnih zaposlenih žensk pa še vedno nima nikakršnega dostopa do ustrezne kontracepcijske oskrbe. Zanje ostaja zunaj dosega tako plačljiva kontracepcija kot od sprejetja Hydovega amandmaja dalje tudi dostop do abortusa.

Hydov amandma, ki je v ZDA v veljavi vse od leta 1977, je pomenil neposredno in konkretno obliko napada na reproduktivne pravice različnih skupin osiromašenih žensk do svobodnega vstopanja v materinstvo. Izničil je možnost polnega kritja stroškov posega, ki jim sicer pripada po Medicaidu, kar je revne ženske potisnilo v brezizhodno situacijo. Plačljivi abortus ostaja za večino ekonomsko deprivilegiranih skupin žensk nedosegljiva pravica. Po podatkih Zveznega sklada za rezerve namreč kar štirideset odstotkov Američank in Američanov živi iz rok v usta, torej ne razpolaga niti s štiristo dolarji mesečnih rezervnih prihrankov (Salganicoff in dr. 2024). Samo strošek za izvedbo umetne prekinitve nosečnosti brez spremljajočih pregledov in izvidov v ZDA to vsoto znatno presega. Cene posega skokovito naraščajo; zmanjšuje se tudi število ustanov, ki izvajajo umetne prekinitve nosečnosti, kar povečuje višino dodatnih stroškov, predvsem tistih, ki so povezani s prevozom in drugo logistiko. Leta 2017, torej pet let pred Dobbsom, je bilo treba v ZDA za medikamentni abortus na zahtevo v prvem trimesečju povprečno odšteti 475 dolarjev in za kirurško opravljeni abortus 495 dolarjev, medtem ko je bilo leta 2025, torej tri leta po Dobbsu, v obeh primerih za tak poseg treba odšteti že do 800 dolarjev (Schroeder in dr. 2022: 14; Planned Parenthood 2025).⁷ Neprofitna organizacija Planned Parenthood nudi le nekoliko nižje cene (USAFacts 2024).⁸ Ta je pred letom 2022 med revnimi ženskami opravila 324.000 plačljivih abortusov na leto, kar pa je v okviru reproduktivne oskrbe, ki jo nudi, le tri odstotke vseh izvedenih in plačljivih storitev pri tej organizaciji; glavni poudarek je namreč na nujenju kontracepcijske oskrbe in testiranju na spolno nalezljive bolezni (USAFacts 2024). Kljub temu da gre za neprofitno in v luči manka javne osnovne zdravstvene mreže

7. Cene posega v drugem trimesečju se gibljejo od 715 do 2000 dolarjev, odvisno od stadija, ustanove in države. Neprofitna organizacija Planned Parenthood nudi le nekoliko nižje cene (USAFacts 2024).

8. Za posege v prvem trimesečju nosečnosti zaračuna 580 dolarjev za medikamentni abortus in 600 dolarjev za kirurški abortus (USAFacts 2024).

v ZDA za dejansko osrednjo organizacijo, ki skrbi za reproduktivno zdravje revnih žensk tudi na področju UPN, so nekoliko nižje cene posega od tistih pri drugih izvajalcih še vedno visoke ter prav tako težko dosegljive za večino revnih zaposlenih in najrevnejših skupin žensk, to je tistih, katerim zavarovanja Medicaid (kot tudi zdravstvene police ACA in zvezne zdravstvene zavarovalne police) po sprejetju Hydovega amandmaja ne krijejo stroškov posega, kar samo med zavarovankami Medicaida zajema vsaj devet milijonov žensk v rodni dobi (Saganicoff in dr. 2024). Cena posega pri neprofitni organizaciji Planned Parenthood, ki se v povprečju giblje med 580 in 600 dolarji, je za siromašne in revne zaposlene ženske še vedno enormen in v večini primerov nepremostljiv strošek, saj je 500 dolarjev lahko enakovredno mesečnemu plačilu najemnine za stanovanje (Leonhardt 2019). Nadalje, 1100 dolarjev – kar je navadno končna realna vsota, ki jo je treba odšteti za celoten paket, saj je ceni posega treba dodati tako spremljajoče stroške zdravstvenih pregledov in izvidov kot stroške, ki izhajajo iz logistike (tj. stroške, povezane s prevozom, nadomestnim varstvom otrok, morebitno podaljšano nastanitvijo, če država zahteva 24- ali 48- urno obdobje za razmislek po prvem obisku zdravnika) – pa je za osiromašene in revne zaposlene v ZDA že ekvivalentno mesečni plači (Leonhardt 2019; Jones 2013: e176; D’Innocenzio in Olson 2022).

Stroške posega do le določene mere, največkrat simbolične vsote, pomagajo kriti razpršene, težko dosegljive, naključno vzpostavljene dobrodne organizacije. Njihovo delovanje je nestabilno, saj je odvisno od nerednega in nihajočega dotoka zasebnih donatorskih sredstev (Trowley 2005: 8). Pred Dobbsom je na žensko v stiski, ki se ji je uspelo prebiti v ožji krog izbranih prosilk dobrodne pomoči, prišlo povprečno največ 280 dolarjev pomoči – to je odločno premalo za kritje cene samega posega, kaj šele za kritje vseh stroškov (McCann 2022). Med temi dobrodelnimi organizacijami, specializiranimi za pomoč ženskam v stiski, osrednje mesto v ZDA zavzema National Network of Abortion Funds, ki je bila ustanovljena leta 1993 in ima 102 izpostavi (CRR 2010: 5). Finančno pomoč nudi ženskam z nizkimi dohodki, ki so izpadle iz programa Medicaid, in tistim zavarovankam programa Medicaid, ki po sprejetju Hydovega amandmaja niso več upravičene do kritja stroškov umetne prekinitve nosečnosti. Kot pri drugih dobrodelnih organizacijah gre tudi v tem primeru za selektivne oblike pomoči, kar pomeni, da je bila pred letom 2022 večina prosilk odslovljenih. Po dostopnih podatkih je na primer leta 2019 ta organizacija prejela 89.000 prošenj revnih žensk v stiski, pomagala pa je lahko le 20.000 ženskam. In še tem je v najboljšem primeru lahko ponudila le delno subvencijo cene posega (Boonstra 2016: 49; Arons in Agénor 2010: 9). Pred Dobbsom je organizacija vsako leto pridobila tri milijone dolarjev donatorskih sredstev, največ 20.000 ženskam letno pa je lahko

povrnila le del stroškov posega v višini od pičlih 50 do 200 dolarjev, in sicer pod pogojem, da so preostali in dejansko večji del stroškov kljub revščini ali prenizkim dohodkom pokrile prosilke same (CRR, *Whose Choice*, 2010: 5, 30). Za vsaj eno petino prosilk pred Dobbsonom je to pomenilo, da je bila razlika med prejeto subvencijo in ceno posega, ki jo je morala prosilka še vedno pokriti iz lastnega žepa, vsaj 500 dolarjev (Trowley 2005: 11). Zato kljub odobritvi povrnitve določenega dela stroškov posega nekaterim ženskam ni uspelo in v državah, ki po letu 2022 niso prepovedale abortusa, ne uspe zbrati preostanka sredstev, da bi si prek subvencij, ki jih nudijo dobrodelne organizacije, lahko zagotovile pristop k UPN. Te ženske nato »izginejo«, zaposlene pa nimajo povratnih informacij, kaj se je zgodilo z njimi oziroma z njihovo nosečnostjo (CRR, *Whose Choice*, 2010: 30). Za druge to pomeni tekmo s časom. Da bi lahko zbrale ustrezno vsoto denarja, so se prisiljene zadolžiti pri sorodnikih ali pa se odpovedati plačilu računov za elektriko, zdravstveno zavarovanje, najemnino, nabavo osnovnega živeža tudi za otroke v družini in lizingu za avtomobil (Jones in Jerman 2017). Na ta način tvegajo deložacijo in izgubo mobilnosti, kar lahko vodi v odpustitev z delovnega mesta. Za tiste brez podporne mreže sorodnikov in prijateljskega kroga doplačevanje stroškov posega in spremljajočih stroškov pomeni, da morajo nemalokrat razprodati ali zastaviti svoje borno premoženje in/ali celo najeti oderuška posojila na črnem trgu (Salganicoff in dr. 2020; ACLU 1994).

Kljub delnim subvencijam, ki jih nudijo dobrodelne organizacije, le redkim revnim ženskam, katerih zdravstveno zavarovanje Medicaid ali program ACA po sprejetju Hydovega amandmaja ne krije stroškov posega, v prvem trimesečju nosečnosti uspe zbrati dovolj denarja za pristop k posegu. Kot izpostavlja Boonstra, so raziskave pokazale, da je za 52 odstotkov žensk zbiranje finančnih sredstev pomenilo zamik pristopa k posegu v drugo trimesečje, kar je ceno posega skokovito podražilo. To je ženske potisnilo v nov začarani krog zbiranja sredstev in še večjega zadolževanja ter v še večjo stisko. Cene posega v drugem trimesečju nosečnosti so namreč dvakrat ali trikrat višje kot cene UPN v prvem trimesečju nosečnosti, število že tako zdesetkanih specializiranih izvajalcev za opravljanje UPN v drugem trimesečju pa drastično zmanjšano (Boonstra 2016: 49). To za ženske pomeni vrtenje v začaranem krogu, zato so, če jim ne uspe zbrati sredstev v prvem trimesečju nosečnosti, praviloma prisiljene odstopiti od varnega in legalnega posega (CRR 2010a; Arons in Agénor 2010: 5). Po podatkih Centra za reproduktivne pravice je bilo pred letom 2022 vsako leto do 32 odstotkov žensk, ki so bile in ostajajo vključene v Medicaid, prisiljenih plod donositi in vstopiti v neprostovoljno materinstvo. Hydov amandma je tako še pred letom 2022 vsaj eno tretjino revnih žensk, ki živijo na pragu ali znatno pod pragom revščine, potisnil v materinstvo proti njihovi volji in na škodo njihovih

družinskih skupnosti, pa tudi na škodo njihovega telesnega in duševnega zdravja (Arons in Agénor 2010: 9). Pravica podplačanih, revnih zaposlenih in siromašnih žensk do načrtovanja družine in lastne prihodnosti je bila v ZDA le tri leta po sprejetju odločitve vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Roe proti Wadu leta 1973 načrtno izvozljena. Za revne in ogrožene skupine žensk v ZDA je bila tudi pred letom 2022 pravica do svobodnega odločanja o rojstvu otrok nedosegljiva utopija. Sistem namreč zagotavlja reproduktivno avtonomijo le bogatejšim, saj je ta odvisna od debeline denarnice, preostalim pa jo načrtno in sistematično odvzema. Ta razredna delitev se še bolj eksplicitno kaže po sprejetju odločitve vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Dobbs junija 2022, ki je stisko predvsem revnih žensk še bolj skrajno poglobila.

4 Učinki odločitve vrhovnega sodišča 24. junija 2022 in ponovne kriminalizacije abortusa na zvezni ravni

Ameriško vrhovno sodišče je 24. junija 2022 v primeru Dobbs proti Jackson Women's Health Organization razveljavilo odločitev, ki jo je sprejelo leta 1973, in na zvezni ravni ponovno kriminaliziralo abortus. To odločitev je samo v prvih stotih dneh posvojilo 14 držav, ki so prepovedale abortus tudi v primeru, ko je ogroženo zdravje ženske (Damante in Jones 2023). Do konca leta 2023 oziroma 2024 je popolno prepoved abortusa ali podobno odločitev, ki prepoveduje abortus po šestem tednu nosečnosti, z enakimi posledicami usvojilo skupaj že 24 držav, kar je skorajda polovica vseh ameriških držav. Brez pravice do pristopa k UPN na zahtevo in v drugih postavkah, ki se nanašajo na spolni napad, okvaro ploda in reševanje zdravja ženske, je ostalo vsaj 22 milijonov žensk v starosti od 15 do 49 let ali najmanj vsaka tretja Američanka v reproduktivni dobi (Damante in Jones 2023; Nash in Guarneri 2023). Takoj po sprejetju odločitve vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Dobbs so civilnodružbena gibanja skupaj z nekaterimi naprednejšimi predstavniki demokratske stranke takratnega predsednika ZDA Joeja Bidna pozvala, da razširi sestavo vrhovnega sodišča z novimi, liberalno usmerjenimi sodniki, kar bi omogočilo razveljavitev njegove odločitve. Hkrati so ga pozvala, naj razglasi izredne razmere na področju varovanja zdravja in življenja žensk (Grey 2022a). To bi administraciji omogočilo, da bi lahko znotraj držav, ki so ponovno kriminalizirale abortus, na zemljiščih v lasti zvezne vlade, kot so na primer vojaške baze in bolnišnice za vojne veterane, vzpostavila t. i. varna območja s premičnimi enotami za izvajanje UPN na zahtevo (prav tam). Ta ukrep bi pristop k posegu olajšal predvsem finančno šibkejšim, ki si potovanja v druge države ne morejo privoščiti. Namesto tega je demokratski predsednik Biden 8. julija 2022 podpisal predsedniški izvršni ukaz, ki ženskam

zgolj omogoča, da brez kazenskega pregona odpotujejo iz ameriške države, kjer je abortus prepovedan, in UPN na zahtevo opravijo v drugi državi znotraj ZDA, ki ga ne kriminalizira (Grey 2022b).

S svojim predsedniškim ukazom je tako demokratski predsednik Biden zaščitil le reproduktivno avtonomijo premožnejših žensk, to je žensk, ki imajo dovolj visoke dohodke, da si lahko privoščijo zelo draga potovanja (in enako drag poseg) v tisto peščico ameriških držav, ki abortusa niso prepovedale in ki po letu 2022 ležijo v dveh geografsko skrajno ločenih predelih ZDA, tj. na zahodni in vzhodni obali (Grey 2022a). Medtem za manj premožne in revne zaposlene ženske dostop do legalnega in varnega abortusa ostaja cenovno nedosegljiv. Stroški posega skupaj z drugimi osnovnimi spremljevalnimi stroški so namreč za ženske zunaj njihove matične države več tisoč dolarjev, kajti ceni posega je treba prišteti še najmanj stroške letalskega prevoza in nastanitve. Raziskovalni oddelk *The New York Timesa* je septembra 2022 pripravil natančnejšo razčlemba osnovnih stroškov. Na primer, ženska, ki potrebuje UPN v zgodnji fazi drugega trimesečja nosečnosti in je s svojo družino stacionirana v državi Idaho, tak poseg lahko najbližje opravi v državi Washington. Za sam poseg bi morala odšteti več kot 3000 dolarjev, za preostale nujne stroške, ki vključujejo stroške prevoza in nastanitve, pa bi morala, če bi potovala skupaj z družino, odšteti več kot 1000 dolarjev; za prehrano in za nadomestno varstvo otrok še okrog 400 dolarjev, skupaj torej skorajda 4900 dolarjev (McCann 2022).⁹ V nemalo primerih bi samo za potovanje iz Aljaske, srednjega ameriškega pasu ali južnega ameriškega pasu, kjer je skoncentrirana večina držav, ki po letu 2022 prepovedujejo abortus, morala posamezna ženska odšteti do 1800 dolarjev (prav tam). Zato se po sprejetju odločitve v zadevi Dobbs še več revnih žensk nahaja v skrajni stiski.

Po odločitvi vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Dobbs in kriminalizaciji abortusa v skorajda polovici vseh ameriških držav so ženske v teh državah prisiljene potovati zunaj meja, torej znatno dlje kot pred letom 2022, in ostati v drugi državi dlje časa

9. Nadalje je izračunal, da bi morala ženska, ki bi iz južnega ameriškega pasu sama potovala v Minnesoto, za najcenejšo obliko varnega abortusa, tj. medikamentozni abortus do devetega tedna nosečnosti, ki je zaradi varovanja zdravja ženske voden v zdravstveni instituciji v prisotnosti zdravnika, odšteti 700 dolarjev. K temu je treba prišteti še najmanj 620 dolarjev stroškov za prevoz, nastanitev in prehrano ali skupaj nekaj več kot 1300 dolarjev (McCann 2022). Podobno bi lahko na primer ženska v 22. tednu nosečnosti, stacionirana na Floridi, nujni kirurški abortus najbližje opravila v državi New York, kjer bi morala za poseg iz lastnega žepa odšteti najmanj 2350 dolarjev, za preostale nujne stroške, ki vključujejo stroške prevoza, nastanitve in prehrane, pa še dodatnih 900 dolarjev ali skupaj 3250 dolarjev (ibid.).

(McCann 2022). Še toliko bolj, če je med prvim obiskom zdravnika in posegom predpisano enodnevno ali dvodnevno obdobje za t. i. premislek. Zaradi tega in dejstva, da že v osnovi večina revnih žensk ne zmore zbrati dovolj sredstev za kritje stroškov posega, se je takoj po sprejetju odločitve v zadevi Dobbs eksponentno povečalo število prosilk za dobrodelno finančno pomoč. Hkrati se je nevarno podaljšalo gestacijsko obdobje, v katerem tiste prosilke, ki se jim uspe prebiti do denarne pomoči, dejansko pristopijo k posegu. Izvedba posega se je zaradi eksponentno povišanih spremljajočih stroškov, pa tudi dejstva, da je treba premagati znatno večje geografske razdalje, in dejstva, da prekarne delavke za razliko od polno zaposlenih zaradi narave svojega nizko plačanega in manj zaščitenege dela težje začasno zapustijo svoje delovno mesto za več kot dan ali dva, avtomatično prestavil iz prvega v drugo trimesečje (D’Innocenzio in Olson 2022). To povečuje rizičnost posega in dodatno zvišuje tudi cene posega. K temu prispevajo še dolge čakalne vrste v državah, ki abortusa ne prepovedujejo, kajti po kriminalizaciji abortusa so bili v skorajda polovici ameriških držav, ki so abortus prepovedale, tamkajšnji izvajalci UPN prisiljeni zapreti svoja vrata. Zato so se obremenitve že tako zdesetkanih izvajalcev v drugih državah vsaj podvojile oziroma celo potrojile,¹⁰ in sicer do te mere, da je treba za prvi obisk pri zdravniku ali za poseg v državah, ki mejijo na tiste, v katerih je abortus prepovedan, čakati tudi tri in več tednov (Myers in dr. 2024). To ponovno zvišuje gestacijski prag in ceno posega, a ne le za ženske iz drugih držav, ampak tudi za rezidentke držav, ki abortusa ne kriminalizirajo (McCann 2022).¹¹

10. V komajda stotih dneh po sprejetju odločitve v zadevi Dobbs je v 13 državah, ki so popolnoma prepovedale abortus, vseh 66 klinik prenehalo izvajati umetne prekinitve nosečnosti, v državi Georgia pa ena od skupaj 19. V teh državah je bilo pred Dobbsum leta 2020 opravljenih 125.780 umetnih prekinitev nosečnosti. V njih živi 22 milijonov žensk v rodni dobi, kar je 30 odstotkov vseh ameriških žensk v rodni dobi (Kirstein in dr. 2022).

11. Leta 2023 je v ZDA k posegu zunaj svoje matične države pristopilo 155.000 žensk ali 16 odstotkov vseh žensk, ki so tega leta legalno opravile abortus. To je bilo dvakrat več kot pred letom 2022, ko je bil abortus v ZDA še zakonit v vseh državah in je v druge države zaradi večjega števila še dostopnih izvajalcev in manj strukturnih ovir (npr. obveznega posvetovanja, 24- ali 48-urnega obdobja za premislek) potovalo 80.000 žensk letno (Maddow-Zimet in Forouzan 2025). Pred Dobbsum je bilo potovanje v druge države namreč nujna za tiste ženske, katerih matične države abortusa sicer še niso prepovedovale, a so imele za nekaj milijonov prebivalstva na voljo manj kot pet institucionalnih izvajalcev UPN (kar 20 držav) ali le od šest do deset (11 držav) – vse te države so bile skoncentrirane v osrednjem in južnem delu ZDA (AbortionFinder 2023). Medtem je po letu 2022 svoja vrata zaprlo vsaj dvajset osrednjih zdravstvenih ustanov, ki so izvajale umetne prekinitve nosečnosti, med letoma 2020 in 2024 pa kar 40 (Lopez 2024; Myers in dr. 2024).

Za kako velike dodatne prepreke in začarani krog, ki je presečišče različnih omejitev, gre po letu 2022, nazorno kaže stanje, s katerim se soočajo ženske na Floridi, eni najbolj bogatih držav ZDA. Na Floridi se cena posega v prvem trimesečju giblje med 600 in 800 dolarji. Pristop k pravočasnemu posegu sta še pred Dobbsom dodatno ovirala obvezno predpisano svetovanje ter 24-urno čakalno obdobje med svetovanjem in posegom (Colombini in Nadworny 2024), kar pomeni, da se mora ženska v ustanovo vrniti vsaj dvakrat oziroma trikrat. Ta država sledi Hydovemu amandmaju in torej prepoveduje kritje stroškov posega za revne ženske, zdravstveno zavarovane v okviru programa Medicaid. Prav tako prepoveduje kritje stroškov posega za drugo skupino revnih žensk, tj. revnih zaposlenih žensk (z dohodki nad 130-odstotnim pragom revščine) z zasebno sklenjenimi zdravstvenimi policami v okviru Obamove reforme oziroma programa ACA (Colombini in Nadworny 2024). Po odločitvi vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi Dobbs je maja 2024 država Florida uvedla kriminalizacijo in prepoved izvajanja abortusa po šestem tednu nosečnosti. S tem ukrepom je, podobno kot še osem drugih držav, namerno izničila možnost pravočasnega pristopa k zakonitemu posegu in med vrsticami abortus prepovedala. Večina žensk v tem stadiju nosečnosti namreč še ne ve, da so noseče. Tiste, ki posumijo v to možnost po prvem izostanku menstruacije, imajo na voljo le nekaj dni, da ukrepajo, tj. da uradno zaprosijo dobrodelno organizacijo za odobritev delnega kritja stroškov, pogoj pa je, da imajo že dogovorjen termin za poseg in da zberejo preostala sredstva – kar je odločno premalo. Zato je večina žensk prisiljena po šestem tednu nosečnosti potovati v druge države. In ker Florido obkrožajo države, ki abortus po letu 2022 v celoti prepovedujejo, to pomeni, da morajo prepotovati še toliko večje geografske razdalje. Vse to še dodatno povečuje že tako visoke potne in nastanitvene stroške, ki posledično dosegajo minimalno vsaj 1000 dolarjev (Colombini in Nadworny 2024). Medtem floridska dobrodelna organizacija Tampa Bay Abortion Fund, ki je pred letom 2022 krila do 50 odstotkov stroškov cene posega, zaradi vsaj dvojno povečanega obsega prošenj po letu 2022 lahko krije le 30 odstotkov cene posega. To pomeni, da morajo revne prosilke pomoči samo za poseg še vedno doplačati najmanj 490 dolarjev (prav tam). Tudi v državah, ki pro forma dovoljujejo abortus le do šestega tedna nosečnosti, za razliko od štirinajstih držav, ki ga v celoti prepovedujejo, to preprosto pomeni, da morajo revne ženske, katerim posega ne krije Medicaid, še hitreje kot v preteklosti zbrati ustrezno in večjo količino denarja. To pa je v tako pokrčenem časovnem oknu dvojno nemogoč podvig. Revne ženske avtomatično padejo iz ozko nastavljenega legalnega okvira, ko je po Dobbsu še moč pristopiti k abortusu v matični državi. Na dobrodelne organizacije se naslonijo v gestacijskem obdobju po šestem tednu nosečnosti, zato še dražja potovanja izven držav skupaj s

povečanimi stroški posega postajajo vse pogostejša in toliko večja finančna obremenitev za dobrodelne organizacije. Te so že pred Dobbsom operirale z nizkimi proračuni in niso pokrivalo polne cene posega in stroškov, zato tudi po Dobbsu niso kos temu izzivu – kljub sprva skokovito povečanim donacijam.

Ponovna kriminalizacija abortusa na zvezni ravni leta 2022 je izzvala še večji naval na dobrodelne organizacije, saj so te v enem letu po sprejetju odločitve v zadevi Dobbs prejele za 39 odstotkov ali vsaj 36.000 več klicev žensk v stiski in prošenj za finančno pomoč kot v letu poprej (NNAF 2024). V znamenje ogorčenega protesta takoj po razveljavitvi odločitve v zadevi Roe proti Wadu so te organizacije od individualnih donatorjev v prvem tednu prejele rekordno vsoto več kot 10 milijonov dolarjev za razliko od povprečno treh milijonov dolarjev, s katerimi so na letni ravni operirale pred letom 2022 (McCann 2022). V prvem letu po ponovni kriminalizaciji abortusa v več kot 20 ameriških državah so zato lahko dobrodelne organizacije razdelile 37 milijonov dolarjev subvencij za kritje stroškov UPN, kar je bilo 88 odstotkov več kot v letu poprej, in 10 milijonov dolarjev pomoči za kritje dodatnih stroškov, kar je predstavljalo kar 178 odstotkov več kot v letu poprej (NNAF 2024). Vendar so tudi na samem višku donatorske pomoči z delnimi subvencijami lahko poskrbele za le 102.855 žensk.¹² Za primerjavo, to je še vedno le ena tretjina vseh letno oskrbljenih v programu Medicaid pred sprejetjem Hydovega amandmaja leta 1977. To pomeni, da so bile dobrodelne organizacije primorane zavrniti vsaj 22.000 revnih žensk (NNAFF 2024). Čeprav so porabile za nekajkratnik več finančnih sredstev, s svojimi delnimi subvencijami niso pomagale bistveno večjemu številu žensk kot v letih pred Dobbsom. Po grobih izračunih so lahko pomagale kvečjemu 13.000 ženskam več (NNAF 2024). Razlog se skriva v štirikrat višjih stroških oskrbe na posamezno žensko, ki jih je zakrivila odločitev v zadevi Dobbs, saj je ta imela za posledico prisilna potovanja v države, ki abortusa ne prepovedujejo. Poglobljena stiska vse večjega števila revnih žensk se je odrazila v višjih stroških, ki jih terja prečkanje tudi več kot ene same državne meje, s tem povezanih večjih dodatnih logističnih stroških in višji ceni posega, med drugim kot posledici vse bolj zamaknjenih pristopov k posegu v višjih stadijih nosečnosti. Ker se je povečalo število klicev in prošenj za finančno pomoč, so morale organizacije najeti več novega osebja in za to odšteti dodatna denarna sredstva, saj so le tako lahko sprocesirale za skorajda štirideset odstotkov več klicev novih prosilk in jim pomagale s preučitvijo zakonitih možnosti pristopa k posegu v drugih državah in z organizacijo za to potrebne logistične pomoči (McCann 2022). Tipičen primer tega, kako se to odraža na

12. Tega leta, tj. 2023, je bilo v ZDA izvedenih 1.026.690 legalnih abortusov (Simmons-Duffin 2024).

mikro ravni, je organizacija Missouri Abortion Fund. Ta je v letu pred Dobbsom za pomoč prosilkam namenila 235.000 dolarjev donacij, med julijem 2022 in junijem 2023, torej leto dni po sprejetju odločitve v zadevi Dobbs, pa kar milijon dolarjev. Kljub temu da je prejela za štirikrat večji znesek donatorske pomoči, je z delnimi subvencijami lahko priskočila na pomoč le 300 ženskam več kot v letu poprej, kajti izdatki za delno pomoč eni sami ženski so se prav v luči novih prepovedi in logističnih omejitev, ki jih je prinesel Dobbs, povzpeli s povprečno 1000 dolarjev na nekajkratnik te vsote (Sherman 2023).

Takoj po letu 2023 so se dobrodelne organizacije soočile z drastičnim upadom donacij, ki so se povrnilo na raven pred letom 2022. Individualni podporniki so namreč svoja sredstva preusmerili v financiranje volilnih in drugih političnih kampanj z namenom vplivanja na politike (Colombini in Nadworny 2024). Hkrati se dobrodelne organizacije po letu 2022 soočajo s porastom stroškov oskrbe na eno samo žensko, ki seveda za razliko od donacij ne upadajo, in naraščajočim številom prosilk za pomoč, ki se je povečalo za štirikrat (Goldhill 2024). Posledično so se od sredine leta 2024 dobrodelne organizacije prisiljene zatekati k skrajnim ukrepom. Finančno pomoč dodeljujejo le še ženskam, ki so že v devetem tednu ali višjem stadiju nosečnosti, z izjemo mladoletnic in žrtev spolnih napadov, kar povečuje stisko preostalih prosilk, ki ne pridejo na vrsto (Goldhill 2024). Ko izčrpajo razpoložljiva sredstva, sedež organizacije za nekaj tednov ali celo mesecev zaprejo, da si medtem lahko finančno opomorejo z morebitnimi novimi donacijami. To pomeni, da v tem obdobju ne sprejemajo novih klicev prosilk in ne dodeljujejo subvencij niti najbolj pomoči potrebnim ženskam; te tako ostanejo brez možnosti pristopa k posegu (Sherman 2023). To vse priča o nevdržnosti sistema dobrodelne pomoči in tako organiziranega dostopa do zdravstvene oskrbe, ki temelji na prostovoljnih organizacijah namesto na uvedbi osnovnega zdravstvenega zavarovanja in vključitvi pravice do abortusa v temeljno zdravstveno oskrbo ter seveda ob predpostavki, da se razveljavi odločitev sodišča v zadevi Dobbs (Towley 2005: 3). Po okvirnih izračunih naj bi bilo zato samo v tistih ameriških državah, ki so uvedle t. i. sprožilne zakone in na podlagi katerih znotraj svojih meja uvajajo (skorajda) popolno prepoved abortusa, na leto prisiljenih roditi najmanj 75.000 žensk, ki jim finančni položaj ne dopušča, da bi si lahko zagotovile pristop k posegu zunaj meja svojih držav (Schreiber 2022). Medtem se je po kriminalizaciji abortusa na zvezni ravni maternalna umrljivost zaradi nelegalnega abortusa v ZDA takoj povečala za 13 odstotkov, in sicer z 861 uradno zabeleženih primerov leto poprej na kar 969 smrti v letu 2022 (Mueksch 2022). V naslednjih letih naj bi se povečala za najmanj 24 odstotkov ali vsaj za 210 dodatnih smrti. Ta delež bo med revnimi manjšinskimi skupnostmi narasel za kar 39 odstotkov (ibid.).

5 Zaključek

ZDA so po sprejetju prelomne odločitve v zadevi *Roe v. Wade* s svojimi interventnimi amandmaji, odloki in predsedniškimi ukazi dostopnost abortusa na zahtevo za ekonomsko najbolj ranljive skupine v celoti izničile že desetletja pred ponovno kriminalizacijo abortusa na zvezni ravni leta 2022. Hydov amandma, sprejet leta 1977, je pomenil prvo neposredno in kolosalno obliko napada na reproduktivne pravice različnih skupin osiromašenih žensk do svobodnega vstopanja v materinstvo po legalizaciji abortusa na zvezni ravni leta 1973. Vse od leta 1977 do danes zato deluje kot tiha oblika »dejanske prepovedi abortusa« za revne ženske (Salganicoff in dr. 2020: 5), in sicer tudi v tistih državah, ki po letu 2022 abortusa niso ponovno kriminalizirale. Kot smo dokazali, to priča, da systemskega napada na pravico žensk do UPN in svobodnega odločanja o vstopu v materinstvo v ZDA pravzaprav ne predstavljata leto 2022 in ponovna kriminalizacija abortusa na zvezni ravni, ki jo je prinesla razsodba konservativnega vrhovnega sodišča 24. junija 2022. Ta napad se je začel desetletja prej, njegova primarna tarča pa so bile in ostajajo revne ženske. Odločitev ameriškega vrhovnega sodišča v zadevi *Dobbs* junija 2022, ki omogoča ponovno kriminalizacijo in prepoved abortusa v ZDA, vodi v poglobljanje že obstoječih razrednih neenakosti med ženskami pri dostopanju do UPN. Ponovna kriminalizacija abortusa na zvezni ravni leta 2022 je razredno diferenciacijo ter prepad med revnimi in bogatimi skupinami žensk pri uveljavljanju reproduktivne avtonomije vidno razgalila in, kot smo pokazali, na nov način zaostrila. Kriminalizacija abortusa je nesorazmerno najbolj prizadela finančno šibke skupine žensk, medtem ko premožnejše na podlagi Bidnovega predsedniškega ukaza lahko še vedno uveljavljajo svojo reproduktivno avtonomijo s potovanji v tujino ali v druge ameriške države, ki abortusa ne prepovedujejo. Dobrodelne organizacije niso odgovor na stisko, ampak oblika vzdrževanja zatečenega stanja. ZDA predstavljajo učno uro, kaj lahko sledi tudi v našem prostoru ob prevladi ideologije desnega klerofundamentalističnega političnega tabora in v spregi z diskurzom liberalnega pola. Liberalni diskurz pravico do abortusa obravnava zgolj kot pravico posameznice do intimne, razpolaganja z lastnim telesom, iz česar naj bi izhajala pravica do izbire. To vodi v izbris razumevanja pravice do abortusa in do svobodnega odločanja o rojstvu otrok kot temeljne človekove in socialne pravice, ki je le na tej podlagi lahko tudi univerzalna pravica, tj. enako dostopna za vse ženske ne glede na debelino njihove denarnice. V nasprotnem primeru imamo opravka z razredno diferenciacijo dostopnosti abortusa in elitizacijo pravice do reproduktivne avtonomije.

SUMMARY

On June 24, 2022 the US Supreme Court overruled *Roe vs. Wade*, allowing states to impose a ban on abortion. Mainstream feminist movements and media outlets in the USA regard the 2022 Supreme Court decision as the watershed event when women in the USA lost their access to abortion and the right to freely decide on the birth of their children and the spacing between them. However, poor women's reproductive autonomy and the right to abortion were systematically attacked fifty years earlier, immediately after the 1973 Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*. In 1977, The American Congress enacted the Hyde amendment, effectively banning federal funding for abortion on demand under Medicaid health insurance program for low-income individuals. The Hyde Amendment denied millions of impoverished women of reproductive age access to abortion on demand. To add salt to the wound, in 2010 the Hyde Amendment was incorporated into the Obama health reform (ACA). The Hyde Amendment restrictions on health abortion coverage, effectively barring the poor from access to abortion care, were extended to include a new large pool of low-income women with earnings between 200 and 400 percentage above official federal poverty threshold. As a result of Hyde amendment being still effective, millions of women on Medicaid continue to be denied access to safe and legal abortion on demand in those American states that have opted not to put a ban on abortion following the 2022 Supreme Court decision.

The article demonstrates that the 2022 US Supreme Court decision on *Dobbs* deepens class differentiation among women in the USA in their access to abortion. We demonstrate that the USA have continuously limited access to abortion since its decriminalization on the federal level in 1973 by systematically targeting low-income women and violating their right to reproductive autonomy. The article shows that the 2022 US Supreme Court decision on *Dobbs*, which ushered in total or near-total bans on abortion in a dozen of American states, stands for a scaling up of restrictive policies, once again affecting primarily low-income and poor women. The bans on abortion following the Supreme Court's decision on *Dobbs* further exacerbate the already existing inequalities in access to abortion and reproductive autonomy between the poor and the rich women. The latter are affected least as they are able to afford interstate travels or travels abroad in order to secure legal access to safe abortions. All of this remains out of the reach for poor and poor-working women for whom *Dobbs* increased abortion procedure costs and just as importantly and crucially, travel and accommodation expenses, none of which can be met by charity organizations. The answer to the court's reversal of *Roe* is not charity work but the reversal of *Dobbs*, the annulment

of the Hyde amendment and the implementation of universal health coverage, which should be one of the basic platforms of feminist movements' campaigns if the right to reproductive autonomy is to be secured for all women rather than the selected few.

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(INTRA)GENDER VARIATION IN WORK–FAMILY CONFLICT OF EMPLOYED PARENTS IN CROATIA

ABSTRACT

This article explores variations in work–family conflict (WFC) among employed parents of minor children in Croatia (N=2414). It examines how sociodemographic characteristics, household organisation, and working conditions influence WFC, specifically looking at differences within each gender group. Women report higher WFC than men, particularly those aged 30–39 who often manage young children, and women with a university education, which is consistent with the high-status strain hypothesis. Men’s WFC is relatively unaffected by age and education, indicating differing gendered impacts of sociocultural factors. Working conditions strongly predict WFC for both genders, although more significantly for men. Unexpectedly, additional help with children in the household increases men’s WFC, suggesting complexities in gender role expectations. Recognising these intersecting influences can inform inclusive workplace policies tailored to diverse parental needs.

KEY WORDS: work–family conflict, working conditions, household organisation, parents, Croatia

(Med)spolne razlike v konfliktu med delom in družino pri zaposlenih starših na Hrvaškem

IZVLEČEK

Članek obravnava razlike v konfliktu med delom in družino (KDD) pri zaposlenih starših mladoletnih otrok na Hrvaškem (N=2414). Proučuje, kako sociodemografske značilnosti, organizacija gospodinjstva in delovni pogoji vplivajo na KDD, pri čemer posebej obravnava razlike znotraj posameznih spolnih skupin. Ženske poročajo o višji ravni KDD kot moški, zlasti tiste, stare

od 30 do 39 let, ki pogosto skrbijo za majhne otroke, in ženske z univerzitetno izobrazbo, kar je skladno s hipotezo o obremenjenosti zaradi visokega statusa. Starost in izobrazba pri moških ne vplivata bistveno na KDD, kar kaže na razlike v vplivu družbeno-kulturnih dejavnikov med spoloma. Delovni pogoji močno napovedujejo KDD pri obeh spolih, vendar bolj izrazito pri moških. V nasprotju s pričakovanji dodatna pomoč pri skrbi za otroke v gospodinjstvu poveča KDD pri moških, kar nakazuje na kompleksnost v pričakovanjih glede spolnih vlog. Prepoznavanje teh medsebojno prepletenih dejavnikov je lahko podlaga za oblikovanje vključujočih politik na delovnem mestu, ki bodo prilagojene različnim potrebam staršev.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: konflikt med delom in družino, delovni pogoji, organizacija gospodinjstva, starši, Hrvaška.

1 Introduction¹

Work and family life are deeply interconnected, with demands from paid work shaping private and family life, and family commitments, in turn, influencing work, often resulting in role conflicts (Greenhaus and Powell 2006). Conflicts between work and family domains negatively affect the individuals' social connections, well-being and quality of life, productivity, job satisfaction and work motivation, as well as impair health (Allen et al. 2015; Gregory 2016; Vieira et al. 2018). Although experienced individually, work-family conflict (WFC) reflects structural tensions between the organisation of paid work and the social organisation of care. Balancing these domains highlights power dynamics at both macro and micro levels, as parents today navigate the dual challenges of economic provision alongside caregiving. The increase in the scope and intensity of work in almost all occupations, along with the parents' higher demands in care work (Luhr et al. 2022) encourage the researchers' and policymakers' interest in the issue of WFC as an important aspect of quality of working life and gender equality policies (Gallie and Russell 2009).

Studies show that gender, age, class, race, disability, level of education, income, number of minor children in the household, and organisation of household and care influence the frequency of WFC, with women more often reporting family to work conflict and men more often work to family conflict (Becker and Moen 1999; Byron 2005; Michel et al. 2011; Tunlid 2020). Moreover, WFC is also mediated by welfare policies, macroeconomic and institutional predictors (Allen et al. 2015; Gallie and Russell 2009; Ollier-Malaterre et al. 2013) which

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indicates that the reported frequency of WFC depends also on nation-states' differences (Allen et al. 2015; Gallie and Russell 2009).

However, recognizing that "gender remains a salient category in understanding work-life issues" (Özbilgin et al. 2011: 27), this study focuses primarily on gender as a key dimension in measuring WFC, using three groups of predictor variables – sociodemographic factors, household structure and organisation, and work conditions. The study starts from the assumption that the differing predictors of WFC among distinct subgroups of men and women must be understood within the gendered structures of the family and workplace, which shape and mediate the nature and intensity of conflict. Building on this framework, the next chapter introduces key theoretical and empirical insights into the nature and determinants of WFC.

2 Work-family conflict

As contemporary life demands increasingly complex navigation between professional and private spheres, understanding the sources of WFC has become crucial for analysing individual well-being and broader social structures. According to role theory, conflict between private and professional life arises from time pressures, behavioural demands, and tensions when one role limits the performance in another role (Greenhaus and Beutell 1985; Čudina-Obradović and Obradović 2001; Barnett and Gareis 2006).

Work-related characteristics are found to intensify or mitigate WFC levels (Byron 2005; Gallie and Russell 2009; McGinnity and Calvert 2009; Michel et al. 2011). Workplace flexibility is particularly crucial for employees with significant family responsibilities, such as caring for preschool-aged children, being a single parent, or supporting elderly or frail family members (Laklija et al. 2021). Its role, however, is two-sided. When flexibility is primarily designed to reduce labour costs – such as through temporary or fixed-term contracts, overtime, shift work, or weekend schedules – it can exacerbate WFC. These cost-driven approaches often lead to unpredictable or inconsistent work hours, making it more challenging for employees to effectively manage their family obligations (Klindžić and Marić 2019). In contrast, flexibility that supports work-life balance focuses on employee-centred practices. These include part-time or flexitime arrangements, remote work, self-scheduled shifts, and paid parental leave, all of which provide employees with greater control over their schedules and improve their ability to balance work and family responsibilities (Klindžić and Marić 2019).

The gendered distribution of housework results in employed parents dedicating unequal amounts of time and energy to housework and childcare. Since women

typically spend more time than men on these activities, they experience WFC more frequently than men (Gershuny 2000; Hochschild and Machung 2012/1989; Tomić-Koludrović 2015; White et al. 2003). Women, especially those with preschool children and elderly parents, are more likely than men to deviate from linear career paths and interrupt their work activity to provide family care (Bianchi et al. 2012; Ehrlich et al. 2020). At the EU level, the European Labor Force Survey (2019) indicates that among the 17% of (previously) employed parents who interrupted their employment for childcare, approximately one-third are women, compared to only 1.3% of men (Eurostat LFS 2019).

WFC is strongly shaped by gender attitudes: women adhering to traditional, fixed gender roles report greater conflict between professional and domestic demands, while women who believe these roles are changeable experience less strain (Townsend et al. 2024). Under the breadwinner norm, men as expected to be fully committed to their work, which includes high job performance, constant availability, and a willingness to adjust their private lives to work demands (Perry-Jenkins and Wadsworth 2017; Kelly et al. 2010). This significantly influences how work conditions are experienced, with work schedules and intense job demands directly affecting the WFC. Men also often internalise the expectations associated with "ideal worker" norm, which further increases stress and guilt when work disrupts family life, making their identities and social value tied to professional success and work achievements (Hill 2005). Huffman et al. (2014) investigate the relationship between traditional gender role beliefs and WFC among fathers. Their research demonstrates that work hours mediate the link between traditional gender attitudes and WFC, suggesting that adherence to the breadwinner role leads men to invest more time in paid labour while reducing time spent on caregiving, thereby intensifying WFC. Results of research conducted among employed fathers in Slovenia state that father's "job significantly reduces participation in household chores" and "working in a management position makes active participation in household chores more difficult" (Kozjek et al. 2021: 61). These results align with prior meta-analyses (Byron 2005), which establish that work-related demands (e.g., overtime, inflexible schedules) disproportionately drive WFC for men, whereas women's conflict tends to stem from domestic responsibilities.

In most EU countries,² unpaid care for children and elderly family members is provided through family networks (Eurostat LFS 2019), which are perceived as a fundamental source of support (Saraceno et al. as cited in Kotowska et al. 2010). Research shows that in multigenerational households FWC is higher than WFC (Matthew 2021) because, while young parents receive help with childcare and

2. EU-LFS includes EU-27, the UK, three EFTA countries and Turkey.

housework from extended family members, these living arrangements can also create additional caregiving and managerial responsibilities. Parents may face increased emotional and cognitive demands from managing both childcare and the care of elderly relatives, which can strain their ability to balance work and family obligations effectively (Frone et al. 1992). As a result, the dual caregiving and managerial roles in such households may be an additional source of conflict(s) which are more frequently reported by women with children under 6 years of age, single parents, and men living with their or their partner's parents (Kotowska et al. 2010; Matthew 2021).

The following paragraphs situate WFC within the Croatian national context. First, they present how gender structures the family domain, including availability of formal and informal childcare support, followed by a review of previous research on WFC within the family domain. Second, they examine employment and work conditions in Croatia as key factors shaping the experience of WFC, followed by research focused specifically on WFC.

3 Work and family in Croatia

3.1 Housework, familial obligations and WFC

Housework and family-related obligations are still divided between heterosexual parents in a way that “wives juggle between three spheres – jobs, children and household chores, and husbands between two – jobs and children” (Topolčić, as cited in Laklija and Dobrotić 2009: 49; Tomić-Koludrović et al. 2018). Even though men perform some housework and childcare more often than before, the most repetitive daily chores remain predominantly “women’s work” (Eurofond-ETF 2022; Klasnić 2017; Leinert Novosel 2018; Tomić-Koludrović et al. 2018). When compared to other EU-27 countries, gender differences in time spent doing repetitive chores such as food preparation and cleaning are the largest in Croatia, with 10 hours for each chore (Eurofond-ETF 2022).

The domain of childcare also remains asymmetrical between parents. Although men discipline, play and learn with children more often, as well as taking part in activities such as driving children to kindergarten or school, women take care of all other children’s needs, with playing, school-related activities, feeding, and taking sick leave when children are ill, among others (Dobrotić 2017; Klasnić 2017; Tomić-Koludrović 2015). Based on a nationally representative sample of 600 women aged 18-65 employed outside of the household and living with their partners, Klasnić (2017) also reports that regardless of the type of job they work, women estimate that they spend around 24 hours per week on childcare, while they estimate that men spend around 10 hours.

Research on WFC in Croatia shows that age, marital status, childcare and housework differently influence WFC of women and men. For women, both age and the frequency of childcare responsibilities are correlated with more frequent WFC. Older women tend to experience WFC more often than younger women (Laklija and Dobrotić 2009). Klasnić (2017) similarly found that women up to 40 years of age are more likely to receive childcare support from extended family members more often than women over 40. The lack of social infrastructure in Croatia, particularly insufficient access to kindergartens and preschools, is reported by parents as a top priority for work-family balance policies (Kamenov and Galić 2011). In response, extended family networks often serve as critical support systems in emergencies (Laklija and Dobrotić 2009). This reliance on family assistance is best exemplified by the widely known practice of "baka-servis" ("grandma-service"), where grandmothers take on childcare responsibilities as an alternative to kindergartens or babysitters (Massey et al. 1995).

Men's WFC was more pronounced when they are more frequently involved in housework, but it lowers for those not living with their spouse or partner (Laklija and Dobrotić 2009). This suggests that living arrangements may play a significant role in WFC. In comparison to other EU-27 countries, Croatia has the highest incidence of multigenerational households, with 12.4% of households fitting this category (Eurostat 2020). Additionally, Dobrotić and Laklija (2012) found that 72.7% of respondents maintain frequent contact with their parents outside of the household, indicating strong family ties. However, the role of multigenerational households in affecting WFC remains underexplored.

3.2 Employment, work conditions and WFC

Fixed-term contracts and seasonal work became the dominant employment types in Croatia in the post-2008 crisis era, both characterised by uncertainty about contract prolongation (Butković et al. 2016; Jaklin and Matković 2022). In comparison to the EU, Croatia is the leading country with regards to precarious employment with 8.4%, followed by France with an almost halved percentage of 4.8% and the European Union (EU-28) average at 2.3% (Eurostat 2018).

Gender and age are found to be the main factors shaping differences in market position and opportunities in Croatia (Galić 2011; Matković 2008; Matković and Ostojčić 2019). The horizontal and vertical gender segregation in the labour market remains prevalent. In 2020, the employment rate was 41.3% for women and 53.6% for men, and gendered labour market segregation was especially evident, with men dominating the business enterprise sector (66.5% men and 33.5% women) while women were more prominent in the government

and private non-profit sector (40.5% men and 59.5% women), as well as higher education (45.1% men and 54.9% women) (DZS 2022).

While most employed women prefer the dual-earner family model (Akrap and Čipin 2011)³, having children remains the main reason for women to forgo their career opportunities (Tomić-Koludrović 2015). Women's employment rates are most negatively impacted between the ages of 30 and 34 due to intense obligations connected with motherhood (OECD 2014; Dobrotić 2015; Eurostat, as cited in Bertek and Dobrotić 2016). However, employment rates of women with higher education are similar to those of fathers in comparison to women with lower education who are likely to be unemployed at this stage of parenthood (Keck and Saraceno; Eurostat 2014, as cited in Dobrotić 2015).

When women continue working, higher education has been found to be a predictor of family-to-work interference (Laklija and Dobrotić 2009). Klasnić (2017) found that familial obligations hinder women's job prospects, with 30% of women having to forgo training or business trips, 20% missing out on career advancement opportunities, and 13% experiencing reduced salaries due to work-family conflict. Mothers are more likely than fathers to limit their career advancement, avoid taking on extra work responsibilities, or work part-time, which in turn negatively impacts their career progression, income, and professional growth (Adamović 2011; Čop 2024; Klasnić 2017).

Research that focuses specifically on the work and family interface shows that interference is stronger in the direction from work to family (Laklija and Dobrotić 2009). A study by Bertek and Dobrotić (2016), based on a representative sample of 1 260 households, found that 21.2% of women always prioritise family, while 17.9% of men always prioritise work. When faced with conflict between these two domains, women tend to prioritise family (Klasnić 2017), regardless of their partner's involvement in childcare. Albeit small-scale, research by Laklija et al. (2021)⁴ determined that employed parents identify more with their family roles than with their work roles. The research also found that employer flexibility such as being able to leave work to do family-related errands significantly mitigates WFC (Laklija and Dobrotić 2009; Klindžić and Marić 2019).

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3. There are two main dual-earner submodels due to different arrangement of unpaid work in the household: 1) dual-earner dual-carer model in which partners roughly equally share family and household obligations, and 2) the female double-burden model in which women are expected to care for the children, elderly and household (Akrap and Čipin 2011).
 4. This research on work-family boundary flexibility was conducted with a convenient sample of 187 participants.

4 Research aim and hypotheses

This research explores the effect of select characteristics on the private and professional life of parents with minor children in the specific context of post-socialist Croatia, that has a long history of multigenerational families, and where gender inequality dominates in the household and in the increasingly liberalised labour market. The study examines the extent to which sociodemographic factors, household organisation, and working conditions predict experiences of WFC among women and men, and explores how living in multigenerational households intersects with these social categories and work conditions to shape and potentially intensify gender inequalities in WFC.

Research hypotheses are as follows:

- H1) Sociodemographic characteristics, household organisation, and working conditions are significant predictors of WFC among women and among men.
- H2) The patterns and strengths of associations between sociodemographic characteristics, household organisation, and working conditions and WFC vary between women and men, such that household-related factors are expected to show stronger associations with WFC among women, whereas work-related conditions are expected to show stronger associations with WFC among men.
- H3) Living in a multigenerational household moderates the relationship between age and WFC among women and men, with the magnitude of these effects differing between genders.

5 Methodology

5.1 Sample

The results are based on a nationally representative survey of parents with minor children (N=2414), using computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI-method), conducted in 2022 within the research project „Impact of public policies on the quality of family and working life and the demographics of Croatia – spaces of change“ (2020-2023).⁵ Two-dimensional sample stratification was used, according to counties and according to the size of the settlement. The data were weighted by gender, age, geographical region, and educational level, making it representative of the Croatian national population in these dimensions for parents with minor children. This article refers to employed parents with minor children (women N=1263, men N=1151).

5. Ethics board approval was not required for this research; however, it adhered to the standard ethical guidelines of the Croatian Sociological Association and the Agency responsible for the fieldwork.

5.2 Variables

Variables on sociodemographic characteristics, household structure and organisation, and working conditions are included and presented in Tables 1, 2, and 3, which display a frequency distribution of answers on the original variables included in the linear regression analysis, performed separately for women and men.

WFC was measured using five items seen in Table 1 which asked the respondents to indicate the frequency of each situation occurring in their life for the past 3 months on a 5-point rating scale: 1="never," 2="rarely," 3="sometimes," 4="often, 5="almost always". The first three items, as seen in Table 1, measure work-to-family direction of WFC and the last two measure the frequency of work-to-family direction of WFC. The scale was taken over from the questionnaire of the 6th European Working Conditions Survey from 2015 (EWCS 2015) translated and localised by into Croatian by Eurofond (Eurofond 2015).

Table 1: Work-family conflict: mean and standard deviation for men and women.

| | Men (N=1151) | | Women (N=1263) | |
|--|--------------|-------|----------------|-------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| <i>Kept worrying about work when you were not working</i> | 2.71 | 1.265 | 2.88 | 1.282 |
| <i>Felt too tired after work to do some of the household jobs which need to be done</i> | 2.69 | 1.145 | 3.07 | 1.172 |
| <i>Found that your job prevented you from giving the time you wanted to your family</i> | 2.49 | 1.192 | 2.58 | 1.224 |
| <i>Found it difficult to concentrate on your job because of your family responsibilities</i> | 2.01 | 2.01 | 2.23 | 1.041 |
| <i>Found that your family responsibilities prevented you from giving the time you should to your job</i> | 1.93 | 1.93 | 2.04 | 1.065 |
| WFC scale | 2.36 | 0.825 | 2.56 | 0.79 |

1= "never", 5="almost always"

Table 2: Sociodemographic characteristics and household organisation (%).

| | | Men | Women | Total |
|---|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Age | 18-29 | 10.90 | 9.90 | 10.40 |
| | 30-39 | 50.50 | 47.30 | 48.80 |
| | 40-49 | 35.20 | 38.70 | 37.00 |
| | 50+ | 3.40 | 4.00 | 3.70 |
| Education | Elementary school | 3.10 | 2.20 | 2.70 |
| What is the last education level you finished? | Secondary school 3y | 22.00 | 13.20 | 17.40 |
| | Secondary school 4y | 45.30 | 45.00 | 45.10 |
| | University degree BA | 9.70 | 11.00 | 10.40 |
| | University degree MA | 19.90 | 28.60 | 24.50 |
| Number of children in household | Less than 3 | 87.70 | 89.40 | 88.60 |
| | 3+ | 12.30 | 10.60 | 11.40 |
| Children 0-7y | No | 38.20 | 52.40 | 45.70 |
| | Yes | 61.80 | 47.60 | 54.30 |
| Do your parents or partner's parents live in the same household as you? | No | 67.10 | 70.00 | 68.60 |
| | Yes | 32.90 | 30.00 | 31.40 |
| Do you or your partner have families, relatives' or friends' help in taking care of children? | No | 32.40 | 36.50 | 34.50 |
| | Yes | 67.60 | 63.50 | 65.50 |
| Who is planning everyday meals? | Me | 6.30 | 73.30 | 41.30 |
| | Equal | 31.60 | 22.20 | 26.70 |
| | Partner | 60.40 | 2.60 | 30.20 |
| | Others | 1.70 | 1.80 | 1.80 |
| Who is planning everyday activities of children? | Me | 3.10 | 56.80 | 31.20 |
| | Equal | 52.00 | 38.30 | 44.80 |
| | Partner | 42.40 | 1.90 | 21.20 |
| | Others | 2.50 | 3.00 | 2.80 |

Table 3: Characteristics of work conditions (%).

| | | Men | Women | Total |
|--|--|-------|-------|-------|
| What is your occupation? | Expert | 18.30 | 15.40 | 16.80 |
| | Clerks | 28.10 | 33.60 | 31.00 |
| | Service sector | 16.40 | 23.30 | 20.00 |
| | Industrial workers | 17.20 | 7.80 | 12.30 |
| | Farmers | 2.40 | 1.10 | 1.70 |
| | Other | 17.60 | 18.80 | 18.20 |
| Are you employed full-time, part-time, seasonally, or occasionally? | Part-time (seasonally, occasionally) | 8.30 | 16.40 | 12.50 |
| | Full-time | 91.70 | 83.60 | 87.50 |
| What is your regular work schedule on your main job? | Morning shift | 59.90 | 52.70 | 56.10 |
| | Work shift (2nd/3rd) | 2.30 | 3.00 | 2.70 |
| | Changing shift | 21.90 | 31.80 | 27.10 |
| | Flexible shift: controlled by employer | 5.00 | 5.20 | 5.10 |
| | Flexible shift: controlled by employee | 10.90 | 7.20 | 9.00 |
| In the last month, have you been contacted outside of work hours by your employer? | Never | 38.40 | 51.30 | 45.10 |
| | One time | 11.50 | 9.70 | 10.60 |
| | Several times | 30.60 | 24.60 | 27.50 |
| | Many times/often | 19.40 | 14.30 | 16.80 |
| Within the last month, did you have to work from home outside of work hours? | Never | 67.70 | 71.70 | 69.80 |
| | One time | 5.00 | 4.70 | 4.80 |
| | Several times | 17.70 | 13.90 | 15.70 |
| | Many times/often | 9.70 | 9.70 | 9.70 |
| Within the last month, were you asked to work overtime? | Never | 46.00 | 60.60 | 53.60 |
| | One time | 12.30 | 8.90 | 10.50 |
| | Several times | 29.30 | 22.90 | 25.90 |
| | Many times/often | 12.30 | 7.70 | 9.90 |
| I can arrange free days and holidays in accordance with my and my family's needs. | Yes | 82.00 | 71.90 | 76.70 |
| | No | 18.00 | 28.10 | 23.30 |

| | | Men | Women | Total |
|---|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Would it be difficult for you to take an hour or two during work hours to deal with personal or family errands? | 1 – never | 7.50 | 18.40 | 13.20 |
| | 2 | 14.20 | 15.60 | 15.00 |
| | 3 | 37.80 | 36.90 | 37.30 |
| | 4 – almost always | 40.50 | 29.10 | 34.50 |
| I missed an opportunity to advance or get a better job because of family obligations. | Yes | 12.10 | 21.00 | 16.70 |
| | No | 87.90 | 79.00 | 83.30 |
| How many times per month do you work on Sundays? | Never | 63.30 | 69.00 | 66.30 |
| | At least once | 36.70 | 31.00 | 33.70 |

The scale's dimensionality was analysed using Principal Component Analysis (PCA), a statistical technique that examines the underlying structure of a given set of variables, which revealed that the scale measures the single-construct nature of the WFC. The decision to retain one factor is based on the Guttman-Kaiser (GK) criterion, which suggests retaining factors with eigenvalues greater than 1. The analysis assessed the internal consistency reliability of the scale using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient ($\alpha=0.754$) indicating a satisfactory level of internal consistency (Hair et al. 2010). To calculate an overall score for WFC, the respondents' answers were summarised across all five items. Higher values indicate a greater level of experienced WFC as measure of WFC.

5.3 Data analysis

Linear regression analysis was used to explore the relationship between WFC and a set of predictors - sociodemographic factors, household organisation, and working conditions. The variables draw upon findings from prior studies in Croatia, which reveal gender segregation in the labour market and disparities in household responsibilities and childcare. Initial bivariate analysis revealed greater WFC among women than among men, which prompted a detailed gender study by employing separate regression analyses for each gender.

6 Results

First, the broad pattern of WFC is examined, and then the determinants for women and men separately. Table 1 presents descriptive statistics on items included in the WFC scale separately for women and men. This data shows greater conflict in the direction of work-to-family than from family-to-work. When comparing women and men, there is a gender gap, with the level of WFC significantly greater for women than for men ($t=-6.255$, $df=2761$, $p<0.01$).

6.1 Sociodemographic characteristics, household organisation and care obligations as predictors of WFC

This article argues that different predictors affect WFC among men and women. To interpret the results, the standardised regression coefficients provided in Table 4 for both genders were analysed. In the upcoming sections, attention is directed towards the comprehensive data from Model 3.

Table 4: Work-family conflict: multiple linear regression analysis for women (N=1263) and for men (N=1153) – standardised regression coefficients.

| | Women | | | Men | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | MODEL 1 Soc- -dem.+ House- hold organisa- tion | MODEL 2 Work conditions | MODEL 3 Full model | MODEL 1 Soc- -dem.+ House- hold organisa- tion | MODEL 2 Work conditions | MODEL 3 Full model |
| AGE (ref. 30-39 y) | | | | | | |
| Age 18-29 y | -0.06* | | -0.079** | 0.064* | | 0.029 |
| Age 40-49 y | -0.023 | | -0.01 | 0.066 | | 0.048 |
| Age 50+ y | -0.037 | | -0.036 | 0.011 | | 0.019 |
| EDUCATION (ref. tertiary) | | | | | | |
| Secondary school 3y | -0.012 | | -0.007 | -0.104** | | -0.049 |
| Secondary school 4y | -0.117** | | -0.084* | -0.036 | | -0.019 |
| HOUSEHOLD | | | | | | |
| Children 0-7y (yes) | -0.052 | | -0.033 | -0.003 | | -0.003 |
| No. children (3+) | -0.018 | | -0.026 | 0.056 | | 0.027 |
| Multigenerational household (yes) | 0.031 | | 0.033 | 0.027 | | -0.009 |
| Help with children (yes) | 0.021 | | 0.012 | 0.068* | | 0.066* |
| Planning meals (me) | 0.01 | | 0.016 | 0.026 | | 0.031 |
| Planning children's activities (me) | 0.055* | | 0.032 | 0.004 | | -0.003 |

| | Women | | | Men | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | MODEL 1 Soc- -dem.+ House- hold organisa- tion | MODEL 2 Work conditions | MODEL 3 Full model | MODEL 1 Soc- -dem.+ House- hold organisa- tion | MODEL 2 Work conditions | MODEL 3 Full model |
| OCCUPATION (ref. experts) | | | | | | |
| Clerks | | -0.032 | -0.006 | | -0.023 | -0.011 |
| Service sector | | -0.026 | -0.002 | | 0.015 | 0.029 |
| Industrial workers | | -0.015 | -0.012 | | -0.032 | -0.002 |
| Farmers | | 0.036 | 0.042 | | 0.004 | 0.001 |
| Other | | -0.035 | -0.005 | | -0.02 | -0.005 |
| CONTRACT (ref. full-time) | | 0.005 | -0.01 | | -0.03 | -0.042 |
| WORK SHIFT (ref. morning shift) | | | | | | |
| Work shift (2nd/3rd) | | 0.04 | 0.048 | | -0.062* | -0.068* |
| Flexible shift: controlled by employer | | 0.013* | 0.01 | | 0.05 | 0.055* |
| Flexible shift: controlled by employee | | 0.057* | 0.043 | | 0.053 | 0.075* |
| Contact outside working hours | | 0.06** | 0.06 | | 0.108** | 0.091** |
| Work from home | | 0.092** | 0.07* | | 0.093** | 0.105** |
| Overtime | | 0.094* | 0.088** | | 0.194** | 0.201** |
| Free days/Holidays | | 0.106** | 0.091** | | 0.114** | 0.111** |
| Running personal or family errands during work hours | | -0.064* | -0.049 | | -0.092** | -0.104** |
| Missed career opportunities (yes/no) | | 0.104** | 0.113** | | 0.09** | 0.081** |
| Work on Sundays | | 0.024 | 0.047 | | -0.06 | -0.12 |
| Adjusted R² | 0.024 | 0.095 | 0.107 | 0.023 | 0.172 | 0.194 |

Table presents standardised regression coefficients ** $p < 0.001$; * $p < 0.05$

The linear regression model for women was statistically significant ($F=10.789$, $p<0.05$). The results, reported in Table 4, Model 3, show that age significantly predicts WFC for women. The youngest group of women, aged from 18 to 29 years old, perceive work-family roles as less conflicted than women aged 30 to 39. Women in other age categories do not significantly differ in WFC compared to the 30-39 age group. While younger women report less WFC than their middle-aged counterparts, age does not significantly affect WFC for men (Model 3).

Similarly, education affects the perception of WFC among women but not among men. Results show that having a degree diploma correlates with greater WFC for women when compared to women with a 4-year secondary school who perceive the conflict of these roles as less stressful ($\beta=-0.084$). Education is not a significant predictor of WFC among men as the effect loses its significance after adding working condition variables in Model 3. This finding suggests that work conditions are a stronger predictor of WFC than sociodemographic factors for men.

For women, the significant effects of age and education on WFC in the Croatian context correspond to previous research that noted some sociodemographic characteristics of respondents as significant predictors of women's notion of work-family stress (Laklija and Dobrotić 2009). Although previous research shows that WFC also depends on the household structure (Crompton and Lyonette 2006; Gallie and Russell 2009; Laklija and Dobrotić 2009), in this particular research, contrary to expectations, having children under seven years of age in the household, living in a multigenerational household, or having additional childcare help in the household are all predictors that are not significant for women's perception of WFC. Also, doing housework or having childcare support from family members (usually grandmothers) is not significant for women's WFC. Model 1 shows that only the everyday planning of children's activities ($\beta=0.055$) correlates with WFC, but this effect disappears after adding work conditions to the Model 3.

When analysing the same data for men, comparable results are found. The linear regression model was statistically significant ($F=15.799$, $p<0.05$). Household characteristics (housework, children under seven years in a household, multigenerational household) are not significant predictors of men's perception of WFC. Interestingly, having additional help with children in the household is correlated with greater WFC for men. Additional household help in this study refers to grandmothers who help with children when needed. This may sometimes lead to greater WFC due to the perception that the available support systems do not align with the individuals' actual needs and expectations. Previous results regarding housework and perceived conflict among men in the Croatian context

show a negative correlation – indicating greater WFC when they are engaged in household work (Laklija and Dobrotić 2009).

6.2 Working conditions as predictors of WFC

Regression analysis (Model 3) confirms the effect of various working conditions on women's and men's perceptions of WFC. Working from home and working overtime contribute to perceived tension in work-family dynamics ($\beta=0.07$, $\beta=0.088$). The highest predictor of WFC for women is a missed opportunity to advance their careers due to family obligations ($\beta=0.113$). Flexibility and ability to plan vacations or run personal or family errands during work hours relates to lower WFC among women ($\beta=-0.091$, $\beta=-0.064$).

The same model was constructed to answer the question about the effect of working conditions on WFC among men, with results confirming the effect of various working conditions on men's perception of WFC. Work schedule is a significant predictor of perceived WFC. When comparing with the morning shift work, flexible working time (controlled by the employer or employee) correlates with higher WFC ($\beta=0.055$, $\beta=0.075$). Interestingly, working in unstandardised shifts is perceived as less conflicting for work-family roles ($\beta=-0.068$). Similar results can be found in other research reporting that lower-skill workers, usually working the second or third shift, experience WFC less frequently (Gallie and Russell 2009). Previous research by McGinnity and Calvert (2009) connects frequent conflict among the highly skilled professionals in West European countries working longer hours and experiencing more work pressure than other occupational groups.

Working from home and working overtime contribute to a higher tension in work-family dynamics ($\beta=0.105$, $\beta=0.201$). The highest predictor of WFC for men is the feeling of having missed career opportunity because of family obligations ($\beta=0.081$). Having the opportunity to plan vacations and taking some time during work hours for personal errands, however, are correlated with lower levels of perceived conflict ($\beta=-0.111$, $\beta=-0.104$).

Model 3 confirms that work demands like long, unsocial, and unpredictable working hours influence the level of WFC and have a negative impact on balancing work and family demands, although in different arrangements for women and men. The regression model predicts WFC more accurately for men ($R^2=19.4\%$) compared to women ($R^2=10.7\%$). This suggests that various facets of work conditions and professional life significantly influence WFC for men, highlighting the pivotal role of employment for men's work-life balance. Reflecting on the hypotheses, we can conclude that H1 is supported: sociodemographic, household, and work-related factors all predict WFC, with work conditions

emerging as the stronger predictors. H2 is partially supported: work conditions are stronger predictors for men, whereas household factors show limited but slightly stronger associations for women.

6.3 Interaction effect of social categories and working conditions, multigenerational households on WFC

Multigenerational households' impact is considered as a potential factor in either exacerbating or alleviating WFC, particularly given the inadequate level of social services for preschool children in Croatia. After adding interactions between living in multigenerational families and age categories and perception of missed career opportunities in the model, the analysis shows that the model did not change significantly (see Table 5). The overall model explains 11.2% of the variance in WFC among women and 19.4% among men. The analysis revealed a significant interaction between age and living in a multigenerational household related to WFC for women ($\beta = -0.077$). Living in a multigenerational household reduces conflicts for younger women compared to those aged 30–39 years, but this effect is not observed among men. Other interactions between living in a multigenerational household and household management variables are insignificant. Additionally, there is no significant interaction between family support and help with children and career opportunities. Multigenerational households have a limited, age-specific protective effect for young women, but they do not broadly moderate WFC or explain gender differences. H3 is therefore partially confirmed but only in a very narrow context (young women).

Table 5: Work-family conflict: multiple linear regression analysis with interaction effects for women (N=1263) and for men (N=1153) – standardised regression coefficients (β).

| | Women | Men |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | MODEL 1 Full model | MODEL 1 Full model |
| AGE (ref. 30-39 y) | | |
| Age 18-29 y | -0.033 | 0.029 |
| Age 40-49 y | 0.013 | 0.049 |
| Age 50+ y | -0.048 | 0.018 |
| EDUCATION (ref. tertiary) | | |
| Secondary school 3y | -0.007 | -0.049 |
| Secondary school 4y | 0.080* | -0.019 |

| | | |
|--|---------|---------|
| HOUSEHOLD | | |
| Children 0-7y (yes) | -0.033 | -0.003 |
| No. children (3+) | -0.026 | 0.027 |
| Multigenerational household (yes) | 0.048 | -0.006 |
| Help with children (yes) | 0.004 | 0.065* |
| Planning meals (me) | 0.019 | 0.031 |
| Planning children's activities (me) | 0.018 | 0.002 |
| OCCUPATION (ref. experts) | -0.13 | |
| Clerks | -0.012 | -0.011 |
| Service sector | -0.008 | 0.029 |
| Industrial workers | -0.014 | -0.003 |
| Farmers | 0.040 | 0.001 |
| Other | -0.007 | -0.005 |
| CONTRACT (ref. full-time) | | -0.042 |
| WORK SHIFT (ref. morning shift) | 0.047 | -0.069 |
| Work shift (2nd/3rd) | 0.012 | 0.055* |
| Flexible shift: controlled by employer | 0.044 | 0.075 |
| Flexible shift: controlled by employee | 0.058 | 0.091* |
| Contact outside working hours | 0.067* | 0.104* |
| Work from home | 0.090* | 0.201* |
| Overtime | -0.087* | -0.111* |
| Free days/Holidays (yes) | -0.087* | -0.104* |
| Running personal or family errands during work hours | -0.049 | 0.080* |
| Missed career opportunities (yes) | 0.087 | -0.069* |
| Work on Sundays | 0.047 | 0.055* |
| Multigenerational household* age 18-29 | -0.077* | -0.013 |
| Multigenerational household* age 40-49 | -0.057 | -0.001 |
| Multigenerational household* age 50+ | 0.028 | -0.004 |
| Multigenerational household* help with children | -0.041 | 0.003 |
| Missed career opportunities* help with children | -0.005 | -0.009 |
| Adjusted R² | 0.112 | 0.194 |

Table presents standardised regression coefficients ** $p < 0.001$; * $p < 0.05$

7 Discussion and conclusion

This article began by examining contrasting explanations for the sources of WFC, focusing on pressures stemming from both the workplace and the family structure and obligations. The analysed model incorporated both theoretically driven and contextually relevant factors on an individual level, household and employment levels, including working conditions. By integrating gender as a key variable, the analysis first examined gender differences between men and women and identifies key predictors that contribute to inequalities and variations in the frequency of WFC, examining these patterns within gender groups for both women and men.

Reported conflict among employed parents in Croatia moves in the direction of work-to-family but not from family-to-work. Women overall experience greater WFC than men, which is consistent with another research done in Croatia (Laklija and Dobrotić 2009) and internationally (Crompton and Lyonette 2006). The predictors of WFC are found in age, level of education, nature of household obligations and selective working conditions, however, the determined predictors show different arrangements for women and men.

Women with university education report greater WFC than women with 4-year secondary high school. This is consistent with other research done internationally that names this phenomenon a high-status strain, which occurs due to the tendency of highly educated persons to be employed at jobs where working conditions blur the boundaries between work and home (Schieman and Glavin 2011; Tunlid 2020). However, differences between the perception of WFC of women with university education and 3-year secondary school education (vocational education and crafts) is not found. This may indicate that the current job market opportunities and access to childcare social services align more with women whose work organisation and job characteristics relate to a 4-year secondary school education. Job characteristics and work conditions associated with 3-year high school education and tertiary education do not provide enough support to mitigate effects of WFC.

While education consistently predicts work-family conflict (WFC) for women, this effect vanishes for men once working conditions are considered in the model. Work-related characteristics and job demands may explain why more educated working mothers experience greater WFC (Tunlid 2020). Tunlid (2020) also explores the role of childcare in perceived WFC, arguing that childcare services reduce conflict for less educated mothers but increase conflict for more educated mothers with very young children. She argues that childcare services need to adequately respond to higher-educated mothers' work demands and schedules.

The group of women from 30 to 39 years of age exhibit greater WFC which may result from being the primary carers of very young children, especially in the context of insufficient access to kindergartens for children under the age of 3. The gendered differentiation of WFC predictors imply that WFC depends on the parents' changing obligations in the household and the primacy of work in different stages of the life cycle. The nature of housework to be done, whether doing versus organising housework and family activities, places different pressure on women and men. While women may assign their usual house chores to other persons within or outside of the household (e.g., fathers or grandparents), the organisational aspects of housework and childcare are almost solely under the women's purview which creates strain in their work and family roles. Employed women were previously shown to give priority to family and motherhood over work (Klasnić 2017). Modernisation attitudes and values on gender equality have in Croatia only been partially adopted, and patriarchal relations and practices continue to dominate the family sphere (Tomić Koludrović et al. 2018) which compels women to maintain work activity and find different strategies for harmonizing private and work life.

While working conditions predict WFC for both men and women, they play the most significant role in predicting WFC for men. Research conducted by Gallie and Russell (2009) showed that extended working hours are likely to present a significant pressure for family life because of the level of physical exhaustion experienced by employees. They concluded that aspects of working conditions that create WFC are overtime work and work from home, flexible working hours and employer inflexibility to do errands during work hours when necessary. Similarly, Čop (2024) found flexible working arrangements which allow doing family tasks during the workday do reduce WFC among self-employed women. Nonetheless, flexibility often translates into less clear boundaries between work and family life, including working from home and being available at any time, which increases the experience of WFC (Schieman and Glavin 2008).

When the influence of working conditions on WFC is compared to the influence of household organisation and care demands, the analysis confirmed that the latter have much weaker influence on WFC. Furthermore, the regression model strongly predicts WFC among men ($R^2=19.4\%$) than among women ($R^2=10.7$), indicating that wider working conditions are related to WFC. The used scale is more sensitive to the spillover from work to family life, an issue that previous research already addressed (see Byron 2005; Gallie and Russell 2009).

Further analysis was done (Table 5) to examine the influence the unequal experiences of multigenerational households on WFC due to their high incidence in the Croatian context. The results suggest that the impact of living in a

multigenerational household on WFC varies by age for women. Younger women benefit more from living in such households and experience lower WFC than women aged 30–39. Younger women may receive more help with childcare and housework or other material and emotional support from live-in family members which can alleviate the pressure of work and family responsibilities.

Based on the findings and scope of this research, future studies of WFC should examine the relationships between working conditions and unpaid household work, both physical, mental and emotional labour. Furthermore, a closer examination of working conditions across different employment sectors should be considered in connection to education but also because men in the service sector exhibit greater WFC. Finally, an in-depth qualitative study of the reasons why persons with higher education report greater WFC, as well as expectations they have from parenthood and careers, which may enrich the high-strain thesis.

This study offers important conceptual and practical contributions by showing that the causes of WFC differ significantly for women and men across different stages of life. By examining how factors such as age, education, household responsibilities, and working conditions interact in shaping WFC, the analysis provides a more nuanced understanding that enriches existing theoretical frameworks. A key contribution lies in the observation that certain forms of household support can have contrasting effects on women's and men's experiences of WFC, underscoring the importance of understanding household dynamics and gender expectations. These findings hold value for the development or evaluation of work-balance policies that consider the intersection of gender, age, education, employment status and family responsibilities, helping individuals balance contemporary work and family demands.

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UVOD V TEMATSKI BLOK

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEMATIC BLOCK



Communicating the climate crisis: Introduction to the thematic block

In October 2025, *Nature* reported that the first climate tipping point – defined as the threshold at which small changes precipitate large and irreversible consequences – had been crossed, with the dying off of coral reefs marking this critical juncture (Tollefson 2025). Coral reefs are vital ecosystems, supporting approximately one-quarter of marine biodiversity and sustaining the livelihoods of nearly 1 billion people around the world. The information published by *Nature* drew upon the Global Tipping Points Report 2025 (Lenton et al. 2025), which provides the scientific basis for these claims. When considered alongside observable phenomena like the ever more intense heatwaves, widespread wildfires, catastrophic flooding, and record-breaking temperatures across Europe and elsewhere in recent years, the accumulating evidence of an escalating climate crisis has long been apparent. Correspondingly, the media has paid greater attention to these developments, reflecting the issue's pressing urgency.

However, the media narrative surrounding climate change has been mixed, reflecting divergent emphases, framings, and levels of urgency across outlets. The discursive struggles over the meaning of climate change and the problematisations it entails are long running, and the notion of climate change, which is filled with antagonisms, circulates in a variety of societal fields, including academia, politics, everyday life, and the media (Filimonov and Carpentier 2022). As Trumbo and Shanahan (2000) described two decades ago, accurate measurements of atmospheric carbon dioxide levels began as early as 1957, and scientists have been concerned about the effect that humans might be having on the atmosphere through emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases since the close of the 19th century with the rapid industrialisation of societies. It may thus be argued that the struggle for climate action is as much a matter of communication and media as it is of science, a point underscored by recent research examining how narratives, platforms, and emotional cues shape public perception and political will (Painter et al. 2024).

Although scepticism and denialism of science have long existed, shifting values, growing inequality, and increasing polarisation have created a societal backdrop that adds to these tendencies (see also Achiam et al. 2024). Science generally, and climate science in particular, is frequently subjected to political criticism and populist attacks. As Egelhofer (2023: 361) observes, in today's "post-truth" era concerns about political assaults on the legitimacy of expert knowledge and scientific facts are mounting. Populist politicians often exploit social media platforms to target

science and journalism, portraying them as part of an “evil elite” that deliberately misleads the public with disinformation. While such discourse is deeply troubling, empirical evidence remains limited as to how these accusations influence public perceptions of scientists and journalists (Egelhofer 2023).

Schäfer and Schlichting (2014) stress that climate change is not easy to perceive since it is typically described in terms of large temporal and spatial scales. The complexity of these descriptions, which are largely produced within scientific contexts, extends to the portrayal of climate change impacts. Most individuals hence rely on the media to learn about climate change (Schäfer and Schlichting 2014). Although early research focused primarily on print media, Koteyko and Atanasova (2016) argue that in the past 20 years communication about climate science and policy has been profoundly shaped by the rise of the Internet and social media.

News media serve as crucial sources of climate change information for many, influencing how people think, feel and behave (Schäfer and Mahl 2025), and communicating complex and often abstract climate issues to diverse audiences remains a continuing challenge. The social responsibility held by the media in communicating scientific knowledge therefore requires ongoing emphasis. Climate change and biodiversity loss are profoundly complex phenomena, encompassing scientific concepts, global interconnections, and long-term consequences not always easy for the public to comprehend or relate to in everyday life (Moser 2016). The shift of traditional newspapers to digital platforms brings several consequences, including unequal access to content, changes in reading habits that may reduce the depth of climate reporting, economic pressures favouring popular topics over rigorous analysis, and a faster spread of information with a bigger risk of misinformation. At the same time, greater interactivity has expanded opportunities for engagement, yet also intensified ideological polarisation (Jucá et al. 2024). Moreover, global research trends reveal that most studies on climate communication in print media focus on high-income countries, leaving perspectives from the Global South comparatively underrepresented (Reghunath and Zafar 2024). Deeply entrenched political and economic interests (Klein 2014) have permeated every aspect of public life, impacting both cultural and cognitive patterns that influence understanding, attitudes and action. These structural forces tend to affect traditional science communication, shaping audience engagement with complex issues. In this context, the arts – albeit often marginalised within science communication – offer alternative modes of participation and meaning-making (Bentz 2020). They can reframe complex concepts via affective, symbolic and experiential forms, while also challenging the economic and discursive monopolies that shape public discourse.

This thematic block examines ways of climate issues are communicated that move beyond conventional boundaries between scientific expertise, journalistic mediation, and artistic practice. In a rapidly evolving media landscape subjected to digital transformation, economic pressures, and political polarisation, it calls for more inclusive, reflexive and creative forms of engaging with climate knowledge. By placing collective and participatory approaches in the foreground, the issue shows how understandings of the climate crisis are not simply transmitted but developed through mutual efforts that bring science, culture, and human experience together.

The first paper “Media framing of the biodiversity crisis: A study of a Croatian daily newspaper” broadens the perspective by examining media coverage of the biodiversity issue in Croatia. Through analysis of the longest running daily newspaper in Croatia *Večernji list*, the study reveals how the newspaper has presented the biodiversity crisis over time. The authors examine the thematic frames and additional framing mechanisms by which the issue is portrayed – whether linked to climate change or referred to as a scientific, local or global challenge. Together, these insights highlight how media narratives shape understanding of the biodiversity crisis.

The case of public understanding of the consequences held by climate change is also central to the next paper “Data journalism, deep features, and the geography of climate crisis in a multiracial city: A case study of *The Local*’s ‘Toronto’s Climate Right Now’ issue”, which serves as an example of hyperlocal digital journalism addressing climate change in a multiracial urban context. Unlike mainstream digital news, which often overlooks marginalised local perspectives, *The Local* adopts a reflexive approach that challenges hierarchies of race, class and geography. By focusing on the greater Toronto region and stressing solutions-focused reporting and visual storytelling with community members, the paper addresses gaps in research on climate journalism in emerging startups and urban climate justice in the Global North.

Rather than presenting climate change as an abstract problem, the third paper “From observation to understanding: Embedding artistic practice for more effective climate research” explores how visual arts can create stronger engagement with climate science. More precisely, how artistic practice and scientific research can come together in deeper, more reciprocal forms of collaboration transcending the traditional divide between the creative and the analytical. Embedding artistic approaches from the outset allows art to act not as an illustration of science but as an epistemic partner that raises new questions, deepens emotional and interpretive dimensions, and strengthens public engagement.

In conclusion, while scientific understanding of the causes and consequences of the climate crisis has matured as a highly refined body of knowledge, public understanding of this scientific knowledge remains incomplete and uneven, creating gaps between what the evidence shows and how individuals perceive the risks, responsibility, and possible actions. At a time of complex and multilayered climate challenges, it is ever clearer that scientific knowledge does not circulate in isolation but is always embedded within cultural values, language, and modes of representation. Scholars and practitioners recognise that responding to the climate crisis requires more than the transmission of facts – it calls for new modes of collaboration that bridge analytical and affective ways of sense-making. Hopefully, the thematic block will contribute to these ongoing discussions.

Guest editors Dejan Jontes and Anja Skapin Subanovič

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Dunja Majstorović, Dina Vozab, Karla Martinić

MEDIA FRAMING OF THE BIODIVERSITY CRISIS: A STUDY OF A CROATIAN DAILY NEWSPAPER

ABSTRACT

The paper analyses media coverage in the period 1959–2022 of the biodiversity crisis in Večernji list, the longest-running daily newspaper in Croatia. A sample of 367 articles in both printed and online editions of the newspaper was constructed via a multiple keywords search. Quantitative content analysis was carried out to determine the interest in biodiversity loss issues over time, and the framing of the biodiversity issue.

The results show that, although overall interest in biodiversity loss is inconsistent, there is a quantitative rise in news about biodiversity over time. The prevailing thematic focus is endangered or extinct species and endangered ecosystems. Most of the articles frame biodiversity as a local issue, as a science-related issue, while many link the biodiversity crisis to climate change. Using inductive coding, specific frames related to biodiversity were developed that could be used to advance this or future research.

KEY WORDS: *biodiversity crisis, biodiversity loss, climate change, media coverage, framing, Croatia*

Medijsko okvirjanje krize biotske raznovrstnosti: študija hrvaškoga dnevnega časopisa

IZVLEČEK

Članek analizira medijsko poročanje o krizi biotske raznovrstnosti v Večernjem listu, najdlje izhajajočem dnevnem časopisu na Hrvaškem, v obdobju 1959–2022. Na podlagi iskanja po več ključnih besedah je bil sestavljen vzorec 367 člankov iz tiskane in spletne izdaje časopisa. Izvedena je bila kvantitativna

analiza vsebine z namenom ugotavljanja stopnje zanimanja za vprašanja izgube biotske raznovrstnosti skozi čas in načinov okvirjanja te tematike.

Rezultati kažejo, da je splošno zanimanje za izgubo biotske raznovrstnosti sicer nestanovitno, vendar je skozi čas zaznati postopno povečanje števila objav na to temo. Najpogosteje so v ospredju teme o ogroženih ali izumrlih vrstah in ogroženih ekosistemih. Večina člankov krizo biotske raznovrstnosti predstavlja kot lokalno in znanstveno vprašanje, številni pa jo povezujejo tudi s podnebnimi spremembami. Z induktivnim kodiranjem so bili razviti specifični okviri, povezani z biotsko raznovrstnostjo, ki bi se lahko uporabili za nadgradnjo te ali prihodnjih raziskav.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: kriza biotske raznovrstnosti, izguba biotske raznovrstnosti, podnebne spremembe, medijsko poročanje, okvirjanje, Hrvaška

1 Introduction

There are many different reasons for the current biodiversity crisis. Throughout human existence we, as a species, have “manipulated and transformed land and its natural resources” (Popp 2022). In that sense, humans have significantly altered the Earth by cutting down forests and building cities, diverting rivers and creating artificial landscapes, and “harvesting so much of the ecosystem’s biomass leaves little behind to support complex food webs” (De Palma and Purvis 2022: 108). Species are also under threat due to human use of sea, climate change, pollution, and invasive species (Hald-Mortensen 2023)¹. But biodiversity or the “variety of life on Earth” is “essential for our survival” (De Palma and Purvis 2022: 106). We cannot extract ourselves from the environment we live in, as we need its air and water as well as the soil and the food it provides us with. Humans share this planet with “approximately 9 million types of plants, animals, protists and fungi” (Cardinale et al. 2012: 59) and many of those species are in decline. Many too are facing extinction, and the rates of extinction are around 1000 times higher than the background rate of extinction² (Ceballos et al. 2010; Pimm et al. 2014; Wilson 2016). Whereas at ordinary times one wouldn’t expect to see a species

1. Still, the main driver of biodiversity loss is human use of land, mainly “deforestation for agriculture” that “is responsible for putting 85% of species at risk” (Hald-Mortensen 2023: 1).
2. That is the rate “that varies from one group of organisms to another” and “is expressed in terms of extinctions per million species-years” (Kolbert 2014: 15). For instance, for amphibians, “the most endangered class of animals” this rate “could be as much as forty-five thousand times higher than the background rate” (Kolbert 2014: 17).

go extinct in what amounts to a human lifetime (such a geologically insignificantly small amount of time), people living today are witnessing the beginning of a mass extinction³ (see Cowie et al. 2022), an event that has only happened five times in the history of our planet.⁴ According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species⁵, the "most comprehensive information source on the global extinction risk status of animal, fungus and plant species", there are currently more than 45.300 species threatened with extinction (IUCN 2024).

But biodiversity is a complex concept that is frequently misunderstood (Shanahan 2008). It does not only mean "the variability among living organisms from all sources", i.e. "terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems"; it also includes "diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems" (Convention on Biological Diversity 2011: 4). Partly because of its complexness, but also because it had been developed still quite recently⁶, the concept is often not fully appreciated or understood by the media or public in general (Shanahan 2008). This is supported by Eurobarometer research on public opinion, conducted both on EU level as well as in Croatia that has revealed that there are still a lot of citizens unfamiliar with the term biodiversity – as high as 29% in EU and 17% in Croatia, while another 30% (27% in Croatia) have heard of it, but don't know what it means (Attitudes of Europeans towards Biodiversity 2019). In 2022 research, part of the national campaign "Listen to the voice of nature, protect Croatia's

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3. Jablonski (1986) defines mass extinctions "as substantial biodiversity losses that are global in extent, taxonomically broad, and rapid relative to the average duration of the taxa involved" (as cited in Jablonski 1994: 11)
 4. These extinctions are often being referred to as "the big five" and include: End-Ordovician, Late Devonian, End-Permian, Late Triassic, and End-Cretaceous extinctions (Kolbert 2014).
 5. Apart from the IUCN, there are many open access databases and information systems containing biodiversity data. The Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) is "an international network and data infrastructure" that provides "open access to data about all types of life on Earth" (GBIF 2025). European Nature Information System (EUNIS) collects data from multiple sources to offer datasets that consist "of information on species, habitat types and sites" (EUNIS 2025). Biodiversity information system for Europe (BISE) offers "data collected through key nature-related policy instruments" (BISE 2025). There is also The Encyclopedia of Life (EOL), "an international effort, led by the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History" that stores information "on nearly 2 million species" (Smithsonian 2025).
 6. The concept was developed in the 1980s when scientists had increasingly become aware of the many "negative trends in abundance and distribution" as well as risk of extinction of numerous species (Turnhout and Purvis 2020: 672).

biodiversity” by the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, similar results were found, although the number of those completely unfamiliar with the term in Croatia has fallen to 12.8% (Research on citizens’ attitudes about nature protection 2022).⁷

Despite this lack of understanding, biodiversity crisis is an important subject of the present day, one that is now inextricably connected to climate change⁸ and a potential source of doomist thinking and anxiety – whether it is written about in the context of wildlife habitat loss, invasive species introduction or in the context of the mass extinction of the species taking place today. Since “the media play a central role in shaping awareness and discussion of biodiversity issues” (Painter 2021: 185), it is ever more important to analyse just how they portray the existing crisis. Therefore, the aim of this research is to assess the overall interest and framing of the topics regarding biodiversity crisis in the media over time. This will be done by focusing on one media outlet in Croatia – *Večernji list* in a longitudinal frame. The study aims to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1: In what way did the interest for the topic of biodiversity crisis change over time (in terms of quantity of news)?
- RQ2: What are the most prevalent thematic frames covered within the biodiversity crisis?
- RQ3: What other framing mechanisms are used in representation of biodiversity crisis (e.g. is biodiversity crisis presented in the context of climate change, is it framed as a scientific issue, a local or a global issue)?

2 Media interest in biodiversity

As explained by Chevallier et al. (2019) very few studies have analysed media interest in biodiversity issues or the role of the media in shaping “public perception of biodiversity in a context of urgent need for conservation” even though this role “may be critical” (ibid.: 107). Their research, conducted on the media outlets in eight countries, has found contrasting trends as in some analysed countries (Brazil, Columbia, France and Spain) there is a “growing coverage of

7. Such data can be worrisome from the successful data collection point of view as well. Citizens’ knowledge on biodiversity is important because their effort in monitoring and collection data from the environment can be crucial for science. As explained by Groom et al. “citizen scientists generate the vast majority of terrestrial biodiversity observations” (2016: 612).

8. De Palma and Purvis (2022) recognize climate change as the newest threat to biodiversity loss which may form “a vicious cycle with climate change” as “ecosystems that have lost biodiversity store less carbon and are less able to cope with extreme weather events and other climate change” (De Palma and Purvis 2022: 109).

biodiversity topics” while in others (Australia, Chile, Costa Rica and South Africa) “a constant or decreasing interest” (ibid.: 114).

Several studies have analysed media representation of both biodiversity crisis and climate change and have found a clear disparity between the media interest in these two issues (e.g., Legagneux et al. 2018; Veríssimo et al. 2014). For instance, Veríssimo et al. (2014) have argued how “climate change has become more mainstream issue than biodiversity” and, similarly Legagneux et al. (2018) have found that changes in biodiversity were covered up to eight times less by the media compared to climate change. Some specific research regarding biodiversity loss – such as “media coverage of pollinator decline” (Althaus et al. 2021) have too shown this disparity. Apart from the mere quantity of reporting, there seem to be differences in the way the two subjects are portrayed. Again, Legagneux et al. (2018) have detected how “climate change coverage was often related to specific events” while this sort of connection wasn’t found “in case of biodiversity” (ibid.: 1). Such results have led the authors to propose different strategies for more (media) engagement in biodiversity topics. Legagneux et al. (2018) have proposed considering “emotional component and self-engagement of the public” as communication strategies for biodiversity issues (ibid.: 5). Novacek (2008) too has proposed several strategies, starting with building “a clear and compelling message about the importance of biodiversity and what we risk in depleting it” (ibid.: 11571). Because there has been a shift in public attitudes regarding climate change, now recognized as a serious environmental problem, biodiversity should be related to other environmental issues and the explanation of its importance “should also be contextual” (ibid.: 11575).

Some research points out that journalists do not use the term biodiversity easily, and some authors like Shanahan (2008) even proposed the avoidance of the term “biodiversity” in the media because it is both “poorly understood and not easy to describe”. Painter (2021), who has interviewed a “selection of UK-based journalists regularly covering environmental issues”, unravelled their opinion of biodiversity being a “difficult term” that their audiences rarely understand (ibid.: 177). He too discovered that it “often masks a series of issues such as species loss or extinction, conservation, ecosystem services, or threats to tropical forests and coral reefs”, so some journalists use alternative words like “nature” (ibid.: 178). A similar conclusion was reached by Brunet et al. (2020) who have found that the term “biodiversity was not explicitly defined in the media” but was rather “used as a catch-all argument frequently supporting proponent and opponent views regarding an issue or project.” (ibid.: 1655).

Considerable amount of research on biodiversity in the media has focused on the portrayal of “charismatic life-size mammals” like tiger, black bear, and

leopard (Painter 2021). For instance, Sadath et al. (2013) had used a specific topic of “human-tiger interaction” to show how national Bangladeshi newspaper (*The Daily Ittefaq*) and international media (*The Guardian*) differed in their framing of this particular problem (ibid.: 37). Still, one of the most studied emblematic mammals are the polar bears (e.g., Archibald 2015; Born 2019; O’Neill 2022), often seen as “icons of climate change” (Born 2019). By conducting a longitudinal analysis “of visual evidence arising from political, social, scientific, and cultural domains” O’Neill (2022) has identified the change in the visual representation of polar bear to political bear, and finally to climate bear. Born (2019) has studied the representation of polar bears (in *National Geographic*) and identified three stages in the process of bears’ “iconization”.

Research on the visual representation of biodiversity loss has shown the importance of photographs in constructing “the meaning of stories on biodiversity” (Seppänen and Väliverronen 2003). In their analysis of *The Times* articles and accompanying photographs on biodiversity, Seppänen and Väliverronen have found “that most pictures represent animal species” as their extinction poses “a very real and significant related threat” but also that none of the pictures were of destroyed nature (ibid.: 67).

The existing research on the climate change coverage in Croatian media is scarce (apart from the two notable exceptions – Bašić et al. 2020 and Kalajžić et al. 2022) while the research on coverage of the biodiversity crisis is practically non-existent. By assessing the overall interest and coverage of the biodiversity crisis in news media in a longitudinal time frame, our aim is thus to fill in the literature gap and broaden this issue in the international context.

3 Media framing

For many, the media are the primary source of information and meaning on different issues related to society, environment or other fields. Therefore, the ways in which these issues, including biodiversity, are represented in the media could have significant effects on how people understand and form opinions on them. One of the most widely used theoretical approach in communication research to understand these processes is framing (Guenther et al. 2024), defined as a mechanism by which some aspects of the perceived reality are selected and made more “salient in communicating text” (Entman 1993: 52).

Researchers broadly differentiate between two main types of media frames. Generic frames are those that can be recognized in news stories regardless of the issue of the story, or in other words, that cut through different issues. Examples of generic frames are conflict frames, human interest or economic consequences

(Guenther et al. 2024). In contrast, thematic frames are issue specific and refer to the thematic focus of the news article. In that sense, thematic frames are only applicable to a specific topic such as, for instance climate change, and they cannot be applicable to other issues (Guenther et al. 2024).

There has been an increasing application of framing theory to research of the representation of climate change in the media (Guenther et al. 2024) and this research most often focuses on media content and thematic frames, discussing measuring frames of, for example, climate action, climate policy or climate justice (Guenther et al. 2024). Other commonly used framing mechanisms for studying climate change include: the extent to which it is framed as an issue of scientific uncertainty or consensus, or local or global issue, or the issue of local or global responsibility (Stoddart et al. 2016).

When it comes to biodiversity, there is no evidence of such wide applications of framing theory. There are, though, examples of studies analysing framing used by different communicators in science and policy discourse about biodiversity (e.g., Elliott 2020; Ugglá 2018) or using generic frames to explain the media representation of certain species (Sadath et al. 2013). One study focused on valence, demonstrating that biodiversity is presented in a positive valence, and more often as having intrinsic, rather than utilitarian value (Brunet et al. 2020).

In the analysis of the representation of climate change in the media, researchers have often employed four frames identified by Entman (1993: 52): defining problems (determining “what a causal agent is doing with what costs and benefits”), diagnosing causes (what is creating the problem), making moral judgements (evaluating causal agents as well as their effects), and suggesting solutions (remedies for the problems and predicting the effects). These frames have been tested and used by for instance, Wessler et al. (2016) and Lück et al. (2016), both for framing Conference of the Parties (COPs). It has been used by Lopera and Moreno (2014) in media coverage of climate science in Spanish newspapers to develop the following frames: causes, consequences, solutions and responsibility. In this study, we are drawing on Entman’s (1993) and Lopera and Moreno (2014) conceptualizations of media frames and are applying them to the biodiversity issue. Since the moral judgement frame has been shown to be problematic in the analysis as it overlaps with the diagnosing causes frame (Wessler et al. 2016), in this analysis we redefined the frame as the responsibility frame. Here, the responsibility frame does not refer to the moral evaluation of causal agents, but to addressing responsibility of actors for the solution of the problem. Besides generic frames, in this study we will be also analysing thematic frames specific for the biodiversity issue, and applying frames commonly used in analysing climate change to biodiversity (e.g. science frame, global or local issue frame).

4 Data and method

The media representation of the biodiversity crisis in Croatia was studied by using content analysis of newspaper articles published in one media outlet – the influential daily newspaper *Večernji list* for the period 1959 – 2022. *Večernji list* changed ownership and political leaning in this long time period. During the socialist Yugoslavia, the newspaper was published by the publishing house Vjesnik. It was the company's most successful daily newspaper with the highest circulation of 370 thousand copies recorded in 1986 (Novak 2005). After the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the newspaper went through the privatization process and ownership changed for many media outlets, but *Večernji list* continued to exert influence over its readership. Up until the emergence of *Jutarnji list* in 1998, *Večernji list* had no real competition on the newspaper market. Since 2000, *Večernji list* has been published by the Austrian media company Styria Media Group. It is considered to be a conservative leaning media outlet. According to Digital News Report 2024 for Croatia, the digital edition of *Večernji list* is on the sixth place (weekly reach for online media outlets) with a 26% audience reach (Peruško, 2024). Despite the higher reaches for other media outlets, *Večernji list* still retains readership for its printed edition (15% reach; Reuters Digital News Report 2024) and therefore has both historic and contemporary significance.

The units of analysis – news articles published in *Večernji list* – were acquired using their archive of the printed editions⁹ (for the available period 1959–2010)¹⁰ and their digital edition *Vecernji.hr* (for the remaining period 2011–2022).¹¹

We selected articles for the analysis by searching via keywords related to biodiversity. Due to the complexity of the term biodiversity and the fact that it has only been introduced in the scientific community in the 1980s (see Shanahan 2008; Turnhout and Purvis 2020), apart from the keyword “biodiversity”, we used

9. The archive consists of digitized editions of printed newspapers published from 1959 (first edition of *Večernji list*) till 2010 and is available on site: <https://arhiva.vecernji.hr/> that offers search via keywords or by date, while for *Vecernji.hr* we used a search engine available on the site.

10. This was the only available print media outlet for a longitudinal study. Apart from *Večernji list*, there are only two newspapers that have a longer publication history – *Novi list* (published from 1900) and *Slobodna Dalmacija* (published from 1943). Both newspapers were excluded from the study due to them being regional newspapers. The only other newspaper with a longer history, *Vjesnik* (published from 1941) ceased publication in 2012.

11. The reason for analysing digital editions from 2011 onwards was that the access to the archive for the printed editions was limited to 2010. This is a limitation of the study which will be discussed in the conclusion.

additional keywords: “ecosystem”, “species extinction”, “endangered species”, “invasive species” and “habitat loss”.¹² The search via keywords in both the archive of printed editions as well as the digital edition of *Večernji list* yielded results not connected or only remotely connected to biodiversity loss so each article had to be checked. Only articles that dealt with the topic in its main part or in entirety were selected for the analysis. The final sample consisted of 367 news articles.

The coding scheme was developed based on literature review and inductive reading of articles by the authors of the study. The articles were analysed for the following categories: date of the publication; (newspaper) section; visual equipment (presence of photos and illustration and what they portray); thematic frames; does the article mention plants, animals, both or none; if animal is mentioned, what class it belongs to; dominant frame and subcategories; is the article prompted by an occasion (e.g., Earth Day, appeal or movement for protection; opening of an environmental protection centre; protests); is the issue of biodiversity presented in the context of climate change; does the article mention scientists, experts, scientific data; valence of the story; geographic range of biodiversity crisis.

Framing of biodiversity was informed by framing categories by Entman (1993) and Lopera and Moreno (2014), and issue specific thematic frames. We used Entman’s (1993) generic frames and Lopera and Moreno’s (2014) application of these frames on climate change (framing causes, consequences, solutions and responsibility). However, we also tried to expand the generic frames by applying them more specifically to the biodiversity issue (e.g. defining specific causes or solutions). The categories referring to generic framing of biodiversity were therefore developed by inductive coding through initial reading of news articles. However, as the intercoder reliability results for generic frames were not high enough for presenting the quantitative results, in the results section we will only describe the way they were developed inductively. Thematic frames refer to the dominant theme addressed by the news article. We could not find specific thematic frames applied to biodiversity in the literature review, so we developed new codes by inductive reading of news articles in the sample.

Authors of the paper were coding the sample of 367 news articles. Intercoder reliability was calculated on the random subsample of 37 articles, which is approximately 10% of the total sample. In the results section the variables with at least 0.7 percent agreement will be presented.¹³

12. Words “environment” and “nature” were not used because, as explained by Legagneux et al. (2018), are not specific enough to the biodiversity crisis.

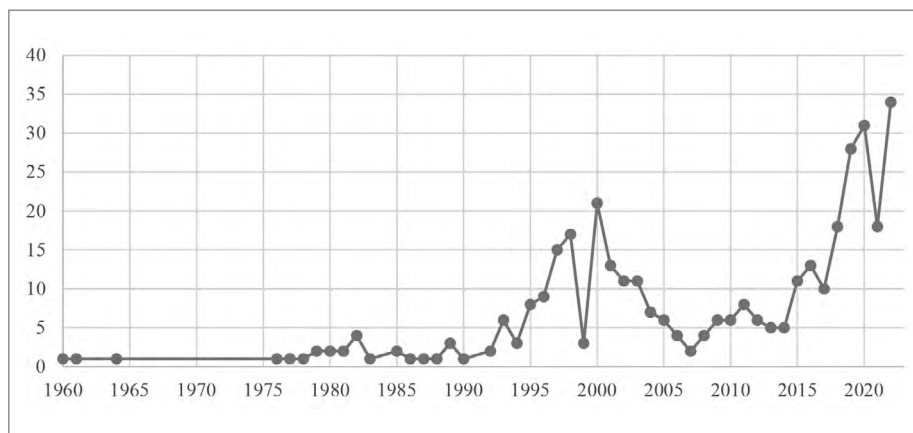
13. The percent agreement for the variable measuring thematic frames is 0.73, for framing biodiversity through science 0.84, for framing biodiversity in the context of climate

5 Results and discussion

5.1 General characteristics of articles on biodiversity crisis

Of in total 367 articles analysed, 180 were published in the printed editions (from 1960 till 2010) and 187 in online editions (from 2011 till 2022). The highest number of articles was published in 2022 (34) and 2020 (31) but the overall trend is an uneven distribution of articles over the years with a rise in the number of articles and then a steep decline (years 1999 and 2021). According to Seppänen and Väliverronen (2003), it was in the 1990s that “biodiversity loss became one of the ‘big’ environmental issues” globally (p. 64–65). This is only in part visible in our sample through the rise in articles on biodiversity from 1995 to 1998. Even though, due to the different nature of print and online editions, it is hard to make direct comparisons, the fact that more than half of the analysed articles were published in the last 11 years speaks in favour of the topic being recognized as more important with time.

Figure 1: Number of articles per years.



There are several very important years for the biodiversity: first, in 1992, at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, The Convention on Biological Diversity was adopted by “the vast majority of the world’s governments” (Convention on Biological Diversity 2022); 2010 was designated as the International year of Biodiversity by the UN (UNESCO 2010); and in 2012 resolution on

change 0.97, and for the story valence 0.73. Cohen’s kappa for thematic frames is 0.6, for framing biodiversity through science 0.63, for framing biodiversity in the context of climate change 0.89, and for the story valence 0.48. Story valence was also not presented in the results section because of the low value of Cohen’s kappa coefficient.

the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services was adopted (IPBES 2012).

Given these important years, we examined the data to see whether it is possible to detect the rise in interest in biodiversity in *Večernji list* – through the rise in number of articles but also through examining the exact topics written about in the recognized important years. No rise in the number of articles was detected for 1992, 2010 or 2012, but the International year of Biodiversity was the expressed reason for publication of three (out of six) articles in 2010.¹⁴ A small increase in use of the term biodiversity in news media was noted by Brunet et al. (2020) “during the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity compared to the average” in their analysis of “major newspapers in the province of Québec, Canada” (ibid.: 1655).

Painter (2021) too has pointed out the importance of 2019 that yielded “the most comprehensive report” published by IPBES that “mapped the rapid decline in recent years in nature’s resources” and was given an “unusual salience” by many media outlets that focused on “around one million animal and plant species” that were “now threatened with extinction” (p. 173). This report too was picked up by *Večernji list* that informed on it in two articles: “We are responsible for the extinction of a million species on which we ourselves depend”¹⁵, and “New UN report: One million species are facing extinction because of humans”.¹⁶

There were no specific sections in either newspaper or online edition on nature, environment and/or animals. Most of the analysed articles in both printed and online editions were published under the section “News” – in total 173 articles (47.1%), and in online editions frequently under subsections “Science and Tech” (43) or “World” (37). In printed editions many were published under the section “Garden” (21) and under the section that had the translations of selected articles from domestic or foreign press (25).

In total 295 articles were accompanied by one or more photographs (80.4% of the total number), 22 had an illustration or a graph (5.9%) and only 4 (1%) featured a video. There were 51 articles (13.9%) without photographs, illustrations or videos, mostly in printed editions.

14. “Tajanstvena riba krških rijeka”, *Večernji list*, 7 March 2010; “Ljubavno kreketanje sve je tiše”, *Večernji list*, 6 June 2010; “Dugokrili noćni lovac”, *Večernji list*, 12 September 2010.

15. “Odgovorni smo za nestanak milijun vrsta o kojima i sami ovisimo”, *vecernji.hr*, 24 April 2019.

16. “Novi UN-ov izvještaj: Milijun vrsta pred izumiranjem je zbog ljudi”, *vecernji.hr*, 6 May 2019.

We used an open-ended question for the description of subjects in main or cover¹⁷ photographs and illustrations and those were later grouped under 19 categories (Table 1).

Table 1: Categories for the subjects of photographs and illustrations (main/cover photo).

| Subjects of main/cover photographs/illustrations | Number of photographs/illustrations | % |
|---|-------------------------------------|------|
| Animals | 143 | 45.1 |
| Fires, floods, cut down trees, polluted environment, dead animals | 20 | 6.3 |
| Scientists, experts, people who take care of the animals, people who help animals | 20 | 6.3 |
| Plants, fungi, and algae | 15 | 4.7 |
| Other | 14 | 4.4 |
| Urban environments | 13 | 4.1 |
| Activists, protesters, activities of cleaning and helping the environment, calls for action | 12 | 3.8 |
| Humans in nature, humans with animals | 12 | 3.8 |
| People | 11 | 3.5 |
| Nature without human presence | 9 | 2.8 |
| Politicians | 8 | 2.5 |
| Celebrities and opinion leaders | 8 | 2.5 |
| Fisherman and boats | 8 | 2.5 |
| Earth and ecosystem | 6 | 1.9 |
| Botanical gardens and museums | 4 | 1.3 |
| Oil and gas platforms and powerplants | 4 | 1.3 |
| Markets with animals and plants | 4 | 1.3 |
| Future environment | 3 | 0.9 |
| Post stamps with endangered species | 3 | 0.9 |

Most of the photographs portrayed animals (143) which is consistent with the Seppänen and Väliverronen's (2003) analysis who have found that most pictures represented animal species. While they found a complete absence of pictures of destroyed nature, in our sample those photographs were present. Photographs of

17. For printed editions, in cases where more photographs were present in the article, we analysed the biggest or the most prominent photograph. In the articles of online editions, we analysed the cover photo of the article.

dead animals, cut down trees and polluted or devastated environment were grouped with photographs of fires and floods and we found in total 20 such photographs. Plants (individual trees, flowers...) were subjects of only 13 main photographs/illustrations, while as little as two photographs were of fungi and algae.

Photographs showing people were grouped under several categories: scientists, experts and people who help animals or take care of the animals (20 photographs), humans in nature/humans with animals (12 photographs), celebrities (8 photographs), politicians (8 photographs) and fishermen (8 photographs). In cases in which it was unclear who the portrayed people were, they were labelled under the category people (11 photographs). The category of protest and activism (12 photographs) was a broader category that not only included people but also posters and calls for action as well as environmental cleanup campaigns.

Only 9 photographs showed nature without human presence, while 13 photographs showed urban environments – cities, and urbanized environments such as coasts and beaches with housing. There was also a category for the portrayal of what could be the environment of the future (soil affected by drought and deserts) (3 photographs).

5.2 Characteristics of the mentioned species

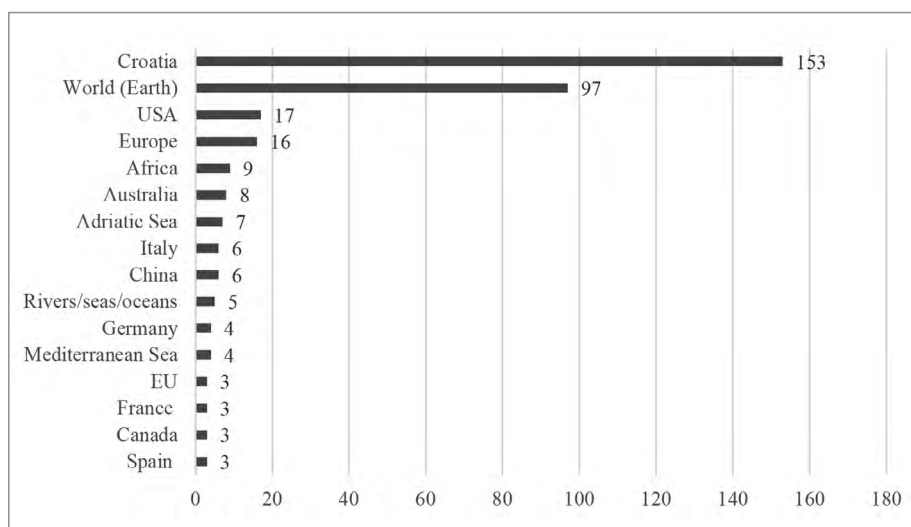
The majority of the articles put focus on animals (243 or 66.2%), rather than on plants (30 or 8.2%), and in 37 articles (10.1%) both animals and plants were mentioned. A total of 57 articles (15.5%) had no mention of animals or plants.

Many articles mentioned more than one class of animals. In 138 articles there was mention of mammals, in 68 of birds, in 57 of fish, in 42 of reptiles, in 31 of amphibians, and in 38 of invertebrates. In 29 articles it was not clear which class of animal the text referred to. We compared the obtained results with the data provided by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. According to the list, the most endangered species are reef building corals – 44% are threatened with extinction, followed by “41% of amphibians, 38% of trees, 37% of sharks and rays, 34% of conifers, 26% of mammals, 26% of freshwater fishes and 12% of birds” (IUCN, 2024). This shows that the media interest in a certain class of animal is not entirely consistent with the data on the number of species in those classes that are threatened with extinction. A similar conclusion was reached by dos Santos Morini et al. (2023) who compared “the frequency of threats to deer species in media reports with the threats’ relevance indicated by experts in the IUCN assessments”. The authors found that although “the main threats described at IUCN assessments coincide” with media reports, some of the threats were underreported (dos Santos Morini et al. 2023).

5.3 Presentation of biodiversity crisis

Focus on the biodiversity crisis seems to be mainly directed at local, i.e. biodiversity issues in Croatia (153 articles or 41.7%), followed by the presentation of the issue as global phenomena (97 articles or 26.4%). In total 7 articles had in focus biodiversity crisis in the Adriatic Sea, which again can be connected to Croatia, and additional four had in focus the Mediterranean Sea. This would mean that the biodiversity issue is mostly framed as a local issue, which might have a specific effect on audiences perceiving biodiversity as something that has direct connection to their immediate environment. As research shows, the Mediterranean coast is especially vulnerable to climate change (Lincke et al. 2020), and this, due to its vicinity to Croatia, is obviously perceived as important.

Figure 2: Geographical range of biodiversity crisis (mentioned more than three times).



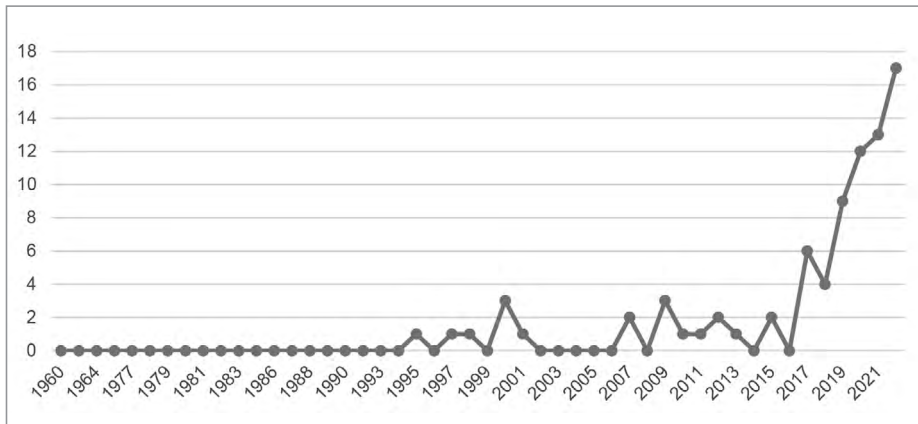
We were also interested if biodiversity was framed as a science-related issue, which is a frame important for climate change reporting (e.g. the question if climate change is a matter of scientific consensus). In that sense we analysed whether there was a mention of scientists, experts and/or scientific data (including international organizations such as UN, FAO) in the articles on biodiversity crisis. In total 253 articles (68.9%) had such mention or data, and 114 articles (31.1%) did not, which would point to the conclusion that biodiversity is in large part framed as a science-related issue.

Another examined characteristic was if the article had an occasion, i.e. if it was motivated by celebration (e.g. Earth Day, World Biodiversity Day...) or protest.

The results have shown that 288 or 78.5% of the articles were not prompted by any such occasion, while 79 articles or 21.5% were.

We also examined if the biodiversity issues were presented in the context of climate change and discovered that 287 or 78.2% were not, and 80 articles or 21.8% were presented in that context. The number of articles on biodiversity crisis framed in the context of climate change has risen dramatically in the last few years (since 2018) (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Biodiversity crisis in the context of climate change (N).



Although climate change is still not the main driver of biodiversity loss, the two may form “a vicious cycle”, one in which the loss of biodiversity that would otherwise slow climate change (by taking CO₂ out of the atmosphere) and make “warming easier to bear” (given that trees in the cities help lower temperatures) could now exacerbate the conditions (De Palma and Purvis, 2022: 109). Our results, indicating the rise of the writing on biodiversity loss in the context of climate change from 2018 onwards certainly point in the direction that this connection has been acknowledged by the journalists in their texts.

5.4 Themes and frames

As outlined earlier in the text, this analysis draws on the thematic frames specific to the biodiversity issue, and generic frames (based on Entman’s 1993 and Lopero and Moreno 2014 conceptualizations). As there was no overview of the thematic frames specific for biodiversity in the literature, we developed the themes inductively by initial reading of texts. The explanation of the developed thematic frames is presented in Table 2. Generic frames were developed in more detail in order to be applied to the biodiversity issue. The development of subcategories of generic frames referring to biodiversity are presented in Table 4.

Table 2: Description of thematic frames related to the biodiversity issue.

| Thematic frames | Explanation |
|--|--|
| Endangered or extinct species | Endangered or extinct animals or plants, including the victims of the “big five” extinctions and the current “sixth extinction” |
| Endangered ecosystem | Consequences of human action (including tourism), fires, floods and invasive species |
| Education campaigns and activities | Educational campaigns on biodiversity and environment of both governmental organizations and NGOs; activities of environmental organizations and movements; campaigns for the ban on hunting |
| Restoring species back in the environment | Attempts of restoring species back in their native environments, including capture breeding programs and success stories |
| People who study and look after animals/plants/environment | Scientists (and their research and conferences) and experts on different species; people who take care of animals (e.g. in zoos, nature parks...) |
| Legislation | Legislation in terms of protection of species and environment |
| Wildlife trafficking | “Illegal trade, smuggling, poaching, capture, or collection of endangered species” and “protected wildlife” (UNODC, 2019); illegal forest logging |
| Hunting and fishing | Overhunting and overfishing as a threat to land and marine species |
| Discovery of a new species | Could also include a rediscovery of a species previously thought to be extinct ¹⁸ |
| Biodiversity | Biodiversity as a concept |

The largest share of news stories about the diversity focuses on endangered or extinct species (31.6%) and endangered ecosystems (23.2%). This finding suggests that media representation of biodiversity tends to focus on species loss rather than on the causes for those losses. Larger proportion of news also focuses on education campaigns and activities of environmental organizations (15%). Biodiversity as a concept is the focus in only three articles of the sample, which goes in line with the argument about the difficulty of integrating this concept in journalistic discourse (see Painter, 2021).

18. Although no such example was found in the analysed articles, Zablocki et al. (2016) have analysed media coverage of species rediscoveries along with the factors that influence this coverage so it is reasonable to assume that this topic could appear in future media content analysis.

Table 3: Frequencies and percentages of thematic frames in the sample.

| Thematic frames | N | % |
|--|-----|------|
| Endangered or extinct species | 116 | 31.6 |
| Endangered ecosystem | 85 | 23.2 |
| Education campaigns and activities of environmental organizations | 55 | 15.0 |
| Restoring species back in the environment | 24 | 6.5 |
| People who study and look after animals/plants/environment | 23 | 6.3 |
| Legislation (protection of species and the environment) | 19 | 5.2 |
| Wildlife trafficking (illegal trade, smuggling, poaching) and forest logging | 16 | 4.4 |
| Hunting and fishing | 10 | 2.7 |
| Discovery of a new species | 5 | 1.4 |
| Biodiversity as a concept | 3 | 0.8 |
| Other | 11 | 3.0 |

We found frames related to causes, consequences, solutions and responsibility for biodiversity in news articles in the sample: all the frames with their subcategories are named in Table 3. When discussing causes, news articles would emphasize human or natural impact on biodiversity, or both at the same time. For example, when discussing human impact, news articles would discuss human activity such as hunting (including poaching) and agriculture development or the role of industry in polluting the environment (among other activities). When discussing natural impact on biodiversity, news articles would discuss changes in natural environments.

In terms of consequences, the loss of biodiversity would be framed as a loss for a diverse ecosystem, in which diversity is presented as a value by itself. Besides this kind of framing, more anthropocentric frames were also present. For example, biodiversity loss would be framed in a utilitarian way as a threat for the survival of human species or economic threat (e.g. for sustainable agriculture).

News articles were also framed in terms of solutions for the biodiversity loss – they would discuss either legal issues or regulation (including restrictions, sanctions, increasing protected areas), education and raising awareness or direct human intervention in fighting biodiversity loss through expert and scientific activities.

Finally, in this paper responsibility was defined as framing certain actors to be responsible for solving the issue of biodiversity loss. We were not interested in framing responsibility for causing the problem, as this would overlap with the definition of causes. In the analysis, we found that news articles would assign responsibility for solving the biodiversity loss to states, industry, politicians,

scientists or experts or international organizations. A part of the news articles would be ambiguous, and assigned responsibility to “humans”, acknowledging in this way the anthropogenic role in biodiversity loss, but failing to assign concrete responsibility.

Table 4: Description of generic frames applied to biodiversity issue.

| Frames | Subcategories |
|-----------------------|---|
| Causes | Natural impact on biodiversity |
| | Human impact on biodiversity |
| | Mixed impact (both human and natural) |
| Consequences | Loss for the ecosystem (biodiversity as a value) |
| | A threat to the survival of human species |
| | Economic (on agriculture, fishing...) |
| Solutions | Increase of the protected areas |
| | Restriction or prohibition of hunting or fishing |
| | Sanctioning of poaching and endangering endangered species; illegal logging |
| | Better legal protection |
| | Education and raising awareness of biodiversity importance |
| | Direct human intervention (e.g. capture breeding program, invasive species removal; new scientific advances in terms of intervention) |
| | Industry adjustment (e.g. sustainable tourism) |
| Responsibility | Humans (human race) |
| | Certain state/states (including EU) |
| | Industry |
| | Politicians |
| | International organizations (e.g. UN) |
| | Scientists and experts |

6 Conclusion

Biodiversity loss is one of the most important topics of our day, and scientists and experts have long warned of the potentially disastrous effects of the ongoing mass extinction of species. Edward O. Wilson (2016) has called the current extinction a “global endgame” that will be fatal for many species while Elizabeth Kolbert (2014), in her influential book of the same name, wrote of the sixth extinction as humans “most enduring legacy” that “will continue to determine the course of life long after everything people have written and painted and built

has been ground into dust” (ibid.: 269). Still, regardless of these warnings, media interest does not seem to be consistent with the magnitude of the problem (see Shanahan 2008) and research has consistently shown the differences in media interest for biodiversity loss as opposed to climate change issues that seem to be much more on the media agenda (e.g., Legagneux et al. 2018; Veríssimo et al. 2014). But the scientific research on media representation of biodiversity loss is also scarce (compared to research on the media representation of climate change) and is generally focused on the representation of certain species, mostly large and charismatic mammals as identified by Painter (2021).

The goal of this research has therefore been to assess the overall interest and coverage of the biodiversity crisis in *Večernji list*, the longest running daily newspaper in Croatia, and thus to fill in the literature gap and broaden the issue in the international context. Since the research in general did not provide a comprehensive overview of the framing of biodiversity loss in the media, quantitative content analysis was carried out to determine the framing of the issue.

The obtained results show the prevailing thematic focus to be endangered or extinct species, followed by endangered ecosystems. The longitudinal analysis carried out for the period 1959–2022 allowed us to determine that the overall interest for biodiversity loss is inconsistent. Still, the highest number of articles was published in the most recent years – in 2022 and 2020 so the rise of interest in the topic is detected. The analysis could not establish a link between important years for biodiversity (adoption of The Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992, designation of 2010 as the International year of Biodiversity by the UN and the adoption of IPBES in 2012) and the rise in the number of published articles. Still, the rise in the number of articles in 2020 could perhaps be explained as the aftereffect of the most comprehensive report published by IPBES in 2019 since the research has shown it had generated substantial media coverage worldwide (see Painter 2021).

The majority of the articles put focus on animals (rather than plants) and the focus is, in majority of articles, on mammals, followed by birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians in fifth place. Putting focus on species humans most easily identify themselves with was expected but is nonetheless inconsistent with the data from IUCN Red list that puts amphibians highest in terms of risk of extinction.

Regarding the media framing of the biodiversity loss, we have found that the focus seems to be mainly directed at local or covering the issue in the Croatian context which was present in more than 40% of the articles. While biodiversity is a global issue and should be reported as such, emphasizing locally endangered species and ecosystems may enhance public awareness and foster engagement in conservation efforts.

This study shows that biodiversity loss in Croatia is predominantly portrayed as a scientific issue (69% of the articles), with a gradual shift toward linking it to climate change (22% of articles in overall sample, but 43% in the last five years). Media coverage remains largely centred on species loss – particularly endangered species and ecosystems – while devoting far less attention to the causes of biodiversity decline. Although frames addressing causes, consequences, solutions, and responsibility do appear, our inductively developed subcategories demonstrate how these could be applied more systematically and explicitly to biodiversity reporting.

However, the study has limitations we would like to address. One of the limitations of the study is the sample. As was discussed, the sample includes articles from printed editions (until 2010) and digital editions of *Večernji list* (from 2011 onwards). As Lechpammer (2024) has shown, digital news tends to be different than those in the print media, in terms of authorship, visual equipment and issues being covered. However, the sample also reflects the agenda setting power of print and digital news media. Because printed editions in Croatia have experienced sharp decline in number of copies sold in years from 2008 onwards (Vozab 2014) and since according to Reuters Digital News Report for Croatia in 2024, digital media are the most dominant source of news (80%) while print media are the most dominant source for only 20% (it was 43% in 2017) (Peruško 2024), digital media content could be more suitable for the analysis of the recent period due to more readers and influence of digital news.

Statistics for several variables were not presented in the results section because of low intercoder reliability. Future studies could use this study as a starting point to create more reliable measures for the analysis of media representation of biodiversity. Future research should also put more focus on digital news outlets (including born digital media outlets) to ensure that the sample includes those media outlets with the highest audience reach. This research could also benefit from a broader sample of media outlets that would include both regional and local media since, as shown, the biodiversity crisis is mainly directed at the issue in the Croatian context. A broader methodological approach which would include other methods – such as interviews with journalists and editors could provide insight into the news selection mechanism. Putting more focus on qualitative analysis such as discourse analysis might add to nuanced analysis of language used in representing biodiversity.

Despite the limitations, findings of this research can serve as a starting point for media researchers, media practitioners, policy makers as well as biologists and conservationists. For journalists it can be a starting point in learning how to place greater emphasis on causal chains and climate-related links. By putting focus on

less “charismatic”, but equally endangered species, the media could contribute to a more balanced public discourse. For policymakers and experts, the results can offer insight into media reporting and framing which can be important in discovering how the topic of biodiversity can be communicated more effectively.

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DATA JOURNALISM, DEEP FEATURES, AND THE GEOGRAPHY OF CLIMATE CRISIS IN A MULTIRACIAL CITY: A CASE STUDY OF *THE LOCAL'S* "TORONTO'S CLIMATE RIGHT NOW" ISSUE

ABSTRACT

The paper reports on the case of Toronto's "Climate Right Now" issue of The Local, a digital news magazine start-up with a health justice focus on urban Toronto. Through a close reading of the issue, which builds on a previous multi-modal study of The Local, it is concluded that The Local's structural commitments to race and equity, which resulted in reporting by and for underserved racialised communities, contributed to a qualitative different kind of climate journalism. This approach centred solutions journalism and visual storytelling featuring community members, and took an inclusive, holistic perspective on newsworthiness of what constituted Toronto's climate. The study contributes to research on climate change journalism by new journalism start-ups as little of such research focuses on climate justice in an urban context in the global north.

KEY WORDS: *climate change; journalism start-ups; digital journalism; community journalism; health equity; hyperlocal journalism; climate journalism; climate justice*

Podatkovno novinarstvo, poglobljene reportaže in geografija podnebne krize v večrasnem mestu: študija primera izdaje »Toronto's Climate Right Now« spletne revije *The Local*

IZVLEČEK

Članek obravnava tematsko številko »Toronto's Climate Right Now« revije *The Local*, digitalnega novičarskega zagonskega medija s poudarkom na zdravstveni pravičnosti v urbanem Torontu. Na podlagi analize te izdaje, ki nadgrajuje predhodno multimodalno študijo medija *The Local*, ugotavlja, da so strukturne zaveze revije k vprašanju rase in enakosti, ki so omogočile poročanje s strani zapostavljenih rasiziranih skupnosti in za te skupnosti, prispevale h kvalitativno drugačni obliki podnebnega novinarstva. Ta pristop je v ospredje postavil novinarstvo, osredotočeno na rešitve, in vizualno pripovedovanje zgodb, v katerih so sodelovali člani te skupnosti, obenem pa je zavzel vključujočo, celostno perspektivo glede novičarske vrednosti podnebnega konteksta v Torontu. Študija prispeva k raziskavam podnebnega novinarstva novih novinarskih zagonskih pobud, s čimer deloma zapolnjuje manjko raziskav, ki se osredotočajo na podnebno pravičnost v urbanem okolju globalnega severa.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: podnebne spremembe, novinarska zagonska podjetja, digitalno novinarstvo, skupnostno novinarstvo, zdravstvena pravičnost, hiperlokalno novinarstvo

1 Introduction

In the summer of 2022, *The Local*, a digital journalism start-up based in Toronto, teamed up with *The Narwhal*, a Canadian digital journalism start-up focused on environmental issues, to produce the "Toronto's Climate Right Now" issue. Focused on urban health and the well-being of diverse communities in underserved neighbourhoods, the issue's approach to climate change was qualitatively different from that of the mainstream. Articles ranged from an in-depth exploration of the disproportionate suffering and death of poorer residents living in high rise housing projects; to a first person reflection by a midwife on climate impacts on the health of pregnant women and babies, and on women's calculus about having children; to a long-form text accompanying community naturalists and Indigenous land stewards adapting to the expansion of invasive species through the city's parks and ravines.

This paper contributes to the study of not-for-profit digital journalism start-ups in the Global North, and to the study of climate change journalism, through analyzing how the innovative structures, mandates, and ethical commitments of *The Local* produced a different type of climate journalism. It argues that *The Local*'s journalistic practices – such as applying a health equity lens to data journalism work; taking a more holistic and decolonial approach to what issues and stories fit under the rubric of urban “health”; and concentrating on deep features which frame data journalism findings within the narrative arcs of experiences of racialized Torontonians – constitute a distinctive approach that speaks to urbanized, racialized Canadian communities that are often marginalized in mainstream climate journalism. In broaching *The Local*'s coverage, this study builds on a previous multimodal, multiyear study of *The Local*'s journalism (Roburn 2025), which highlighted key ways its coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic differed from mainstream coverage in the greater Toronto region. To augment the thematic, content, and quantitative analyses of this earlier study, this analysis adopts close reading practices commonly used in the environmental humanities. It aims to uncover if there is a consistent “method” to *The Local*'s coverage of both the pandemic and urban climate change in Toronto.

2 Literature review and context

2.1 Challenges to effective climate journalism

Climate change is widely recognized to be a defining issue of our time, and journalism plays a key role in the general public's understanding of it (Schäfer and Painter 2021). A constantly proliferating literature documents a myriad of challenges to effective climate communication, including but not limited to: petroturfing (Kinder 2024) and other forms of climate denialism, often supported by the fossil fuel industry; the need to accurately convey a complex scientific topic to diverse layperson audiences (Callison 2014); the problems posed by the “slow violence” of climate change, which can be less attention grabbing, and therefore less newsworthy, than wars, traffic accidents, and other more “spectacular” events (Nixon 2011); the tendency of climate change coverage to favor elites and elite sources at the expense of the voices of the people most affected (Comfort et al. 2019; Schäfer and Painter 2021); and numerous affective considerations, such as how openness to accepting climate change science can be significantly shaped by political affiliation (Morris 2021), or how coverage that is too alarmist may actually hinder, rather than help, public engagement and citizen action (Appelgren and Jonsson 2021; Denisova 2025).

Climate journalism research often assesses the state of climate journalism in a particular region or across the world (Boykoff et. al 2023; Navuku and Obijiofor 2024; Wang and Downey 2025); focuses on the identity and values of journalists (Engesser 2024; Painter et al. 2024); and questions if specific strategies, such as using data visualization (Morini et al. 2024), or engaging in “future journalism” (Borgen-Eide 2024), are effective in foregrounding climate concerns.

Bruggemann (2017) highlights that journalistic standards and norms have evolved to better respond to the challenges of covering climate change. For example, the standard of “balanced, objective” information has been interpreted with more nuance, using techniques like “weight-of-evidence” reporting (Dunwoody 2015) that contextualizes opinions that are or are not evidence-based. Major newspapers such as *The Guardian* have adapted their style guide vocabularies to better reflect climate realities (Carrington 2019). Significant projects, trainings, and journalism networks exist on local, regional, and national scales, and at journalism schools, to support better climate change reporting. For example, the *Oxford Climate Journalism Network* includes more than 600 reporters in 120 countries; *Covering Climate Change Now* (<https://coveringclimatenow.org/>), founded by the *Columbia Journalism Review* and *The Nation* magazine, includes over 500 participant organizations in sixty countries reaching billions of people; and *The Earth Journalism Network* focuses specifically on strengthening local journalism about climate change.

2.2 Climate journalism in a time of global media transformation

As Schäfer and Painter (2021) point out, the increasingly urgent need for effective climate change news coverage has coincided with a period of transformation of global news media. Digitization has radically altered the media ecosystem in which journalists operate. For example, legacy media outlets have shifted their resources from print to online journalism, and journalists and news organizations require a presence on social media both for reporting purposes and to reach audiences. Perhaps most importantly, in the last decades, the economic models for “legacy” news media have largely collapsed, triggering a very significant decline particularly in terms of local and community media (Downman and Murray 2018), a dire situation that Quandt and Wahl-Jorgensen (2021) point out was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Quandt and Wahl viewed the “critical moment” of the pandemic not only as a crisis but as an opportunity for journalism, and particularly digital journalism, to transform and thrive. Partially because digital and data journalism have been in a period of growth, and may be a way to fill in some of the news gaps left by disappearing legacy media (Downman and Murray 2018), researchers have

devoted increasing attention to digital news startups in a variety of locations and contexts (Bruno and Nielsen 2012; Callison and Young 2020; Schaffer 2010, 2013; Simons 2013; Usher 2017; Wu 2023). Germane to this paper, Downman and Murray (2018) argue that (digital) hyperlocal reporting is pivotal to journalism's future.

The Local, whose special issue on climate is the subject of this study, is both a "hyperlocal" community news focused project, and a digital news start-up that makes prominent use of data journalism. Data journalism is a growing area of study, with researchers examining, for example, its interactivity (Appelgren 2019) and audience engagement (Martin et al. 2024), and its role as alternative media (Wu 2024) and in public service journalism (Widholm and Applegren 2022). Wu argues however that overall, research specifically pertaining to data journalism is scarce.

2.3 Data journalism and geographies of difference

This study builds on an earlier case study (Roburn 2025) of *The Local's* work as a health justice focused digital news startup operating during the COVID-19 pandemic. *The Local's* data journalism was so successful because it filled a gap in pandemic news coverage: mapping health data onto postal-code specific maps starkly illustrated the difference in access to vaccinations, and the difference in health outcomes, between wealthy areas of the city and underserved neighbourhoods. These maps arose out of *The Local's* commitment to centering "the geography of difference" (The Local, n.d., (a)). The term "geography of difference" is widely used in sociology and geography to describe how relations of power are spatialized. For feminist geographers, spatial relationships not only construct particular places (Massey 2005), but also identities, as experiences of racialization and gendering are enacted through spatial organization (McKittrick 2006).

Geographies of power are especially at play in the case of the slow violence of climate change, with most impacted populations often being spatially and temporally removed from those who are the biggest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. Massey wrote extensively on the "spatialization" or spatial creation and reproduction of modernity into geographies of power based on the centre/periphery economic and governance model of empire adopted by colonial powers. Gutsche and Hess (2019) apply this analysis to articulate how digital journalism institutionalizes place-making, and the impacts this has across "racial, spatial, and institutional spheres of social interactions," (2019: 84) frequently reinforcing existing power relations. Downman and Murray's (2018) work brings this geographic dimension into conversation with the emergence of hyperlocal news start-ups in a time of digital disruption. By centering grassroots voices from

marginalized communities, hyperlocal digital journalism outlets interrupt the tendency of legacy media towards media concentration, and towards a centre/periphery model that minimizes local and regional voices.

Toronto is one of the most diverse cities in the world, with over 200 languages spoken at home by its citizens (Social Planning Toronto, n.d.). *The Local's* approach relied not only on coming to data through an intersectional lens that asked questions about how race, gender, ability, and other factors impacted public health in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), but extended to specific ethical commitments to hire, train, and support a "pipeline" of racialized journalists from the communities that *The Local* served (Roburn 2025).

While Cohen and Clark (2024) note a general tendency for mainstream digital journalism to reproduce employment precarity and exclusions along racial and gendered lines, Callison and Young (2020) point to new journalism start-ups in Canada – like *The Narwhal* and *The Local* – as spaces of journalistic innovation, including in terms of addressing the lack of diversity in mainstream media newsrooms. As Young and Callison (2021) point out in their ethnographic study of a new journalism start-up, gender, colonialism, and technology matter when it comes to how start-ups articulate and carry out their mission. Motta (2022) documents how new journalism start-ups, particularly those serving marginalized communities, have thrived by developing new networks and supports, often partnering with well-resourced funders not only for financial support, but to develop resources and deliver trainings and tools specifically tailored to helping small community news organizations thrive. Citing Andrea Wenzel's work, Motta argues that start-up journalism practice among news organizations serving marginalized communities inclines toward solutions journalism and engaged journalism. This helps to foster "greater trust between media, community members, and organizations where residents feel more connected and invested," but only to the extent that community journalists "are reflexive about journalistic norms like objectivity, that reinforce hierarchies of race, class, and geography" (Wenzel in Motta 2022: 95). In Motta's estimation, it is characteristic of such start-ups that they catalyse conversations at a national level about journalistic norms, bringing neglected community perspectives into the national and international limelight.

Keeping in mind Motta's claims that community engaged digital start-up journalism brings neglected local perspectives to light, and rupture hierarchies of race, class and geography through a reflexive approach, this study examines the "Toronto's Climate Right Now" Summer 2022 issue of *The Local*, which was jointly produced with another digital journalism start-up, *The Narwhal*. It asks:

- (a) Has *The Local* innovated a distinct, and distinctly local, journalistic approach?
- (b) What might such an approach offer for climate change reporting in the

- Greater Toronto Area (GTA), that is different from legacy media coverage?
- (c) How are *The Local*'s structure, processes and ethical commitments "showing up" in specific ways in terms of the issue's reporting?

3 Method

The "Toronto's Climate Right Now" issue was chosen for this close reading for multiple reasons. While much of the current literature suggests that to better cover the "slow violence" (Nixon 2011) of climate change, journalists and other media makers need to focus on the stories of those most impacted (Ejaz and Najam 2023; Reghunath and Zafar 2024), the majority of climate change journalism with a grassroots focus on most affected communities centres rural areas and/or communities in the Global South. As *The Local* instead offers a "hyperlocal" focus on an urbanized setting in the Global North, the analysis can be in conversation with a robust literature on climate communications and journalism, while still contributing something new.

The Local itself, which has won nineteen national level prizes for its coverage, including three top "gold medal" prizes for general excellence at Canada's Digital Publishing Awards, is exemplary of the best of Canadian new journalism startups. Like other Canadian non-profit new journalism start-ups, it does not take advertising but is instead funded by a mix of foundation funding and subscriptions. *The Local* and *The Narwhal* are the first two Canadian Registered Journalism Organizations, non-profits which give tax receipts to donors. They also have specific commitments to financial and donor transparency, to editorial independence, and to codes of ethics that frame journalistic accountability in new ways. Germane to this study, both *The Narwhal* and *The Local* have explicit commitments to racial diversity in the organization's ranks, with *The Local* publishing yearly diversity reports, measuring its Race, Equity, and Representation Commitment, which ensures reporters are members of the communities they serve.

The case study builds on the author's earlier, multi-modal research of the impact of *The Local*'s journalism on health equity during the COVID-19 pandemic (Roburn 2025). An important context arising from this research is that *The Local*'s journalists and editors consistently linked the magazine's innovative reporting, which had a concrete impact on greater health equity in the allocation and accessibility of vaccinations to underserved neighbourhoods, not only to *The Local*'s mandate, but to how that mandate was enacted structurally through the adoption of specific commitments, particularly around Race, Representation, and Equity.¹

1. See web.archive.org/web/20250619155212/https://thelocal.to/race-representation-and-equity-commitment/. *The Local* also has a more general Code of Ethics.

In tying *The Local's* unique reporting, and thus its appeal, to the fact that *The Local's* editors, journalists, and fellowship holders² were representative of the communities they serve, *Local* interviewees highlighted a crucial, underexamined dimension of “engaged” reporting. A growing body of research examines the impact of negative racial biases in reporting on Black, Asian, Arab, Indigenous, and other racialized groups in North American newsrooms, which are overwhelmingly white (Cheung 2024; Oh and Min 2023) and reflect a “white male social order” (Harp et al. 2020: 239). Yet engagement journalism research such as Robinson and Johnson (2024) focuses on better community outreach and relationship building strategies while failing to acknowledge the root issue that communities are not being reported on from within their own ranks, even as “cultural competence” has emerged a key factor in journalists successfully engaging with BIPOC communities. With rare exceptions, such as Young and Callison’s ethnographic research with Indigenous journalists and journalism outlets in Canada demonstrating that “coming from a community actually gives you a form of expertise ... And it should be treated as such” (Young and Callison 2020: 161), there is a paucity of research that examines the journalism produced through more equitable, representative newsrooms in the Global North, including that produced through new journalism start-ups.³ This lacuna is commonplace: a recent meta-review of the research into legacy and online climate change coverage (Schäfer and Mahl 2025) – research originating overwhelmingly in the Global North – does not mention racial make-up in newsrooms, despite reviewing extant research focused on journalist identity (for example, in terms of “role perception”) and organizational context.

In contrast, the “infrastructural” turn in media theory explicitly recognizes that dominant culture prejudices, such as algorithmic or “coded” bias, are embedded within the structures and processes of dominant media systems (Buolamwini 2023; Eubanks 2019; Noble 2018). Such theory centers the experiences and voices that these systems marginalize, not only as subjects/audiences but as producers and designers. The ecomedia research approach applied here draws heavily on intersectional analyses rooted in feminist theory, postcolonial studies, critical disability studies and Indigenous and Black media theory. Such methods are

2. The fellowship is an annual mentoring program, with fellowship holders publishing work in *The Local*.

3. Substantive research examines the role and impact of multicultural, minority, and ethnic press in Canada, and of Indigenous media (Hayward 2019; Murray 2008), but these are different sectors, distinguished by different federal policy regimes and because they may operate in languages other than English or French.

“culturally competent,” in Robinson and Johnson’s term, critically interrogating questions of identity and intersectionality within climate change messaging. More specifically, the choice of a close reading strategy follows Song’s analysis that close reading is an excellent way of “thinking climate change and race together,” surfacing slow violence by “focusing on their attendant affects and observable material consequences,” such that “Each [of race and climate change] can act as a frame that helps us to imagine the everyday as other than what it may serenely appear.” (Song 2018: 51). The analysis that follows draws inspiration from work such as Lopez’s (2022), which acknowledges the roles of slavery and colonialism in shaping a global economy in which climate change impacts are unevenly distributed and mediated, and Monani’s (2024) book length study, which complemented a nuts-and-bolts examination of the operation of the world’s largest Indigenous (and Indigenous led) film and media festival with analyses of specific film texts, in order to highlight how Indigenous ecocinema offers a decolonial perspective distinct from other ecomedia.

Echoing Monani’s methods, this case study complements an earlier multimodal study of *The Local*’s workings over a six-month period, by focusing on a close reading of a particular text, the “Toronto’s Climate Right Now” issue. It is “situated,” in context of the author’s earlier research into *The Local*, but also through the author’s years of Indigenous and ecomedia focused scholarship and field work, and of residence in Toronto. Mindful of urban media theorist Mattern’s caution that countering the deficits of informatic/computational models of urbanism requires attending to “urban epistemological ecologies,” this situatedness informs the interpretation of the issue’s climate change storytelling within the context of a vibrant multiracial city in which “nontextual, unrecordable forms of cultural memory ... are especially relevant for marginalized populations” (Mattern 2021: 64) and environmental knowledge often finds expression in nonsemantic, ambient, and immanent forms. Table 1 lays out the articles in the issue in sequential order as they appear on thelocal.to website, the article type, and the author’s affiliation. The close reading that follows considered the individual article texts and accompanying image and video, the interrelationships of the articles and their placement within the issue, and the issue in the context of the broader cycle of *The Local*’s quarterly issue output.

Table 1: Articles in the “Toronto’s Climate Right Now” issue.

| Article title | Type author | Affiliation |
|--|---|--|
| We’re in a Climate Emergency—It’s Time We Started Acting Like It | Lead editorial | Local editor |
| As Toronto Temperatures Rise, Inequalities Widen | Long feature and photo story | Local editor and freelancer |
| The Weight of Childbirth During a Climate Crisis | Perspective/ personal narrative | Community member/ nonjournalist |
| A Brine Against Nature | Short science/policy focused feature with data graphics | Narwhal editor |
| The Line Between ‘Invasive’ and ‘Native’ Blurs | Long feature and photo story | Freelancer for The Local |
| How a Downtown Landfill Became an Accidental Bird Sanctuary | Long feature and photo story | Narwhal editor and photographer |
| The Drive to Reduce Car Pollution Hits Gridlock | Long science/policy focused feature with data graphics | Narwhal editor |
| The Great (Surprisingly Expensive) Outdoors | Long feature and photo story | Strong affiliation with both magazines |
| Carving Out a Brand New Island | Long feature and photo story | Freelancer for The Local |

4 Analysis

4.1 Tipoffs in the tagline

Four key thematics emerged from the analysis of the “Toronto’s Climate Right Now” issue: public health framing, visual storytelling, holistic orientation, and an emphasis on solutions journalism. These are perhaps best introduced through the issue’s front image and editorial (Figure 1).



Figure 1.

“Toronto’s Climate Right Now” opens with a wide-angle view of a curve in a multi-lane freeway, with one direction of the traffic in rush hour gridlock. Heavy crowns of mature deciduous trees cloak the highway’s margins. Massive roadway lights, towering several stories above the treeline, break the sightlines at regular intervals along the roadway’s curve. In the middle and far distance, the outlines of residential towers are grouped along the highway, their details obscured in brownish smog. The tagline reads “From heat inequality to invasive species, from an urban bird sanctuary to a brand new Toronto island – stories about vulnerability and adaptation in Canada’s biggest city, a collaboration between *The Local* and *The Narwhal*” (The Local (b) Summer 2022).

This text and visual presentation articulate facets of an approach to urban climate change that is consistent both across the issue, and within the arc of *The Local*’s broader storytelling of the city. The reporting is unabashedly “hyperlocal,” embedded in the workplaces, transit routes, and homes of Toronto’s inner city and less favoured suburbs. While the issue approaches climate change through a health justice frame, what is foregrounded is the vibrancy of the city itself. Although the tagline focus on “vulnerability and adaptation” echoes the language of climate science and policy, and although sound science and a focus on policy choices ground individual articles, the stories of climate emergency encompass a more expansive arc than is usual with legacy media climate reporting in Canada. This is both in terms of subject matter that is included, and the holistic approach. The cover image illustrates one of the key themes across the feature articles: that

a city is a jumble of green (natural) and grey (human-built) infrastructure. Both are needed for urban communities and ecologies to thrive, yet benefits and harms are unequally structured into the built environment.

Visual storytelling, such as the cover image, is a key placemaking strategy. It embeds the reader not just in locations, but in communities, and the juxtapositions within and between images convey contradictions and complexities. The photo stories accompanying feature articles bring vibrancy and break up discrete sections of text, creating spaces for reflection and co-existence of multiple facets of “wicked” climate problems, and contributing to *The Local’s* efforts “to fill a role that traditional media neglects – turning complex policy issues into compelling narratives, [and] addressing problems that are systemic and ongoing, even if they don’t have a news hook” (The Local (c) n.d.). The photos also echo the texts in positing community members as the most prominent and central subjects and experts.

A final facet of the tagline presentation is its optimism and openness to possibility – a sanctuary, a new island – that fit with a solutions journalism approach.

A brief editorial, which opens with Toronto’s city council’s declaration of a climate emergency, quickly zooms from the science and policy behind the declaration to climate change’s “hyper-local” consequences, arguing that “harms from extreme weather events will always disproportionately affect those already on the margins of our city – the elderly and the urban poor, those who live or work in buildings without proper ventilation or cooling.” (The Local June 21, 2022). Maintaining an informal tone, the editorial promptly distills the issue down through an analysis focused on structural inequalities: “Climate change is the result of meteorological conditions, sure, but our experience of it is the result of specific policies and politics—the way our cities are organized, the inequities already baked in.” After highlighting the collaborative nature of the issue, the editorial ends by framing the issue as both critical and hopeful: critical, at a critical time, of the urgent problems of climate breakdown, but hopeful that there is time to build resilience and avoid the worst harms.

4.2 Public health is personal

While including touchpoints common to mainstream science reporting, such as opening the editorial with globally accepted science of a UN IPCC report, the issue is distinguished through its immersive focus on public health. This emphasis begins with the first long form article “As Toronto Temperatures Rise, Inequalities Widen,” which reiterates the editorial emphasis on structural inequalities immediately in its tagline that “Climate change causes heat waves, but the city’s

politics, policies, and design determine who suffers most.” It continues through to the final article on the urban design challenges of creating a climate positive downtown neighbourhood on an island newly created at the mouth of the Don River to rewild and restore wetlands in order to mitigate flooding and make the urban waterfront more climate resilient. As Weathers et al. (2018) describe, health communication research suggests that the framing of climate change as a health issue engages and empowers more readers: it counters polarization along political lines, as health is a commonly held value, and it grounds the abstract and complex problem of climate change in concrete, urgent everyday life concerns that are accepted and understood. This is key: without diminishing the focus on the most vulnerable, (in line with *The Local’s* social/health justice values), a health focus brings the risks “close”: one’s own children, or elders, may be affected. People are most likely to change their behaviour or take action when their personal sense of risk is heightened (Weathers et al. 2017).

“As Toronto’s Temperatures Rise,” resonates with other *Local* articles that foreground climate risks to human health by immediately grounding the narrative in an embedded, embodied scene of impacted, “vulnerable” community members taking action in their neighbourhoods. The image at the top of the article depicts Shaheen Kausar, turning on an aging, duct taped window air conditioning unit, harsh sunlight pouring down on both her home and the public housing tower which fills up much of the window view within the image. Kausar is a member of Community Resilience to Extreme Weather (CREW), an association of residents in public housing towers organizing in the face of extreme heat stress in their homes. The article follows CREW during a heat wave, as members go door-to-door checking on neighbours and assisting tenants where possible to get to cooler places such as a local library, community centre or cooling centre.

The challenges of this public health context become clear because of the granular, “close” view of residents within such a long feature: immigrant and refugee residents face language barriers and a lack of familiarity with how to access cooler places; a pensioner cannot afford to turn on their air conditioning unit; seniors and other residents with mobility challenges cannot easily reach cooler locations. With apartments remaining overheated well into the night, working age tenants, whom the article explains are “more likely to work in hot conditions, like construction or manufacturing, or physically intensive roles that require them to be on their feet all day,” may endure sustained exposure to excessive heat for days at a time. The “street level” photography also manages to keep community members “close” – seven of nine photographs depict CREW and other residents in the St. James complex – while making the “picture” of structural inequalities visually apparent. An early section explaining the science

of urban heat islands is punctured by a photo, taken from a high-rise tower, of eight brutalist, concrete high-rise towers filling the frame. The only splashes of colour are a mural on one building, the orange hues of crepuscular sunlight, and a tiny patch of pale blue sky in the upper right corner of the frame. A later aerial shot looks down on the only tree cover in the photostory: a small parkette surrounded by St. James Town highrises.

The public health focus extends not just through place, but in time: the text delves deep into past urban heat wave events in Toronto, Chicago (a city with a similar, Great Lakes influenced climate), and Vancouver, breaking down city emergency policy responses, within the context of hundreds of deaths which skewed heavily towards vulnerable low income residents, with children, seniors, people with disabilities, and Black residents overrepresented.

Importantly, this focus is couched within stories of citizen and community action and advocacy to address the policy choices which have produced these unequally distributed health consequences. Beyond the actions of CREW, the article highlights a son fighting for air conditioning not only for his mother but across all long-term care homes, and a local general practitioner in St. James Town using the limited tools she has to acquire air conditioning for at risk patients through the Ontario Disability Support Program. In this way, the public health framing is enmeshed in a narrative of community empowerment. These themes not only mutually reinforce one another: they mutually reinforce the impulses that climate communications research underscores as prompting action and behaviour change. As Motta (2022) noted, this “solutions journalism” focus is crucial for engaging and empowering those who distrust mainstream journalism due to the perception that it scapegoats their communities as criminals and/or victims.

4.3 Holism and nuance

“Toronto’s Climate Right Now” stands out because for a magazine aimed at a general, but local, readership, it brings a surprising depth and breadth to its coverage. Locally-focused storytelling arcs are used to disrupt one more barrier to journalism that supports citizen climate action, that climate is a problem too complex to grasp.

Storytelling – and specifically the juxtaposition of multiple, situated stories and points of view – happens both within individual narratives and in the layering of different perspectives on the same problem. The primacy of racialized, local community voices is key to this complexity. The second story in the issue, “The Weight of Childbirth During a Climate Crisis,” is a simple first-person essay from a young former nurse turned midwifery student. It juxtaposes her experiences ministering to elderly patients with heat stroke and delirium in an overstressed

hospital system during a summer heat wave, with stories from her own life and her experiences as a midwife, in order to contemplate what it means to bring new life into the world in a time of climate crisis. The reflections reiterate equity concerns, framed in terms of maternal and infant health, but expressed with an almost startling vulnerability of a Gen Z voice narrating the “terrifying and discouraging” threat of climate breakdown that has stalked her generation since childhood (Chatterjee July 5, 2022). Her explanation of her choice to retrain as a midwife exhibits the delicate balance between two potentialities/motivations for climate action: the movement towards hope and life (each birth a rebirth of love, and possibility) and the awareness of stark present and future realities as climate crisis continues unchecked.

Unlike almost every other story, the narrative has only one photo, a domestic image of the author on a couch by a window. Instead of photos, poignant pull quotes both flesh out and break up the text, further amplifying the emotional impact of the author’s story. Climate communication literature underlines that such uses of voice and personal experience are disarming, creating emotional connection – in conflict resolution terms, storytelling draws us in to a place of shared concern, whereas more abstract climate debates can polarize into positions, which are more rigid (Denisova 2025).

The narrative brings complexity to the climate change story in another way: along with such pressures as unaffordable housing and financial precarity, the climate crisis is cast as one more dimension of an increasingly unliveable world that gives pause to people contemplating having children in a future that is increasingly unpredictable and unsafe. This folding together of economic and environmental “scarcity” as part of a contiguous generational experience speaks back to mainstream media narratives which frequently frame economic and environmental needs as polarities between which there is an “either/or” trade-off.

This holistic approach to climate reaches its most sophisticated in one of the issues longest features, “The Line Between ‘Invasive’ and ‘Native’ Blurs.” The feature offers a deep dive into the management of invasive species within Toronto parks and ravines. Climate change has favoured the flourishing of many non-native plants, which in some cases take over the ecological niches of native species and extirpate them. However, rather than presenting this process in a purely unfavourable light, the article engages in a nuanced examination of the issue, again through the stories of grassroots community groups.

The feature begins with the heartbreak of the members of a community group “Friends of Small Creek,” witnessing workers with chainsaws and woodchippers clear a hundred-year old forest in the Small Creek ravine wetland. Despite

the wetland being an endangered urban ecosystem, providing a rare “wild” refuge for people and plants, the clearcutting to make way for the expansion of a commuter rail line had been justified by the regional transit authority on the grounds that 205 of 268 trees were classified as invasive species.

A nuanced discussion of the category of “invasive species” follows, providing a throughline as the piece takes the reader through multiple examples of local places in ecological transition. This discussion is adept in bringing together urban human and plant communities through shared colonial histories of migration, intentional and not, spurred by global trade and politics. It puts the rhetoric around invasive species – a favouring of genetic “purity,” and the policing of what is not from here – in conversation with “nativist” biases that frames human migration as invasive and unwanted. With ecological niches moving due to accelerated climate change, scientific experts and local residents alike question rigid categories of who (plant or person) belongs in a place. Indigenous Land Stewardship Circle (ILSC) member Donna Powless, Cayuga from Six Nations, proposes that “every plant has a purpose.” (Powless in Won Ken, June 25, 2022). Pointing out that Powless uses invasive as well as native plants in her traditional practices, the narration follows Powless and Henry Pitawanakwat performing ceremony during a controlled burn of High Park’s black oak savannah ecosystem, planted by Indigenous people thousands of years ago. Powless articulates a vision of Indigenous land stewardship “built on the need for harm reduction and climate action” (Powless in Won Ken June 25, 2022). This includes small controlled burns, and hand pulling invasive plants of concern rather than using pesticides, but also caring for ancient burial mounds in High Park. It reflects a world view in which Indigenous people have a close relationship with the land, strive to keep balance rather than control, and honour the presence of ancestors.

A final layer of analysis incorporates a policy perspective via the words of Toronto’s Director of Urban Forestry, Parks Forestry and Recreation. The balance that must be achieved, in the case of the Small Creek Ravine, is not just between native and non-native species, but between “green” and “grey” infrastructure. A climate friendly city has both green spaces to provide shade, purify air and water, and shelter biodiversity, and public transit and other infrastructures that allow residents to be low-carbon in how they go about their business.

Layering together past and present, science and Indigenous knowledge, policy and grassroots community experiences, the article succeeds in offering a complex, dynamic, and singular picture of how one might approach one aspect of climate change’s influence on urban ecosystems.

Another way *The Local* holds nuance and keeps systemic, ongoing public health issues in holistic focus is through repeatedly returning to such issues. In

summer 2024, *The Local* published another collaboration with *The Narwhal* on “the wave of a green transition, and ... the ways climate commitments and business imperatives collide in Canada’s biggest city” (*The Local* (e) 2024). The consistency of return is not just in subject matter, but in structure: numerous themed issues offer snapshots of Toronto right now, whether it is Toronto at 3 AM (and the lives of shift workers), or the “seven days in Toronto” issue characterizing everyday life during the pandemic.

4.4 Visual storytelling

Earlier research on *The Local* (Chen and Roburn 2025; Roburn 2025) highlighted the importance of data journalism and digital storytelling. The *Climate Right Now* issue is also very image-rich: almost all the features have a credited, assigned photographer, with between a half-dozen to over forty images accompanying each article text. This saturation of imagery is one kind of digital start-up innovation: print magazines simply cannot afford dozens of colour images required to give imagery a more central role in their storytelling.

Photography enhances the “placemaking” of the issue by situating the reader vividly in particular locations; by foregrounding local community members as an actual embodied presence within the narrative; and by visually representing urban nature as a complex jumble of the built world, humanity, and biota overlapping in both planned and surprising ways. While the feature writing “grounds” subject matter by placing interlocutors in various scenes, it is the multiple photographs which provide a composite view and capture telling details, whether following along with an inner city elementary school class on an outdoor education field trip, or offering a sequence of snaps of birds being captured, banded, and released at a bird banding station in the “rewilded” Leslie Street Spit. These kinds of dynamic sequences epitomize *The Local’s* effort to depict Toronto’s climate “right now.”

The imagery that accompanies feature articles is notable in centering local residents, rather than scientists or policy makers. There are multiple photographs of Donna Powless and other Indigenous Torontonians undertaking ILSC activities in High Park, of CREW members and tenants in action in the St. Jamestown towers, and of staff and volunteers at the Tommy Thompson Park Bird Research Station. Such visual representations foreground the actual embodied presence of community members, especially racialized people, disabled residents, senior citizens and other vulnerable/marginalized Torontonians. The difference is significant: such bodies are scarce in legacy media reporting, appearing mainly in victim centred narratives or stories of lack. In *The Local’s* reporting, we see community members in action, as agents responding to and shaping their

circumstances, even within strictures imposed by poverty and other structural barriers. Community members belong in, and to, these places: they make Toronto the city that it is.

Finally, photography is effective in depicting a distinctly urban nature, through visually conveying the interrelatedness of humanity, biota, and the built world. This is especially evident in the final feature “Carving Out a Brand New Island,” which explores the re-engineering of the mouth of the Don River toward a more natural flow, complete with wetlands for flood control, and the creation of a forty hectare man-made island to house 10 000 people in a new, “climate-positive” neighbourhood. The photography complements both a diagram of the Don River’s planned redirection and an artist’s rendition of the planned neighbourhood, replete with parkland and trees, nestled between channels of the Don River, with a verdant Toronto Island in the background, and downtown Toronto gleaming off to one side. The photography is chiefly wide angle aerial shots of the construction zone: large machines at work moving dirt and gravel on the island and a long spit/breakwater that will be a future park; mud, greenery, and gleaming white sections of yet to be laid flood protection pipe next to a partially built flood control structure; the wide span of new bridges, one with water underneath, and the other crossing an as yet dry channel. Two of the photos are GIFs, the eye drawn to vehicles and machinery in motion. The display makes clear the industrial labour and manpower that underlies this “green” community project.

Maps, charts, and other data visualizations are prominent in only two features addressing road salt and air pollution, written by journalists whose primary affiliation is with *The Narwhal*. The visualizations support story arcs that speak to a city-wide picture rather than one grounded in particular localities, and feature “expert” voices of scientific researchers, city officials, and heads of non-profit advocacy groups. This paucity of data journalism is out of step with *The Local*’s pandemic coverage (Roburn 2025) and requires further inquiry to explain.

4.5 Solutions journalism

The final piece in the issue, “Carving Out a Brand New Island,” takes the reader on-site to where bold plans for a “dream of a (mostly) car-free neighbourhood, where apartments are heated by geothermal energy and residents are only steps from boat launches and bike paths, surrounded by reinvigorated wetlands and greenery,” (Watson June 21, 2022) are in the process of being actualized. The scope and scale of the project are extremely ambitious, a “model for the world” of a restored and rewilded river mouth, complete with a new island which includes a community meeting the highest environmental and liveability standards.

This piece, as well as Fatima Syed's feature on outdoor education, "The Great (Surprisingly Expensive) Outdoors," are especially forward-thinking, concerned not just with short-term measures for a pressing current problem, but with what actions, programs, and policies will shape what Toronto is like in ten, twenty-, or thirty-years' time. This stretches the usual bounds of community solutions journalism into the realm of futurism. Jason Lewis explains that for Indigenous people, "future imaginaries" are vital:

Our absence from the future imaginaries of the settler culture should worry us. Absence implies non-existence, or, at the very least, non-importance. A people that are absent in the future need not be consulted in the present about how that future comes about. A culture that is assumed not to be important one hundred years from now can be discounted now (Lewis 2014: 58).

Within media studies, it is widely acknowledged that flourishing of Indigenous and Afro-American futurisms in music, film, speculative fiction, and other expressions of popular culture is a crucial fulcrum that decolonial social movements leverage to energize and educate in support of broader social change. But what to make of future imaginaries in hyperlocal journalism? For the communities it serves, *The Local* concretizes "speculative" imaginaries as real, attainable possibilities. Its journalism locates beginnings that exist in the present, offering practical, evidence-based pathways for these to amplify and thrive in the future.

After identifying in the article tagline that "introducing kids to nature is how you build the next generation of environmentalists," Fatima Syed (July 9, 2022) offers a comprehensive analysis of local innovations and challenges to creating culturally relevant, accessible, affordable outdoor education programming for kids from low income and immigrant communities. Syed highlights the work of a Black vice-president of the Ontario Society for Environmental Education, of the Halton Black Voices collective which "help(s) those living in community housing beautify their neighbourhoods, while also taking Black families out camping and hiking," and of a hands-on, land-based program supporting local immigrant youth to become climate leaders. When the article moves on to barriers and possible policy options to reduce them, the implication is clear: Black, immigrant, queer, and other marginalized youth deserve and need to be the environmental leaders of tomorrow, and this is more than possible.

5 Discussion

A close reading of the text, images, sequencing, and other aspects of the “Toronto’s Climate Right Now” issue suggests that *The Local* has a mission-driven focus on public health; uses rich visual storytelling to foreground the community it serves, to offer multiple perspectives on multifaceted subjects and issues, and to highlight the science that makes health inequalities apparent; focuses on long-form features in which storytelling provides the narrative arc on which to hang complex discussions of policy and science; and is ambitious in its solutions journalism.

The reporting not only makes a science-based case showing inequitable distributions of public health goods (including a healthy environment), but showcases pragmatic policy pathways to short- and long-term change. Discussions of science and policy are attached to the lived experience of local people (and sometimes plants) in ways that encourage communities to dream big, to be as involved in setting future directions for Toronto as wealthier, better enfranchised neighbourhoods. *The Local*’s data, science, and policy-engaged journalism epistemically centers Indigenous and racialized communities, recognizing local people as knowledge holders and decision makers whose roles are essential to a thriving Toronto, now and in the future. While some of this centering is overt, for example in focusing on outdoor education for racialized youth as leaders of tomorrow, some strategies are less so. For instance, the geographically situated, cyclical return to climate change across various temporal registers (within the issue, across issues) resonates with Indigenous oral storytelling forms (Archibald 2008). Arguing that “Western media could prevent Western man from comprehending Black geographies and alternative media outside his own purview,” Towns (2022: 59), points to orality, along with sticks, rocks, constellations, trinkets, and bodies, as forming part of the “makeshift mediations” of escaping slaves that “extended Black people into alternative, Black futurities” (2022: 63). In stressing that Black geographies and Black media are deeply intertwined “as media and communication have always been connected to questions of transportation and geographic space” (2022: 59), Towns underlines that illegibility to dominant culture was vital to the media of Black emancipation. However, this same illegibility can cause the discounting of “alternate genres of humanity expressed in the(se) alternate forms of mediation,” (Towns 2022: 77). Put more simply, to shift geographies of difference (and inequality) requires a reconfiguration of media.

In this context, something more is at work at *The Local* than simply solutions journalism. It is likely that the cohort of young, racialized journalists from

underrepresented communities, mentored through multiple methods⁴, created an interpretive community from which a more ambitious and culturally competent type of community journalism emerged. “Toronto’s Climate Right Now’s” final article describing the forming of an entirely new island, complete with an equitable and eco-friendly community, illustrates the scope of such ambition. The scale of imaginary is world-building, with graders, loaders and bulldozers breaking down and repurposes the existing order. It resonates with the world-building scales of Afrofuturist visions—visions woven into music, movies, literature as well as more ephemeral contemporary expressions of Black popular culture—but with the added underlying message that sweeping, infrastructural change to urban community lifeworlds can and is being made real.

6 Conclusion

Journalism research has been poorly attuned to the Black, Indigenous, and racialized humanities, futurities, and lifeworlds that form part of the milieu⁵ not only of *The Local’s* journalists, but of the communities they serve. The vibrancy of these communities, and their present and potential expertise in community environmental stewardship and planning, are not adequately foregrounded in today’s climate journalism. This is a problem on multiple registers. As Young and Callison (2020) have argued, poor representation of racialized and Indigenous communities contributes to a crisis of audience in the multicultural cities of the Global North, as fewer and fewer people see themselves in the subject matter and slant of mainstream news. In the case of the more focused concern of climate communications, engagement rises when communities feel empowered and see problems as actionable: a greater focus on the climate adaptation successes of racialized and Indigenous communities – both emergent/innovative and those rooted in thousands of years of cultural and environmental stewardship – would be of benefit not only to these communities, but for climate journalism as a whole.

What does this mean for future research agendas, and for evolutions of climate journalism? In Canada, the surge in research into new journalism startups is one hopeful direction, especially in so far as it attends to the evolving structures and ethical commitments of such start-ups, and how they structure organizational and journalism cultures. The broadening scope of community engaged journalism

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4. Roburn (2025) describes in much greater detail *The Local’s* programs and strategies to create a professional “pipeline” for racialized journalists to reach the highest levels throughout Canadian journalism.
 5. Jennifer Gabrys’s *Program Earth* (2016) offers an extended discussion of milieu in the context of environmental mediation.

research is another: early results from Lochan-Aristide, Blanchette, and Chen's research into the Green Line (Alshami 2025) document the emergence of a novel framework for "hyperlocal" community engagement in which journalistic outputs, consumed asynchronously, are but one step in a repeating cycle of information sharing and community building events centred on accessing and evolving solutions for stronger communities. Given that overall, digital journalism is reproducing racial and gendered inequalities in who has power and who is precarious in the newsroom (Cohen and Clarke 2024), it seems incumbent on journalism researchers who are serious about climate communication to ask more persistent and profound questions about representation within journalistic ranks. This will almost certainly open possibilities for more engaging and effective climate journalism.

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FROM OBSERVATION TO UNDERSTANDING: EMBEDDING ARTISTIC PRACTICE FOR MORE EFFECTIVE CLIMATE RESEARCH

ABSTRACT

The article explores the potential held by artistic practice – especially visual arts and photography – as an embedded element of climate change research. Drawing on historical and contemporary examples, it argues that art should not merely serve as a vehicle for science communication, but as an epistemic partner in the production of climate knowledge. The paper critiques current collaboration models such as artist residencies and calls for the deeper, earlier integration of artists into research design, knowledge framing, and public engagement. Through case studies, pilot projects, and evaluation frameworks, it proposes the development of interdisciplinary networks and co-creative methodologies that support the cultural and emotional dimensions of climate understanding towards inspiring more meaningful public action.

KEY WORDS: *climate change, art and science, interdisciplinary collaboration, visual communication, artistic practice*

Od opazovanja k razumevanju: vključevanje umetniške prakse za učinkovitejše raziskovanje podnebnih sprememb

IZVLEČEK

Prispevek raziskuje potencial umetniške prakse, zlasti vizualnih umetnosti in fotografije, kot sestavnega dela podnebnih raziskav. Zgodovinski in sodobni primeri interdisciplinarnih sodelovanj razkrivajo, da umetnost ne bi smela biti le orodje za posredovanje znanosti, temveč bi morala biti tudi epistemološki partner v raziskovalnem procesu. Članek izpostavlja omejitve obstoječih modelov

sodelovanja, kot so umetniške rezidence, in zagovarja zgodnjo vključenost umetnikov v oblikovanje raziskav, komunikacijske strategije in oblikovanje pomena. Na osnovi primerov dobrih praks, pilotnih projektov in evalvacijskih metod, prispevek predlaga oblikovanje mreže in novih modelov sodelovanja med umetniki in znanstveniki s ciljem povečati javno razumevanje in odziv na podnebno krizo.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: podnebne spremembe, umetnost in znanost, interdisciplinarno sodelovanje, vizualna komunikacija, umetniška praksa

1 Introduction

Public awareness and risk perception are closely linked to how well people understand the human causes of climate change and potential solutions (Lee et al. 2015). Yet much of climate science remains difficult to access, often communicated through specialist language and complex modelling frameworks that limit broader understanding and, most critically, meaningful engagement (Jasanoff 2010; Edwards 2010). Communication is, of course, only one part of a larger picture. Persistent inaction also stems from entrenched political-economic interests – such as fossil fuel lobbying, growth-driven economic systems, and regulatory inertia – that actively obstruct (Klein 2014; Brulle 2014) or obfuscate (Oreskes and Conway 2010) meaningful action. While this paper does not claim that scientific communication is the root cause of climate inaction, it argues that creative, visual communication plays a crucial, and often overlooked, role in shaping how knowledge circulates, how publics are mobilised, and how interdisciplinary collaboration can unfold more richly.

Interdisciplinary collaborations between climate scientists and artists offer an under-developed but powerful way to expand participation and reframe abstract, technical concepts in ways that resonate across cultural and cognitive boundaries (Lakoff 2010; Nurmis 2016). While art has historically been used to illustrate or popularise science, embedding artistic practice from the outset of research allows it to act as an epistemic partner – challenging assumptions, generating new questions and enriching the interpretive and emotional dimensions of climate knowledge. Both art and science share a deep history of making the unseen visible, interpreting complexity, and extending collective understanding. In the context of climate change – where data can be obscure, contested, or culturally distant – visual creativity can translate specialised knowledge into accessible, affective forms that sustain engagement and foster inclusive dialogue among researchers, policymakers, and publics.

Addressing the integration gap requires more than producing new visuals: it calls for a fundamental rethinking of climate communication as a co-creative

process embedded within research design. This paper traces the historical and contemporary contexts of art–science collaborations, examines the symbolic complexities of representing climate science visually, and proposes practical strategies – network-building, pilot projects and rigorous evaluation methods – for overcoming barriers. Drawing on my experience as both a visual artist and interdisciplinary researcher, I aim to show how creative collaboration can function not merely as an adjunct to science communication but as a foundational practice for building public understanding, emotional engagement, and collective action towards climate change mitigation and adaptation.

2 A (very) brief history of art–science collaboration

Any hesitancy around collaboration between scientists and artists may stem from the perception that art–science partnerships are a relatively recent phenomenon. From a British perspective, many such collaborations emerged in the 1990s, shaped by the “public understanding of science” paradigm – the idea that art can help communicate scientific knowledge along with its social, cultural and ethical dimensions. This has included efforts to popularise science and convey its more visual aspects, often aiming to broaden public engagement with scientific ideas and principles. Yet, the entanglement of art and science reaches much further back. Early cave paintings, for example, reflect detailed empirical observations of animal behaviour, movement and anatomy. Philosophers like Plato and Pythagoras saw harmony across mathematics, music and art, rooted in proportions and geometric form. Renaissance figures like Leonardo da Vinci and Albrecht Dürer combined artistic skill with scientific investigation, while the Scientific Revolution relied increasingly on illustration as a method of inquiry. During the Enlightenment, artists worked alongside scientists to document botany, zoology and anatomy discoveries. In this light, art and science are not simply compatible but are historically and conceptually intertwined.

However, these collaborations were gradually strained by the increasing specialisation of academic and industrial disciplines. The rise of scientific positivism during the Industrial Revolution further prioritised quantifiable knowledge, especially where it aligned with economic and technological advancement, reinforcing disciplinary divides throughout the 19th Century. Yet artistic movements such as Naturalism persisted in depicting reality through observation and method, sustaining the shared foundations, at least intellectually, that have long connected art and science: observation, experimentation, creativity, and representation.

Nevertheless, today there is still a sharp divide between what we consider artistic and scientific knowledge. C.P. Snow’s (1959) influential Rede Lecture

warned that the division between the sciences and the humanities posed a serious threat to the future of knowledge production and argued that the cultures of the arts and sciences had become mutually unintelligible, with little understanding or appreciation for one another's methods, languages, or values. He believed this divide was holding back innovation, policy development, and the capacity to address global challenges like poverty, energy and education, especially in a time that required interdisciplinary solutions to increasingly multifaceted problems. The debate sparked decades of academic discussion about interdisciplinarity, the nature of knowledge, and the structure of education and research.

Numerous developments since have helped re-establish the relevance of art–science collaborations. The rise of novel and hybrid technologies has also been pivotal. Utilising emerging technological tools (such as the computer) as artistic apparatus was directly influenced by György Kepes, who founded the Centre for Advanced Visual Studies (CAVS) at MIT in 1967. CAVS was influential in its mandate to absorb “new technology as an artistic medium” through encounters between scientists, artists, engineers and industry (Massachusetts Institute of Technology 2025). A new collaborative language emerged within new shared instruments of artists and scientists. The emergence of doctoral programmes within visual arts subject areas has also led to more cross-disciplinary opportunities among researchers. There has also been a vast increase in cross and inter-disciplinary funding opportunities that encourage collaboration and cross-disciplinary thinking, and a steadily growing desire to re-“legitimise” practice research amongst artists.

Alongside these structural and technological developments, artists have increasingly assumed new cultural responsibilities, moving beyond the gallery to engage directly with public spaces, communities, and pressing social and environmental challenges. This shift has expanded the scope of artistic practice, aligning it more closely with questions of knowledge production, while also increasing interest in the impact of practice-based research. As Friedrich von Borries (2015) notes, an important shift began in the second half of the 20th century when artists started reflecting critically on the “scientification” of the world – referring to the expanding influence of scientific rationality, metrics, and systems thinking across many domains of life. In response, many artists adopted scientific methods not only as creative tools but also as objects of inquiry and reflection. These developments saw artists moving beyond gallery conventions into ecological, public, and socially engaged projects, culminating in high-profile moments like Documenta 13 in 2012, which placed artistic research at the centre of an internationally significant exhibition. Such reflexive engagement has both complemented and interrogated scientific perspectives within Western knowledge systems, helping to lay the conceptual groundwork for contemporary art–science collaborations.

3 Why interdisciplinarity for climate communication?

Building on the intertwined history outlined above are numerous contemporary art–science initiatives oriented toward enhancing the cultural visibility of science and increasing its ethical and societal resonance, like the British Science Festival, the Wellcome Collection’s exhibition programme, and the Science Museum’s Dana Research Centre events. While such initiatives are valuable, many artists remain wary of being positioned primarily as communicators of scientific content. This over-instrumentalisation risks narrowing artistic practice to a supportive function, rather than recognising its capacity to challenge, reframe, and co-produce scientific meaning. Capacities that are central to more embedded and reciprocal forms of collaboration. While art has a long history of instrumentalisation, this is not its most useful purpose. There is much more potential to merge the symbolic knowledge contained within both disciplines – particularly in this moment of layered, complex, and “wicked” societal problems – into a hybrid language that can communicate with logic, empathy, and a united authority.¹ Thus, this paper advocates for deeper, more reciprocal forms of collaboration, where artistic practice is embedded within scientific inquiry not to illustrate it, but to question, enrich, and reimagine its frameworks for the benefit of both disciplines.

The more than 88,000 papers published on climate change reflect the immense scope and interdisciplinary complexity of the field (Lynas et al. 2021). Yet for all this output, climate change remains a difficult phenomenon to represent because its drivers are often invisible, its timescales are vast, and its impacts are often distributed unevenly. Unsurprisingly, studies have shown that people relate more easily to environmental problems that are easier to visualise, such as air pollution (Nisbet 2009). This makes the visual dimensions of climate change – how we see, picture, and imagine it – pressing concerns in both climate communication research and the environmental humanities. However, a persistent assumption continues to shape these discussions: that the epistemological gulf between the sciences and the visual arts is too vast for meaningful collaboration. In practice, these domains are already deeply entangled. Scientific practice has long relied

1. The term *wicked problem* was first introduced by Rittel and Webber (1973) to describe complex social issues that are difficult or impossible to solve definitively due to incomplete or contradictory knowledge, changing requirements, and entangled political, cultural, and economic dimensions. Climate change is widely recognised as a quintessential wicked problem because its causes, consequences, and responses are distributed unevenly across space, time, and social groups – demanding cross-disciplinary, adaptive, and context-specific approaches.

on visual tools not only to document evidence but also to define what counts as evidence in the first place. Moreover, core scientific values such as objectivity and observation are themselves rooted in visual conventions that have been critically explored by artists, historians, and theorists alike.

As both an instrument of scientific observation and a medium of artistic interrogation, photography offers a uniquely fertile space for dialogue between the arts and sciences. Its dual and continually evolving role – as both a tool of empirical documentation and a vehicle for subjective interpretation – has profoundly shaped our collective understanding of the planet, influencing not only the practice but also the perception of science (O'Reilly 2018). Photography extends the scope of observation beyond individual experience, enabling forms of shared witnessing that have transformed scientific and public discourse alike. As Daston and Galison (2007) note in *Objectivity*, before photography became central to scientific experimentation, researchers often relied on “imperfect” human senses – for instance, Arthur Worthington’s mental image of liquid droplets – to document phenomena. The arrival of photography allowed scientists to claim greater objectivity, anchoring knowledge in seemingly mechanical images. Yet artists, historians, and theorists quickly recognised that the camera was no neutral instrument: its images always abstract, frame, and strip away context. Bruno Latour (1993) further argued that the very divide between “nature” and “culture”, a foundational assumption of modern science, was itself a fiction of modernity.² In the context of climate science, this history underscores a critical point: presenting knowledge as culturally neutral can obscure the very social, political, and emotional dimensions needed for inclusive and resonant communication.

While the practice of photography was increasingly adapted to serve the aims of the scientific method, its integration introduced new epistemic challenges, chief among them the separation of image from reality. As Mitchell (2005) argues, this tension generates a critical space in which both artists and scientists must ask what images say about the world, and how they shape our understanding of it. This paradox is especially evident in widely circulated NASA satellite images of Arctic ice loss or the iconic *Blue Marble*. Though presented as transparent records of environmental truth, such images are technologically mediated and aesthetically curated, sustaining the illusion of detached observation while

2. While the nature-culture divide is not a *practical* requirement for everyday scientific experimentation, it is a foundational epistemological assumption underpinning how modern knowledge systems, institutions, and societies have historically separated scientific (natural) and social (cultural) knowledge.

evoking powerful emotional responses.³ Recognising these dynamics opens new opportunities for meaningful art–science collaboration. Photography, in particular, provides a potent site of interdisciplinarity – where visual art can not only enhance scientific communication but also help reframe the questions science asks, embedding humanities-based reflection into empirical knowledge production.

As theorists, artists, and researchers increasingly interrogate the dominance of scientific rationality, it becomes essential to examine how scientific knowledge is framed and received by different publics. Scientific communication is never neutral; the language, imagery, and metaphors used profoundly influence interpretation (Haraway 1988). In climate change, where data is often contested and predictive models fail to resonate with lay audiences, framing becomes even more critical. Susan Sontag (1977) observed that repeated exposure to shocking images erodes their emotional impact – a phenomenon first identified in images of war, but also evident in climate imagery. George Lakoff's (2010) theory of cognitive framing similarly shows that people interpret information through pre-existing "frames" that filter acceptance or resistance. When the dominant frame within communication is apocalypse or catastrophe, shocking imagery may initially provoke urgency but can quickly lead to fatigue and disengagement. To sustain engagement, communicators must shift the frame rather than intensify the imagery – focusing, for example, on scientific process, local collaboration, and solution-building to establish participatory and hopeful narratives. Frame-shifting, or the strategic recontextualisation of an issue to activate new interpretive pathways, has proven effective even in polarised contexts. For example, in bipartisan political debates, it enables meaningful dialogue between parties that hold fundamentally different worldviews by reframing issues in ways that resonate with alternative values or identities (Doornbosch et al. 2025). In the context of climate communication, interdisciplinary collaborations between scientists and artists offer a powerful way to embed such frame-shifting mechanisms. Artists can introduce metaphors, sensory modes, and narrative strategies that activate different cognitive schemas, reaching audiences that may not engage with conventional scientific discourse.

While visualisation remains central to scientific practice, the growing complexity of contemporary research methods presents a challenge that interdisciplinarity can help solve: many scientific instruments no longer produce

3. With current AI image generation technologies like Google Gemini now producing images resembling photographs – generated via text-based prompts – both the danger and utility of photographs will increase.

images or data that are easily legible to non-specialists. As Bruno Latour observed in *Laboratory Life* (1986), the production of scientific knowledge increasingly relies on “inscription devices” – tools that transform material phenomena into symbolic representations, such as graphs, models, or code. These devices are often opaque, their inner workings obscured through processes of “black-boxing”, where meaning becomes inaccessible to those outside specialised domains (Morin et al. 2012). This opacity can contribute to an epistemic culture of uncertainty, where climate data can be misunderstood, mistrusted, or dismissed due to its abstract and highly specialised form.

The difficulty is not abstraction itself, as both art and science function abstractly, but *how* that abstraction is communicated. Scientific abstraction, whether in the form of non-pictorial data (like statistical models or code) or complex visualisations (like technical graphs), often relies on specialised symbols that may feel cognitively or culturally distant from lived experience. By contrast, artistic abstraction often operates through metaphor, sensory affect and narrative, offering forms of symbolic engagement that are emotionally and intuitively accessible to the global majority. For example, while certain paleoclimate terms like “karst systems” or “U-Th dating” hold little meaning for the general public, creative representations can re-symbolise these invisible and cryptic scientific processes, translating climate knowledge into affective, embodied experience. Here, artistic practices offer complementary strengths – particularly in empathising, perspective-taking, and narrative persuasion. Rather than simplifying complex information, art can re-symbolise it – translating abstraction into sensorial and affective experience and helping map complexity through intuition, aesthetics, and embodiment (Demos 2016: 31–62).

Beyond reframing abstraction, participatory approaches such as citizen science offer a way to integrate the interpretive strengths of artistic practice with the empirical rigour of climate research (DITOs Consortium 2019). Citizen science projects invite publics to become active contributors to data collection and interpretation, making abstract scientific processes tangible through hands-on engagement. When artistic methods are embedded within these initiatives, participants are not only gathering information but also shaping the ways it is represented, discussed, and acted upon. This participatory ethos complements the collaborative values found in other long-standing knowledge traditions, helping to expand the communicative reach of climate science while fostering a sense of shared ownership in the research process.

Finally, in broadening the landscape of collaboration, it is essential to recognise the long-standing knowledge systems that predate contemporary scientific methods. Indigenous knowledge systems – rooted in deep, place-based

understandings of ecosystems, cyclical time, and relational ethics – offer vital perspectives on sustainability, resilience and climate adaptation. As scholars such as Whyte (2017) and Johnson et al. (2016) argue, these forms of knowledge are not simply supplemental to scientific ones but challenge the assumptions and priorities of Western science. Including Indigenous methodologies within interdisciplinary climate research aligns with decolonising aims and helps reframe dominant narratives by embedding values of reciprocity, care, and responsibility to notions of discovery. This broader epistemic landscape not only diversifies the cognitive tools available to researchers but also opens pathways to more just, context-sensitive environmental action.

These representational gaps underscore the value of interdisciplinarity – not just to improve communication, but to foster deeper public understanding and participation. Artists and scientists both work within symbolic systems; bridging them expands the ways knowledge can be visualised, shared and acted upon. Recognising this convergence prepares the ground for embedding artistic practice not simply as illustration, but as an epistemic partner in the research process.

4 The case for embedding art into climate research

Building on these communicative strengths, the next challenge is *embedding* artistic practice from the outset of climate research, and moving beyond add-on models like traditional artist residencies. The “two cultures” debate highlights the persistent structural and epistemic divide between art and science, which can complicate the development of genuinely shared methodologies – even where both aim to better understand and respond to the world. Contemporary barriers to collaboration range from institutional constraints (Hicks et al. 2010) to the difficulty of translating complex scientific data into narratives or visual forms that resonate across disciplines. This highlights a need for shared vocabularies and becomes even more urgent as the boundaries of scientific inquiry are themselves being redrawn. As Bruno Latour argues, climate change has turned the laboratory “inside out,” transforming it into a “worldwide lab” where knowledge production unfolds not in isolation but within the broader cultural and political atmosphere (Latour 2004). In this expanded laboratory, climate change presents a complex, contested problem with no singular solution, and where public engagement is deeply entangled with cultural values. Rather than reinforcing the divide between the objective scientist and the expressive artist, this paper adopts Latour’s (1993) view that such categories are modern constructions. Scientific knowledge, like artistic practice, is embedded in cultural, visual, and emotional imaginaries – recognising this opens the door to more

symmetrical and imaginative collaborations. Both art and science can visualise the unseen, foster emotional engagement, and mobilise collective action, though they often do so through distinct methods and traditions. While scientific practice demands rigour and objectivity, this does not preclude abstraction, creativity, or emotional resonance. Our dominant institutional and communicative norms must not obscure imaginative and relational dimensions – dimensions that artistic practice can help illuminate.

Returning briefly to the history of art–science collaborations helps clarify the opportunities now available for imagining and enacting new forms of alliance. Historically, many benefits of such collaborations have emerged from the artist-in-residence (AiR) model, which still dominates the contemporary art–science landscape. AiRs became more common as scientific experiments expanded in scale, often supported by substantial public funding. This, in turn, created an imperative to disseminate and justify scientific work to non-specialist audiences. In many large-scale science projects, a portion of public funding is allocated to artistic dissemination to support communication and community engagement. Notable examples include CERN’s residency programme, which brings artists into direct contact with scientists in the laboratory, and IRB Barcelona’s initiative, which fosters post-anthropocentric microbiology literacy and encourages collaborations exploring microcellular landscapes. These AiRs have undoubtedly brought new audiences and understanding to particle physics and microbiology. However, they are often tied to physical spaces, highly specialised equipment, or simply massive budgets. AiR programmes are still too often conceived as by-products of scientific inquiry, positioned primarily in a communicative role rather than as platforms for philosophically or methodologically investigative engagement.⁴ This model also presents specific challenges for the climate sciences, which rely primarily on data collection dispersed across natural sites worldwide and on integrating information from multiple sources and methods. Such data is stored and shared via data centres – such as the ECMWF Data Centre (Tecnopolo di Bologna), which houses major European climate data – rather than requiring on-site access to a centralised facility. This decentralised and distributed nature

4. The budget for artistic and philosophical explorations into such things as the meaning, ramifications or rationale for new and possibly disruptive discoveries (e.g. the Higg’s Boson, dark matter, or quantum quarks) are minute when compared to a project’s initial scientific funding, and always occur after the science project has already been initiated. As an example, in 1997 the Large Hadron Collider project cost 4.71 billion dollars to initiate and has an annual budget of 1.7 billion USD as of 2022. It offers residencies worth 18,000 USD, which represents approximately 0.00001% of its annual operating budget, or metaphorically, a single grain of sand on an entire beach.

makes climate science an ideal testing ground for co-imagining genuinely new strategies for embedded collaboration, unconstrained by the traditional residency model.

As hinted at in the last section, the social and cultural dimensions of climate change are another vital reason why involving artistic collaboration benefits the scientific study of climate. In *Why We Disagree about Climate Change*, Hulme (2009) argues that climates have both a physical reality and cultural meaning that should be considered inseparable. This argument points to the potential benefits of collaboration amongst scientists and artists in creating the transdisciplinary space and required language to address a holistic “idea of climate” – one that is not solely science or art. This does not, however, imply watered-down science or art-as-a-service, but space and language in which both sides can acknowledge that climates are more complex than any single discipline can alone represent with any finality. If climate science seeks to inform and influence decision-making in culturally diverse and politically complex contexts, then partnerships with other disciplines – including the arts – can offer crucial complementary perspectives and methods.

Since the early 2000s, the *Cape Farewell* project has brought forth interdisciplinary thinking and new visual strategies that can better communicate the urgency of climate change than traditional models. One of its most well-documented initiatives is *Pollution Pods* (2016) by artist Michael Pinsky. This immersive installation, exhibited over 30 times internationally and visited by over 30,000 people, recreates the atmospheric conditions of five urban environments using climatically controlled chambers. Visitors “[s]tep inside a series of climatically controlled pods and compare five contrasting global environments, where the air quality, ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and carbon monoxide levels... [are] recreated” (Cape Farewell 2025). *Pollution Pods* was commissioned and used as a research tool by the team behind the Climart research project (Norwegian University of Science and Technology), where psychology, natural science and art converged to study how climate related art is received by audiences. The team found that participants’ intentions to act on climate issues increased (ranging from slight to strong) after engaging with *Pollution Pods* (Sommer et al. 2019). Combined with other findings that attempt to parse what kind of art leads to bigger audience impacts, their study affirms that art can function as a powerful tool in environmental communication.



**Pinsky, Michael (2019): Pollution Pods [Photograph].
Exhibited at COP25, Madrid.**

While results such as these are promising, more research is needed to assess whether short-term motivation leads to long-term behavioural change, and how the positive interdisciplinary activity of *Pollution Pods* can be recreated more often. Drawing on a long tradition of activist art and photography, repeated and diverse encounters with such work – rather than one-off experiences – are more likely to leave lasting impressions. Exhibitions like *Pollution Pods* offer direct, affective encounters with climate issues, helping to make abstract phenomena tangible and personally relevant. Roosen et al. (2017) argue that precisely such emotional resonance can foster more profound understanding and individual action. Similarly, Spence et al. (2011) demonstrate that perceiving climate-related art can reduce feelings of uncertainty around climate change and enhance viewers' belief in their own ability to make a difference: two essential factors in motivating behavioural engagement. Their findings reinforce the value of emotional and perceptual engagement in strengthening public agency, especially among those who may feel overwhelmed or disconnected from scientific messaging. In short, *Pollution Pods* exemplifies how art can provide meaningful climate experiences, particularly for those who have not yet been directly affected.

The overarching Climart project not only studied the effects of climate-related art but also exemplified how co-designed interdisciplinary initiatives can foster meaningful and lasting collaborations between artists and scientists. Notably, the project demonstrated that when artistic practice is integrated from the outset of imagining communicative impact, rather than added at the margins, it can produce both measurable impact and sustained relationships. Encouragingly, a growing number of initiatives and communities are now embracing similar models. For instance, TBA21-Academy seeks to foster “new forms of knowledge emerging from the exchanges between art, science, policy and conservation” (TBA21-Academy 2025), supporting ocean-focused projects that cross disciplinary and geopolitical boundaries. Meanwhile, Résidences 1+2 has established a programme of residencies that explicitly pair photography with scientific research, operating on the principle that “both question the world by making the invisible visible... giving us a different way of seeing” (1+2 Photographie and Sciences 2025).

Critically, however, collaboration can only be successful if it is beneficial for both scientists and artists (Moser 2016). A recent example demonstrating the positive effects of interdisciplinary collaboration in both disciplines is “6&6”, which paired six artists and six scientists as they explored conservation issues in the Sonoran Desert in California. It resulted in many positive outcomes, with scientists becoming more inclined to integrate an artistic approach from the start of a scientific project, and to enhance critical thinking about communicating both the process and the results of the science more creatively (Clark et al. 2020). The project also revealed how interdisciplinary dialogue could expand scientists’ perspectives, prompting them to view “scientific problems in a broader... more creative context” (Clark et al. 2020). Similarly, Kagan (2015) observes that artists working in transdisciplinary collaborations with scientists often acquire new methodological skills, ecological literacy, and systematic approaches to critical self-reflection – developments that can enhance their confidence and ability to understand and communicate complex issues effectively. As Kagan (2015) further argues, such collaboration supports the development of “an aesthetics of complexity,” a critical framework for addressing what climate change increasingly represents: a *wicked problem* – a challenge that is highly complex, socially contested, and resistant to definitive solutions. Wicked problems require adaptive, pluralistic approaches, and collaboration across disciplines is essential to generate the layered, culturally responsive strategies they demand.

Considering the positive experiences that interdisciplinary collaboration can foster, embedding artists within scientific research contexts represents a natural step toward continually reimagining the role and value of diverse knowledge systems within present culture. Such partnerships can also encourage productive forms

of reflection within research teams, including greater openness to questioning methodological assumptions and the broader social implications of emerging technologies. Given that the climate crisis is, in part, entangled with technological and industrial developments shaped by scientific knowledge, it is both reasonable and necessary to explore new intersections between the sciences, humanities, and creative practices. These collaborations offer a powerful opportunity not only to communicate more effectively, but to collectively imagine alternative futures grounded in critical, innovative, and inclusive approaches to knowledge production.

5 Understanding barriers and establishing networks

As a practising visual artist who has visited over 40 laboratories and field research stations, I can attest to the challenges of navigating highly technical environments – from particle accelerators to complex climate models. In hindsight, I would have benefitted enormously from a network of likeminded individuals who had already negotiated these boundaries, offering guidance, shared vocabularies, and potential collaborators. In the absence of such support, many of these collaborations were hard-won, often requiring extended periods of introductions, exchanges of motivations, and attempts to predict possible outcomes before any shared work could begin. As demonstrated by the above histories and emerging collaborative models, enthusiasm for interdisciplinary work often grows significantly once artists and scientists collaborate. In my own experience as both a researcher and visual artist, such engagements frequently sparked mutual curiosity and revealed unexpected common ground. However, these opportunities often arose serendipitously rather than through structured pathways, and normalising interdisciplinarity may be key to significantly advancing the scope and impact of climate communication.

Many researchers – particularly in the early stages of project development or careers – are likely unsure how to initiate interdisciplinary collaboration or how to align such work with disciplinary norms and institutional expectations. This paper, therefore, aims to contribute toward establishing more straightforward guidelines and best practices that can support systematic, reciprocal engagement between climate scientists and visual artists. While there is a growing body of research on art–science collaboration, much of it remains piecemeal or case-specific, with limited attention to embedding artistic practice throughout the whole research cycle. This lack of established frameworks can lead to hesitation and sometimes unintentionally create barriers to collaboration, particularly when many existing funding structures still do not readily accommodate cross-disciplinary approaches.

Overcoming the barriers to interdisciplinary collaboration requires more than enthusiasm – it demands structural and cultural change beginning at the earliest stages of research. A growing body of literature suggests that fostering awareness of different disciplinary values, methods, and communication norms enables researchers to better engage diverse publics and expand the reach of their work (Barry et al. 2008). Building on this, embedding artistic collaborators from the design and grant-writing phases has been shown to enhance methodological creativity, broaden engagement, and access new communities and institutions (Braund and Reiss 2019). To normalise such approaches, interdisciplinary partnerships must be supported from inception – not only by institutional frameworks and funding mechanisms, but also through the cultivation of new researcher cultures that are reflexive, inclusive, and comfortable working across disciplinary divides.

A realistic first step toward improving interdisciplinary collaboration is to envision what might be considered an ideal model – one grounded in the lessons of past and present projects – and then work backward to identify the necessary pathways that can support it (see Fig. 1). Successful collaborations tend to be planned as interdisciplinary from the outset, often beginning at the grant-writing stage. They also engage relevant cultural partners with a stake in the research, involve diverse communities that bring a range of perspectives, and contribute to the training of practitioners who are more comfortable navigating interdisciplinary terrains. Crucially, these collaborations must cultivate a shared vocabulary, foster two-way, non-hierarchical communication, and establish clear points of interaction where mutual learning and evaluation can take place.

Figure 1: Key Considerations for Art–science Project Collaboration.

| | |
|---|--|
| Early-Stage Integration | Artists and scientists co-develop research aims and methods from the proposal phase. Creative thinking embedded in project framing, not just communication. |
| Mutual Stakeholder Engagement | Cultural institutions, NGOs, and local communities involved as active collaborators. Shared investment in outcomes and dissemination pathways. |
| Diverse Knowledge Systems | Inclusion of epistemologies beyond Western science (e.g., Indigenous, experiential, or affective knowledge). Recognition of both empirical data and cultural meaning as valid forms of insight. |
| Two-Way, Non-Hierarchical Communication | Dialogic structures that encourage equal voice and agency. Mechanisms to resolve disciplinary tensions through mutual learning. |
| Shared Vocabulary and Reflexive Practice | Time and space for building common language and expectations. Ongoing reflection on roles, assumptions, and power dynamics. |
| Training and Capacity Building | Support for early-career researchers to develop interdisciplinary fluency. Opportunities for artists and scientists to learn each other's methods and cultures. |
| Flexible and Multi-Modal Evaluation | Use of both qualitative and quantitative measures. Emphasis on process, audience engagement, and long-term impact—not just outputs. |

A particularly valuable area of future research – still underdeveloped in the current literature – is a deeper exploration of the barriers that climate scientists face when engaging with arts-based researchers, and vice-versa. We need a more detailed account of the institutional, epistemic, and cultural dynamics that shape such collaborations, including the assumptions, priorities, and systemic constraints that may limit engagement on both sides. One promising approach would involve conducting extensive interviews with Earth scientists and artists – both those who have collaborated across disciplines and those who have not. Individual circumstances would help identify the specific barriers that arise when artists and scientists seek to apply for (often discipline-specific) funding or communicate their work through interdisciplinary means. Such research could inform the development of shared vocabularies, baseline collaborative frameworks, and practical guidance for establishing productive working relationships prior to funded opportunities. Encouragingly, there are recent initiatives to build upon – such as the Swiss Artists-in-Labs programme and Australia’s CLIMARTE network – which demonstrate how long-term institutional partnerships can support artists not merely as communicators, but as contributors to knowledge production. Disseminating these insights across disciplinary boundaries, including at traditional scientific conferences, could help demystify collaboration and challenge lingering assumptions, while encouraging broader uptake. Addressing this knowledge gap is a critical step toward building more sustainable, integrated research cultures.

Despite clear complementarities between artistic and scientific motivations, there remains a critical gap in the mechanisms that bring these communities together. Climate science presents a fertile basis for alignment, yet its decentralised nature often means that collaborative opportunities arise sporadically, if at all. A dedicated network focused on *picturing climate* – broadly conceived – could provide the connective tissue needed to align shared goals and diverse expertise. What remains missing is the infrastructure to convert overlapping interests into structured, lasting partnerships.

A well-designed digital platform that goes beyond typical academic dissemination websites could help bridge this gap, facilitating dialogue, co-creation, and knowledge exchange. Supporting both international exchange and local collaboration, it could help researchers and artists in shared regions or field sites find one another. Features such as interactive mapping of expertise, curatorial highlights of exemplary projects, and algorithmic matchmaking based on interests, location, or complementary skills would make points of contact visible and actionable. UX and UI design would play a central role in mediating between scientific and artistic cultures, while multilingual and accessible design would

widen participation. Community moderation, thematic collections, and open discussion spaces could sustain an inclusive and respectful dialogue. Crucially, showcasing a range of pilot projects would demonstrate the tangible benefits of interdisciplinary collaboration and inspire further engagement.

For maximum impact, the network must extend beyond artists and scientists to include climate communicators, curators, historians, NGOs, local communities and policymakers. Hybrid international conferences could address pressing, real-world climate communication challenges, with global discussions cascading into regionally driven gatherings. These localised forums would surface underrepresented perspectives and embed research in community contexts. As funding bodies and higher education institutions increasingly prioritise demonstrable impact – via mechanisms such as the UK’s Research Excellence Framework – this model could deliver outcomes meeting both scientific and cultural criteria. In this reciprocal exchange, climate research could inform site-specific artistic interventions tailored to community concerns, while artists gain access to the tools, methodologies, and tacit knowledge of climate science, enriching each discipline’s capacity to act meaningfully in public and research contexts. Showcasing these collaborations through targeted pilot projects and detailed case studies would not only make the benefits of such a network tangible but also provide a practical foundation for scaling interdisciplinary climate communication in the years ahead.

6 Pilot projects, case studies and evaluating success

“Moments of convergence,” as Buller (2009) describes, emerge when collaboration is treated as an active, situated process of assembling knowledge and practice. As Barrett and Bolt (2007) argue, practice-led research generates knowledge that is embodied, intuitive, and context-specific – qualities essential for addressing complex, real-world challenges and positively influencing diverse communities. To foster more such moments, well-documented pilot projects and case studies are needed, offering tangible models to guide others. This requires clear buy-in to the idea that co-creation can lead to more effective climate communication, demonstrably engage communities, and produce positive impacts that can be evidenced. Crucially, creative climate communication must be funded in parallel with climate research for it to be successful, aligning with the “impact” and evaluation agendas of major funders such as REF or Horizon Europe.

There are multiple pathways for advancing art–science collaborations within the emerging, hybrid field of climate communication, and the most compelling next steps will be those that align creative ambition with clear routes to

interdisciplinary funding. While any definitive list will necessarily remain open, the greatest opportunities often emerge where the priorities of scientists, artists, and external stakeholders intersect. Targeted initiatives could include: (i) mentorship pilot projects linking artists and scientists from underrepresented communities in the Global South, where climate impacts are often most acute; (ii) hybrid AiR programmes embedded within temporary field research sites near UNESCO sites or cultural institutions; (iii) Indigenous knowledge projects integrating alternative knowledge economies into contemporary climate understanding; (iv) climate justice initiatives drawing on Indigenous cartographic traditions, postcolonial ecological aesthetics, or Global South storytelling; and (v) citizen science collaborations where data collection and interpretation are co-produced with publics, using artistic methods in protocols and feedback systems. For scientists seeking funding for new climate research, embedding even a single high-quality creative dissemination case study – linked to a growing network of like-minded researchers – could help establish a durable culture of interdisciplinarity in a domain where it is urgently required.

Case studies act as blueprints for best practice, while acknowledging both the individuality and the challenges of each collaboration. Ideally, scientists, artists, curators, and community organisations work from place-based or conceptual concerns that carry shared meaning for all involved. Diversity in team composition, methods, and context is essential, and when combined with thoughtful design, case studies can capture tensions as they emerge while pointing toward evolving best practices. Artists and scientists will not always share the same goals, and differences in priorities, timelines, and epistemologies are common. Ignoring these differences risks undermining the work. Even with strong personal rapport, contrasting modes of practice can create tensions over research focus, narrative framing, and intended audiences. Anticipating such differences allows collaborators to prepare more effectively, document common pitfalls, and provide valuable guidance for others, which is equally as important as recording successes.

Projects such as *The Colour of the Climate Crisis* by Kisilu Musya in Kenya, or Sámi artists' visual responses to Arctic science, or environmental sensing initiatives like *Making Sense* (Ars Electronica) are not themselves roadmaps for case studies, yet they exemplify how artistic interventions can foreground perspectives historically marginalised in Western scientific discourse. As Gabrys and Yusoff (2012) note, such work can generate new "scales of visibility" and "alternative conceptual paradigms" that expand the cultural and interpretive reach of climate research. Systematically documenting and disseminating such examples within a collective archive would not only guide future projects and

strengthen future funding applications as a resource to reference, but also provide embedded evaluation evidence, helping to normalise art–science collaboration as a process that is method-generative as well as communicative.

Importantly, pilot projects also underscore the practical and economic value that artists bring to interdisciplinary teams. Unlike many research specialists, artists often require minimal infrastructure, working without expensive laboratories or technical equipment, yet contribute meaningfully through their expertise in visual and cultural communication. When embedded from the outset, artists can act as key facilitators of public engagement, cultivating new audiences for both their own work and the broader research initiative. To maximise this impact, pilot projects should set clear expectations for cultural dissemination within research planning, including budget allocations that reflect the essential communicative role of the arts in climate science. By formalising such norms, we not only enhance the effectiveness of interdisciplinary research but also take a critical step toward mainstreaming collaborative models that are both impactful and sustainable.⁵

Demonstrating the practical and cultural value of these collaborative models, however, depends on thoughtful evaluation, which brings its own set of conceptual and methodological challenges. Although some may argue that assigning educational or evaluative functions to art risks instrumentalising it, this paper recognises such functions as complementary rather than reductive. However, one of the greatest challenges in evaluating the effectiveness and impact of collaboration between artists and scientists is collecting and digesting metrics associated with artistic outputs. In terms of audiences, this mirrors the culturally reflective question of what makes “good” art – a question inspiring decades, if not centuries, of debate. Yet, in the focused arena of climate communication, some earlier examples have already offered a few solutions to understand audience reception of climate-related art. For example, if and how audiences engage with climate-related artistic outputs can be investigated via partner relationships, such as including surveys and exit interviews at museums or using participatory observation and feedback forms during community-based installations or public events. Digital exhibitions can be measured via metrics and analytics embedded within websites, alongside interactive components, to better understand whether or not they enhance viewers’ understanding of concepts. Drawing from frameworks in environmental psychology (e.g., Klöckner 2015)

5. As a final personal example, I have stretched the smallest of budgets to produce photo-stories, artists book works and experimental films; thus, firmly believe that even modest sums and costs of participation can be well worth the “return on investment” for research teams in terms of impact.

or cultural impact assessment (Roosen et al. 2017), these metrics can inform scalable strategies for future interdisciplinary work.

One of the advantages of focusing on the *educational* components of climate change research (i.e., how and why climates are studied vs. climate change in general) is that the focus is on building climate-related knowledge, vocabularies, and engagement rather than falling into a binary of good vs. bad (or true vs. untrue). Since it has been shown that *understanding* how climates function is an excellent predictor of climate awareness and one's ability to parse the politics of climate change (Lee et al. 2015), the production and evaluation of such knowledge gathering becomes somewhat easier. By that, I mean it is not necessary to determine whether an artwork has shifted a viewer's stance on climate change (e.g., from climate denier to climate activist), but rather what understanding of how climates function and are studied has been gained from viewing it. Success could then be judged more simply by analysing the knowledge or insights acquired, avoiding the more subjective question of "what is good art?". Again, the reasonable concern amongst artists is that art may be reduced to a didactic function standing only in service to science; however, this argument is flimsy, considering all artworks aim to deliver new knowledge and inspire intellectual debate. In the case of climate-related art, this new knowledge should sometimes focus not only on increasing a viewer's understanding of the process, implications and predictions of climate research but also on translating the quiet urgency, deep care, and existential curiosity that lie in the heart of why scientists seek to understand the climate. Making art both educational and artistically relevant is, I argue, the great challenge of any visual artist working today.

Another essential consideration is evaluating the effectiveness of collaborations, such as: how effective it is to include an artist in science teams (or vice versa)? What value do collaboration and interdisciplinarity bring to answering complex questions? Is communication of climate issues enhanced, and does climate research find new audiences? As mentioned above, these complex questions are well suited to a case study approach. A photographic artist paired with a scientist studying caves and an established museum will likely provide vastly different outputs and engage different audiences than, perhaps, a multimedia artist paired with an Arctic climate systems researcher collaborating with a grassroots/experimental gallery.

A deceptively simple but essential question to ask at the outset of any case study design may simply be: *What is the core purpose of this research?* This question can help shape mixed-method evaluation approaches that include qualitative interviews, reflective writing, exhibition analytics, and social impact assessments. Crucially, embedding artists from the beginning allows these

evaluation criteria to evolve alongside the research itself. In doing so, evaluation becomes not an afterthought but an integral part of the collaboration, and one that values meaning-making as much as measurement. Importantly, flexibility here refers to adaptive, context-specific application of a rigorously designed mixed-method framework – one that uses systematic protocols to ensure data remains comparable across projects and transferable to future collaborations (again highlighting the need for stronger networks). While evaluating the impact of interdisciplinary collaborations can be challenging – particularly given the range of artistic methods and audiences – this complexity should be seen as a strength rather than a limitation. Just as scientific specialisations are highly individual, so too are artistic practices and the communities they engage. Project partners, too, bring distinct mandates, priorities, and cultural contexts. This diversity reflects the expansive reach and opportunity of creative approaches in addressing climate change’s cultural, emotional, and cognitive dimensions – but only if creativity within climate science is embraced in scale.

Rather than applying rigid, standardised metrics, flexible, co-designed evaluation frameworks that honour both scientific inquiry and artistic engagement should be adopted. Several models from related disciplines also offer promising templates for evaluating art–science collaborations. For example, Theory of Change (developed initially for social impact work) helps teams map how artistic interventions might lead to long-term social, emotional, or behavioural outcomes. It is particularly effective at identifying the smaller, often-overlooked steps that contribute to broader change (Weiss 1995). Participatory Action Research (PAR), widely used in education and community development, supports collaborative goal-setting and co-designed evaluation methods, making it especially valuable in community-engaged art projects. Outcome Mapping, meanwhile, is well-suited for interdisciplinary work due to its non-linear approach to change. It acknowledges that progress may be indirect and emergent, rather than following a strict cause-and-effect trajectory. Collectively, these frameworks move beyond narrow, quantitative metrics and allow researchers to track more diffuse but meaningful outcomes, such as shifts in understanding, empathy, or civic engagement.

Additionally, assessing the effectiveness of artistic interventions requires long-term engagement, as attitudinal or behavioural change often emerges gradually rather than immediately. This underscores the need for longitudinal studies and follow-up evaluation to fully understand the impacts of art–science collaborations, something that project partners are well-suited for, contrasting strict funder timelines and budgets. Finally, clear, flexible evaluation strategies not only serve researchers and artists but also provide stakeholders (e.g., funders,

institutions, and policymakers) with evidence of impact. In the context of rising demands for demonstrable public engagement and research “impact” (as defined by REF or Horizon Europe), effective evaluation is not optional – it is central to embedding artistic practice credibly within scientific research cultures.

7 Conclusion

Shifting cultural norms in climate science and its communication requires creativity, community engagement, and a shift toward more dynamic, narrative-based methods – precisely where visual arts and artists can excel. Challenging traditional divisions between art and science can reinvigorate public interest, creating space for more diverse, meaningful engagements with the climate crisis. The interconnected and abstract nature of climate change resists reductive messaging; instead, communicating its urgency demands plural narratives that invite reflection, empathy, and dialogue. Trading simplicity for breadth allows for new insights to emerge – insights that are best realised when the arts are fully embedded within climate research, not as afterthoughts but as co-creators of knowledge.

To normalise this approach, networks and pioneering pilot projects must pave the way. These initiatives not only build collaborative capacity but also address practical barriers such as disciplinary dissonance, unequal access, and a lack of shared vocabulary. Embedded artists can help develop evaluative frameworks that evolve with the research itself, contributing to new modes of understanding that go beyond data delivery. Comprehensive case studies – grounded in real-world collaborations – can serve as proof of concept, helping to secure funding, engage policymakers, and guide future partnerships. A digital, publicly accessible network could further support this work by offering matchmaking tools, showcasing best practices, and housing adaptable toolkits for interdisciplinary integration.

Ultimately, embedding artistic practice in climate science is not a luxury but a necessity. Interdisciplinary collaboration fosters more than aesthetic engagement – it reshapes how knowledge is produced, how impact is defined, and how publics are brought into dialogue. Climate science, with its dispersed and complex realities, demands new, embedded forms of engagement that reflect the emotional, social, and cultural dimensions of the crisis. The most powerful collaborations will redefine research culture itself: where artists, scientists, and communities co-produce new forms of knowledge. The task ahead is not simply to picture climate, but to reimagine how we know, feel, and act upon it – together.

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Tibor Rutar

Marko Hočevár: Growth models, industrial relations institutions and labour market policies in Ireland, Portugal and Slovenia: Explaining capitalist convergence and divergence. Ljubljana: Faculty of Social Sciences, 2024 270 p., (ISBN 978-961-295-080-4), Open Access

Many, if not most, academic discussions that invoke the dreaded term “neoliberalism” generate much more heat than light. Too often, the term is deployed in a way that it either means anything and everything, and hence nothing in particular, or is so suffused with normative condemnation as to be useless for descriptive, scientific purposes. Fortunately, Marko Hočevár’s book on the Irish, Portuguese and Slovenian paths to neoliberalism steers away – far away – from these dangers and wonderfully illuminates the relevant social issues and changes.

Hočevár’s central conceptual message is that even though there are many important empirical details and nuances characterising the three country cases, as well as tangible differences between them, we should not overlook that they are all cases of the same broad transition. In the past few decades, Ireland, Portugal and Slovenia have all embarked, in one way or another, on a path toward greater liberalisation of industrial relations and labour market flexibility. This is a fairly simple and short (if important) message, and an entire book could hardly be written simply on the back of it alone. What makes Hočevár’s book special is precisely that the bulk of the text is concerned with demonstrating the core message in painstaking empirical detail. An enormous amount of descriptive statistics and secondary evidentiary material, along with some original qualitative evidence, is marshalled to establish the liberalising trajectory of all three countries.

By so doing, Hočevár successfully shows how liberalisation has proceeded from around the 1980s to the present. The first period, he argues, lasted until the 2008 crisis. All three countries became more flexible and competitive, albeit by way of quite different policies and processes. Then, in the immediate aftermath of the crisis, all three countries engaged in further liberalisation in a much more policy-convergent way. Finally, just before and during the 2020 pandemic, the liberalisation stalled or even reversed somewhat. Underlying these empirical accounts are quite convincing theoretical explanations for why (and how) liberalisation was first pursued and then abandoned. The explanations have to do with the different nature of both crises (the latter was an exogenous shock, for instance), the decline of industrial and organised labour, and the shifting party-political patterns, especially the rise of certain populist left parties crucial in the political centre’s struggles to govern.

Now, given that Hočevár explicitly situates himself in “Marxist and neo-Marxist political theory” (p. 24), one might expect him to not only describe and explain the process of liberalisation, but to also ‘problematise’ and normatively critique it. And, indeed, it is intimated in the book, if only implicitly, that he does not endorse the transition

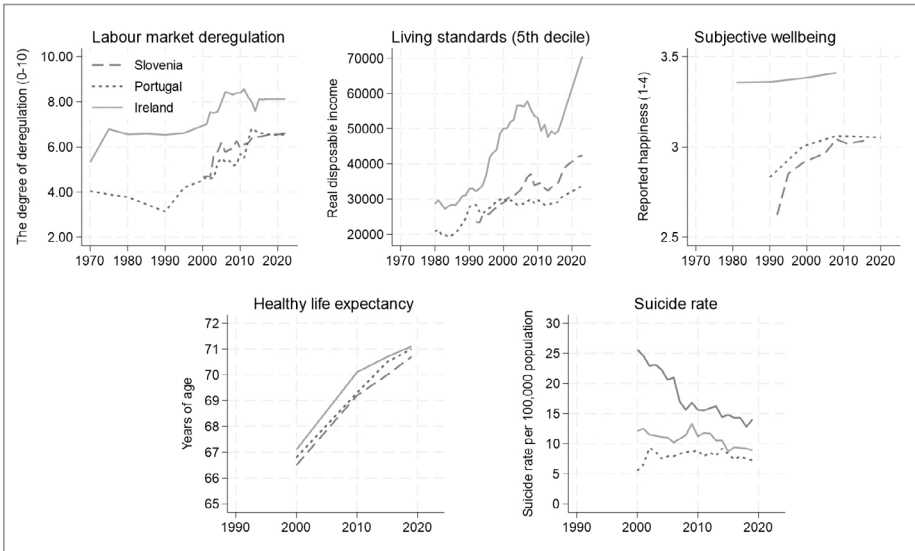
or, better yet, that he sees it as (at least in part, if not wholly) as a deleterious social process. He repeatedly describes it as “anti-labour” (pp. 46, 231), “anti-social” (pp. 45–46), part of “radical” (p. 152) market policies whose purpose is to weaken unions and shift power from the masses to employers.

Nevertheless, none of that can be read as explicitly and unequivocally denunciatory. Hočevár is careful with his words and sticks to explaining, not condemning. Moreover, he spends little time adducing statistical evidence that could be seen as condemnatory of the process, again affirming he is interested in analysis, not normative assessment. The closest he comes to that is while presenting and discussing inequality figures. But one might expect him to go further and show how life fared during (or before and after) liberalisation with reference to other, more direct social indicators, such as poverty rates, median living standards, life satisfaction, life expectancy and mortality, and so on. Many reasons may exist for his decision to avoid the topic. It could simply be that he wanted to describe and explain, while leaving normative assessment to a future project. In fact, there is a strong tradition in Marxism that (ironically) condemns moral condemnation and strives to only look at the facts and societal “laws of motion”. (This is doubly ironic because Marxists are typically also quite fond of ‘describing’ capitalism with normative monikers like “exploitative”, “oppressive” or “dominating”; see Geras [1984].) However, it could also be that life in Ireland, Portugal and Slovenia has fared relatively well, even under the impact of “anti-labour”, “anti-social”, “radical” market liberalisation. If this were the case, presenting the relevant statistics would clash with Hočevár’s implication that labour market flexibility and neoliberalism are not that desirable.

Out of curiosity, I decided to look up some of the relevant data. As Figure 1 shows, the data for labour market deregulation line up almost perfectly with Hočevár’s account. Ireland has always been the most liberalised among the three (already at the end of the 1970s), as he himself explains. The three cases then rapidly converged from 1990 onward until around the mid-2010s, after which no further liberalisation is apparent. In the meantime, however, most or all of the relevant social indicators have, perhaps surprisingly, been trending in the ‘right’ direction. As the three societies were busy liberalising themselves, living standards improved, happiness and healthy life expectancy rose, and suicides declined (or remained flat at a low level). Obviously, no causal inference can be drawn here. I am not suggesting that these indicators improved *due* to labour market deregulation. Yet, if the process were as deleterious as is often claimed, one would expect at least a somewhat different descriptive trend.

A multivariate panel regression with fixed effects would be a more appropriate exercise for inferential purposes, although even here omitted-variable bias and reverse causation complicate things. Again, out of curiosity, I ran a few such regressions and found quite mixed results. The 2-year lagged index of labour market deregulation turned out not to be a statistically significant predictor of economic development, reported happiness, median living standards, or the suicide rate. It only significantly predicted income inequality. Broader measures of economic liberalisation fared better: no correlation with income inequality and a statistically significant and positive correlation with happiness and economic development.

Figure 1: Over-time trends of the extent of labour market deregulation and assorted social indicators.



Whatever the case may be with respect to the social outcomes of neoliberalism (but see the latest empirical reviews in Berggren [2024]), it is certain that Hočevar's rich description and explanation of how Ireland, Portugal and Slovenia came to be much more liberalised over the past few decades stand on solid footing and will inspire further analysis in this area.

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Damir Josipovič

**Ksenija Perković: Med prostorom in družbo:
Regionalna in multikulturalna identiteta Vojvodine.
Koper/Capodistria: Založba Annales ZRS, 2023.
421 str., (ISBN 978-961-7195-11-8), 28,00 EUR**

Znanstvena monografija *Med prostorom in družbo: Regionalna in multikulturalna identiteta Vojvodine* doktorice Ksenije Perković je z več kot 400 stranmi obsežno delo, ki zasluži posebno pozornost. Ne le zato, ker v Sloveniji celovitih tematskih monografij o Vojvodini nimamo, pač pa predvsem zaradi zornega kota, s katerega avtorica opazuje ter analizira in podaja raziskovalne rezultate. Po osnovni izobrazbi sociologinja, ki je obranila doktorsko disertacijo na področju geografije, prinaša svež interdisciplinaren pristop k področju regionalnih identitetnih študij. Vojvodina kot federalna enota druge ravni v nekdanji jugoslovanski socialistični federaciji je danes redkeje prisotna v slovenskem javnem diskurzu – spregledana je tudi v prostorsko-geografskem smislu kot avtonomna pokrajina v sestavu Republike Srbije. Vse pogosteje si pot utirajo poenostavitveni koncepti, ki države slikajo ne le kot regionalno-geografsko homogene, pač pa tudi kot identitetno monolitne ter pripadnost avtonomnih regij in njihovih pestrih prebivalstev pavšalno pripisujejo titularni grupaciji. S tega vidika je naslov knjige in grafični koncept naslovnice domiselno izbran. Zrcali namreč multidisciplinarno formacijo avtorice kot sociologinje in geografinke. Zato opazuje družbo skozi regijo – specifično »odprtino« v prostoru. Tej odprtini pa podeljuje subjektiviteto, ki izhaja prav iz procesov ozemeljskega konstituiranja in etnične pestrosti kot dolgotrajne posledice prisilnih, planskih in prostovoljnih migracij.

Ta obsežna monografija je smiselno razdeljena v tri dele. Prvi del (str. 15–136) je razdeljen na štiri poglavja, ki predstavljajo teoretsko in definicijsko osnovo: (1) Regija, proces regionalizacije in regionalna identiteta, (2) Paradigma center-periferija in koncept (regionalne) avtonomije, (3) Etnonacionalne identitete v sodobni družbi ter (4) Multikulturalizem in strategije sobivanja v različnosti. Tu morda malce presenetni ambivalentno stališče avtorice do »(ne)obstoja splošne opredelitve manjšine« (str. 113), čeprav je pred desetletjem izšel tematski volumen, posvečen prav temu vprašanju (Kržišnik - Bukič in Josipovič 2014).

Drugi, nekoliko krajši del knjige (str. 137–182) se z dvema poglavjema konkretnije posveča Vojvodini, njenemu geografskemu položaju, vprašanjem avtonomije in regionalizma ter notranji regionalizaciji na ravni NUTS regij: (5) Avtonomna pokrajina Vojvodina – (širši) regionalno-geografski in družbeno-zgodovinski kontekst ter (6) Vojvodina v okviru (de)centralizacije in regionalizacije Srbije. Kot vzporednico Sloveniji navedimo, da je Vojvodina s podobno velikostjo okrog 20.000 km² in dvema milijonoma prebivalcev prav tako brez smiselne razdelitve na NUTS2 nivoju ter predstavlja eno samo regijo. Enako je bilo v Sloveniji do vzpostavitve dveh kohezijskih regij, ki pa sta povsem brez geografskega smisla. Kohezijske regije bi morale odražati neko zgodovinsko

povezanost in dolgotrajnost te povezanosti – v Vojvodini npr. oblikovanje iz treh zgodovinskih regij Bačke, Banata in Srema, vendar rigidnost priporočene velikosti (okrog 800.000 prebivalcev) onemogoča institucionalizacijo treh regij, manj pa upravičuje denimo združevanje Bačke in Srema.

Tretji in najobsežnejši del knjige (str. 183–180) se z uvodnim poglavjem (7) posveča etno-demografski strukturi, kateri sledi težiščno poglavje (8) Interpretacija avto/biografskih intervjujev, ki je namenjeno etnografskemu kvalitativnemu raziskovanju in polemiki s teoretskimi doneski. Predstavljena je tudi prostorska distribucija begunstva, kjer izrazito prednjači Srem; nakazuje na dramatičnost izidov oboroženega nasilja in izganjanja najprej Hrvatov iz Srema, nato pa povojnega priseljevanja srbskih beguncev iz Hrvaške in Vojvodine. V smislu jezikovih opredelitev, uradnih jezikov in pisav na območju občin je še posebej zanimiva prostorska distribucija »etnografskih« podskupin Hrvatov – Bunjevcev in Šokcev, analitično podprta tudi z ustrežno kartografijo. Posebej so analizirani in predstavljeni še Srbi, Madžari in Romuni.

Standardno zasnovano monografije dopolnjujeta uvodno in zaključno poglavje. Impozantnemu seznamu literature na devetnajstih straneh ne gre ugovarjati, kljub temu pa bi prišla prav še kakšna referenca, vezana na oblikovanje teritorija – torej regije (avtonomne pokrajine) Vojvodine v geografskem smislu, ter učinek na interpretacijo demografskih podatkov in iz njih izvedenih zaključkov. Zelo prav bi prišlo tudi imensko kazalo, da bi se bralstvo lažje znašlo med uporabo citiranih virov v obsežnem osrednjem besedilu knjige.

Izjemno pomembni kvalitativni uvidi avtorice utrjujejo pomen in vlogo etnografske metode v družboslovno-humanističnih raziskavah. Ob poudarjani multietničnosti zlasti nekdanje Vojvodine in planski kolonizaciji po koncu druge svetovne vojne v smeri postopne etnonacionalne homogenizacije in popisne prevlade Srbov velja izpostaviti naslednji pomemben avtoričin zaključek: »Srbi so se v okviru kvalitativnega dela raziskave izkazali za precej heterogeno večino in njenih pripadnikov posledično ne smemo nekritično ‚metati v isti koš‘« (str. 382). Ta zaključek kvalitativne raziskave je v skladu z demografskimi indeksi, saj je bilo do leta 1971 v Vojvodini kar 38,7 odstotka prebivalstva priseljenega, daleč največ med vsemi federalnimi enotami Jugoslavije (Josipovič 2006: 207). To nas napotuje na zaključek o etnično heterogenem zajemu srbske pravoslavne cerkve še iz časov osmanske penetracije v severozahodni del Balkanskega polotoka (današnji Bosna in Hercegovina ter Hrvaška). Zato je zanimiva persistenca vztrajanja teh razlik, ki so se ojačevale skozi planske povojne migracije ter begunstvo ob in po razpadu Jugoslavije: »Srbi, ki so se nazadnje priselili v Vojvodino kot begunci zaradi posledic vojne na Hrvaškem ter v Bosni in Hercegovini, v Vojvodini (še vedno) predstavljajo ‚kulturno‘ manjšino. Omenjeno je najbolj stopilo v ospredje ravno v medsebojnem kulturnem distanciranju avtohtonih in priseljenih Srbov. Torej, če (pogojno) lahko govorimo o etnični homogenizaciji, nikakor ne moremo govoriti o kulturni. /.../ Kolonizacije in stalna priseljevanja, ki so regijo zaznamovala v preteklem stoletju, bi lahko predstavljala poskuse homogenizacije ‚od zunaj‘, pri čemer je bila zaradi tega primorana stalno braniti svojo kulturo sobivanja. Omenjeno pride najbolj do izraza v okviru kulturnega stika med ‚staroselci‘ in ‚prišleki‘, kar se je potrdilo tudi

skozi sama pričevanja« (str. 384–382). Iz tega je mogoče sklepati na »etnično razliko« in na obrambo specifičnih udomačenih kulturnih vzorcev, ki od »dođošev« zahtevajo prilagoditev v vojvodinsko staroselstvo. Kljub vsemu je vojna kot že tolikokrat pustila neizbrisen pečat in prizadejala udarec multikulturalizmu na način, kot pravi avtorica, da ljudje različnih pripadnosti bolj živijo drugi ob drugih kot pa drugi z drugimi, pri čemer odnosi niso vedno najbolj »pris(o)tni« (ibid.). Opozorilo je pomembno tudi kot nauk za trenutno divjajoče vojne v Palestini, Ukrajini, Sudanu in drugod, da bodo pomiritvene poti in celjenje ran dolgotrajni, spominjanje in kolektivna memorija pa neizbrisna.

Izjemnega pomena za ohranjanje etnične pestrosti Vojvodine je prav njena regionalna avtonomija. Ta jo dela močno drugačno od preostalih delov Srbije in prav zaradi tega etnični procesi potekajo manj intenzivno v smislu homogenizacije z osrednjim arhetipom, zato pa bolj v smislu ohranjanja prostorske posebnosti, izražene z današnjim območjem, zajetim v Vojvodino. Poznavanje te problematike pa je v Sloveniji manj prisotno.

Na tem mestu smo se lahko dotaknili le dela bogate zbirke izsledkov iz knjige, ki predstavlja ne le zanimivo branje, temveč tudi odpravlja dolgotrajen primanjkljaj sistematičnega preučevanja Vojvodine s strani slovenskih raziskovalk in raziskovalcev. Delo je zato izvrstna osnova, na katero se lahko naslonijo preučevalci in raziskovalci etničnih procesov ter njihove teritorializacije in regionalizacije, pa tudi laična javnost. Nekatere predstavljene ugotovitve, ki jih prinaša knjiga, imajo zadostno težo, da bo treba dopolniti ali korigirati nekatera stališča osrednjega strokovnega in znanstvenega toka na področju poznavanja etničnih procesov iz »nekdanje širše domovine«.

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Barbara Gornik

**Vlasta Jalušič, Mojca Pajnik in Majda Hrženjak (ur.):
(Ne)enakost v času krize in vzpona avtoritarizmov.
Ljubljana: Mirovni inštitut, 2024.
248 str., (ISBN 978-961-96019-7-6), 20 EUR**

(Ne)enakost v času krize in vzpona avtoritarizmov je zbornik prispevkov raziskovalk in raziskovalcev Mirovnega inštituta, nastal pod uredništvom Vlaste Jalušič, Mojce Pajnik in Majde Hrženjak. Gre za nadvse dobrodošlo branje kritičnega razumevanja človeškega bivanja v fenomenološki perspektivi krize na družbenih ravneh, ki se dotikajo tako abstraktnih in fluidnih vidikov kolektivne zavesti, vrednot in imaginarijev kot tudi nekoliko bolj otipljivih in momentalno stabilnih področij državnih institucij, politik(e), prava in medijev. Te ravni, kot kažejo avtorice in avtorji, so analitično privlačne kot dejavniki, ki omogočajo vznike, perpetuacije in zatone sodobnih kriz.

Nabor prispevkov bolj ali manj eksplicitno zastavlja diagnostično-prognostično vprašanje, *kje smo (bili) in kam gremo*, ki je morebiti najbolj potrebno prav v kontekstu krize, saj ta implicira refleksijo nekega stanja in hkrati tudi perspektivo prihodnosti. A to vprašanje je relevantno tudi v kontekstu družbenih (ne)enakosti, ki jih krize razgaljajo in v nekaterih primerih celo poglobljajo. Omenjene teme se tako v prispevkih neizogibno stekajo ob bok konceptom človekovih pravic, demokracije in avtoritarnosti ter nas silijo k premisleku, ali je to, kjer smo, obenem res tudi to, kamor si kot družba (in posamezniki v njej) želimo.

Zbornik pokaže, da krize nikakor ne gre razumeti površinsko, kot se pogosto dogaja z uporabo pojma v javnem diskurzu. Prav iz te predpostavke izhaja temeljno sporočilo poglavja Vlaste Jalušič, ki nas povede v konceptualno kompleksnost krize na ontični ravni. Po uvodnem pregledu etimološkega izvora in zgodovinske rabe pojma kriza avtorica preide na razsežnosti paradigme krize. Posebej intelektualno spodbudne so njene povezave med krizo, učinkovanjem politike in (ne)zmožnostjo vznika novih načinov demokratičnega delovanja. V razpravi avtorica suvereno prehaja med krizami na različnih ravneh, od specifično bolj ali manj »stvarnih« vidikov političnih, ekoloških, zdravstvenih, migracijskih, energetskih in finančnih kriz do nekoliko manj otipljivih kriznih stvarnosti znotraj dolgo trajajočih družbenih epoh. Z argumentacijo na koncu pripelje do sodobnega pojmovanja krize kot »dogajajoče se katastrofe«, ki jo zaznamujeta nekakšna kronična občost in ujetost v permanenten trenutek brez časovne dimenzije, brez začetka in konca.

Pa vendar, ko govorimo o krizi, je ključno prepoznati, da ta ni vseobsegajoče objektivno stanje niti sodobna globalna univerzalnost, čeprav je naš družbeni imaginarij prežet z diskurzom permanentnih kriz. Dejansko je vsaka kriza veliko bolj individualizirana, lokalizirana in začasna, kot se prikazuje. Zaradi te navidezne vsesplošnosti je krizo treba razumeti kot konstrukt oz. idejo, ki jo vsakodnevno konzumiramo, kot poimenovanje, ki ga nenehno (nečemu) pripisujemo, kot perspektivo, skozi katero pojasnjujemo dogodke

in razumemo svet. Permanentnost krize kot njena temeljna značilnost ne glede na vse nastaja znotraj interesov, ki krizo ustvarjajo z namenom doseganja določenih učinkov. Na to opozori tudi Marko Ribač v svojem poglavju, v katerem analizira različne pojavnosti populizma. Ribač se izkaže kot izvrsten poznavalec in kritičen uporabnik teorij, ki obravnavajo to področje. Že v izhodišču opozori na problematičnost uvoza poenostavljenih pomenov populizma, ki prevladujejo v političnih in novinarskih diskurzih. Avtor med drugim pokaže na ontološko povezanost med populizmom in krizo – (avtoritarni) populizem se namreč najpogosteje udejanja kot odziv na določeno »krizo«, ki jo, da bi ohranil svojo relevantnost, preišlino in vedno znova poustvarja znotraj antagonizmov med ljudstvom in elito, kar mu omogoča preživetje in vpliv.

Epidemija covida-19 in z njo povezana kriza sta nedvomno močno zaznamovala raziskovalke in raziskovalce ter spodbudila nova razmišljanja o demokratičnosti sodobnih družb. To se vidno odraža tudi v prispevkih, zbranih v tem zborniku. Svet je bil tako rekoč čez noč potisnjen v nujnost omejevanja družbenega življenja, kar je odprlo prostor različnim odzivom oblasti. Nekatere vlade so izredne razmere izkoristile za omejevanje demokracije, krčenje državljskih in človekovih pravic in uvajanje avtoritarnih ukrepov, ki niso bili neposredno namenjeni zajezitvi virusa, temveč utrjevanju njihove moči in ohranjanju oblasti.

Avtoritarnе težnje oblasti niso ušle pozornosti niti Neži Kogovšek Šalomon, ki s svojim delom pomembno prispeva k družbeni razpravi. Njen prispevek o krizi prava med epidemijo covida-19 je posebej dragocen v luči nizke stopnje demokratične zavesti v Sloveniji. Medtem ko je bila epidemija v slovenskem političnem prostoru večinoma problematizirana z vidika javnega zdravja in gospodarskih posledic, so enako ključni vidiki, povezani z opuščanjem demokratičnih standardov in načel pravne države, v javnosti ostali skoraj povsem prezrti, marginalizirani ali celo namerno zanemarjeni. Kogovšek Šalomon v svoji analizi kritično osvetljuje delovanje ustavnega sodišča znotraj takratnih družbenih okoliščin, pri čemer meni, da je bilo v nekaterih pogledih do vladnih ukrepov preveč prizanesljivo. Ob tem priznava kompleksnost situacije, a hkrati brezkompromisno izpostavlja pomen pravne države kot mehanizma, ki varuje demokratična načela pred avtoritarnimi težnjami izvršilne in zakonodajne oblasti.

V tem kontekstu so poleg pravnih institucij pomembno vlogo pri ohranjanju demokracije v kriznih razmerah odigrali tudi mediji. Mojca Pajnik in Majda Hrženjak v svojem prispevku analizirata poglede slovenskih novinarjev na njihovo profesionalno vlogo med epidemijo covida-19. V obdobju porasta avtoritarnega načina vladanja so se novinarji soočali s političnimi pritiski in spremenjenimi pričakovanji glede norm medijskega poročanja. Avtorici v poglavju naslovita problem uklonljivega odnosa med mediji in politiko na eni strani ter funkcijo medijev kot četrte veje oblasti na drugi. S svojo analizo opozorita na ambivalentnost novinarskega dela, v primeru slovenskih novinarj in novinarjev pa kot ključno ugotovitev izpostavita njihovo okrepljeno zavezanost in zavest o pomenu avtonomnega, neodvisnega in odgovornega poročanja.

Prispevki zbornika se zatem iz obravnave avtoritarnih tendenc premaknejo k temi družbene (ne)enakosti. V nedavnem obdobju epidemije covida-19 so se številni družbenokritični prispevki začeli prav z ugotovitvijo, da zdravstvena kriza ne le razkriva, temveč

tudi pogloblja že obstoječe družbene neenakosti. Maja Breznik temo neenakosti s teorijo »pravne oblike« in delovnopravne teorije umesti v kontekst krize delovnega prava. Na podlagi študij primera nestandardno zaposlenih pokaže na iluzornost delavskih pravic in kolektivnega (samo)organiziranja. Čeprav delavske pravice lahko omilijo izkoriščanje delavcev, hkrati zaradi njihove umeščenosti znotraj struktur kapitalizma utrjujejo prav tista razmerja, ki razredne neenakosti porajajo. Na iluzornost človekovih pravic v navezavi na nedovoljene migracije pokaže tudi Veronika Bajt s svojo konceptualizacijo prisilnega vračanja migrantov kot zločina iz sovraštva. Posebnost tega poglavja je zagotovo preseganje ločnice med mednarodnim in kazenskim pravom; ta se pokaže z interpretacijo prisilnega vračanja kot nasilja nad migranti, ki si zasluži kategorizacijo kaznivega dejanja.

Perečo temo družbene neenakosti naslovi tudi Majda Hrženjak v poglavju o krizi upravljanja v domski oskrbi starih ljudi, ki temelji na perspektivi diskriminacije in presečnosti oziroma interseksionalnosti starizma. Njena refleksija ponuja poglobljeno kritično analizo politike upravljanja epidemije, ki je nesorazmerno prizadela predvsem starejše osebe oziroma tiste v domski oskrbi. Nazadnje družbene neenakosti obravnava Živa Humer in Mojca Frelih. V svojem prispevku proučujeta spremenjene razmere med javno in intimno sfero ter intenzifikacijo gospodinjkega in skrbstvenega dela v času pandemije. S fokusom na enakosti spolov in vključenosti moških v skrb za otroke odstirata spremembe skrbstvenih praks moških in prispevajo k ambivalentnemu razumevanju moškosti tako v smeri skrbnih kot v smeri manj progresivnih moškosti.

Zbornik se v zadnjem poglavju sklone z vrnitvijo na problem krize. Fukuyamove napovedi konca zgodovine namreč ne doleti konec velikih ideologij, temveč njihova vrnitev, ki s stopnjevanjem in generiranjem vzdušja konca krepí apokaliptični občutek dokončnega propada. V tem kontekstu Lana Zdravković osvetli eshatološke teoretizacije radikalne politično-filozofske misli z uvedbo teoloških konceptov, povezanih s figuro sv. Pavla. Ta, kot pokaže avtorica, za filozofe, kot so Žižek, Badiou, Agamben, Benjamin in drugi, predstavlja paradigmo za razmislek o sodbeni politiki, emancipaciji in transformaciji.

Vsebina zbornika v širšem pogledu potrjuje, da je razmišljanje o krizi univerzalno človeško vprašanje, ki se prilagaja okoliščinam in intelektualnemu kontekstu posamezne dobe. Ideje o apokalipsi, propadu civilizacij ali koncu sveta so namreč značilne za religiozne, filozofske in mitološke pripovedi različnih kultur in obdobjih človeške zgodovine. Prispevki nazorno razkrivajo, kako sodobni čas temu razmisleku dodaja novo dimenzijo z vključevanjem znanstvenih in globalnih perspektiv, hkrati pa kažejo, da temeljno vprašanje o usodi človeštva in sveta v določenih pogledih ostaja nespremenjeno.

Andreja Živoder

**Mirjana Nastran Ule in Eva Strmljan Kreslin (ur.):
Na ulice! Odraščanje v današnjem času.
Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, 2024.
256 str., (ISBN 978-961-295-072-9), 24 EUR**

Znanstvena monografija, ki je nastala pod taktirko urednic Mirjane Nastran Ule in Eve Strmljan Kreslin z naslovom *Na ulice! Odraščanje v današnjem času*, prihaja na knjižne police v ravno pravem času. To je čas globoke družbene in individualne negotovosti, mestoma celo nelagodja o odraščanju in starševstvu v sodobni družbi, o vlogi in mestu otrok, staršev, družine, šole, institucij, politike v njih. To pa so hkrati tudi pomembne teme, ki tlakujejo pot družbeni solidarnosti in prihodnosti.

V monografiji se srečajo znanstvenice in strokovnjakinje, ki odraščanje naslovijo z različnih zornih kotov: socialne in razvojne psihologije, pedopsihiatrije, socialne pedagogike, pa tudi s perspektive strokovnih delavk javnega zavoda družinskega centra Mala ulica, prostora, ki ponuja številne aktivnosti za dojenčke, malčke, otroke in njihove starše/skrbnike.

V uvodu Eva Strmljan Kreslin, pobudnica monografije in ustanoviteljica družinskega centra Mala ulica, predstavi nastanek in delovanje družinskega centra ter opravi primerjavo z drugimi evropskimi modeli družinskih centrov. Poudari, da družinski centri opravljajo pomembno funkcijo v družbi, ki presega zgolj pomoč staršem z majhnimi otroki, saj delujejo na vzgojno-izobraževalnem, socialnem, družinskem in celo (preventivnem) zdravstvenem področju.

Drugi sklop monografije teoretsko in empirično naslavlja otroštvo, družino in starševanje. Dr. Ljubica Marjanovič Umek najprej predstavi razvojno psihološke značilnosti in pomembne razvojne mejnike zgodnjega odraščanja. Skupaj z Dašo Cvjetičanin pa v naslednjem poglavju opredelita vlogo in pomen igre v odraščanju, pri čemer posebej izpostavita pomen igre v naravi in proste igre. V naslednjem poglavju dr. Mirjana Nastran Ule sociološko naslovi specifične spremembe, zahteve in protislovja sodobnega družinskega življenja in starševanja. V naslednjih dveh poglavjih dr. Mirjana Nastran Ule skupaj z Aleksandro Klopčič sodobno materinstvo in očetovstvo kontekstualizirata skozi manjšo empirično raziskavo, v okviru katere sta izvedli fokusni skupini z ženskami v zgodnji fazi materinstva in z očeti, ki so se ali se še udeležujejo aktivnosti v okviru Male ulice. V luči demografskih sprememb in (ženskega) skrbstvenega dela pozoveta k solidarnosti med spoloma kot pomembni poti k promociji solidarnosti med generacijami in krepitvi socialne države.

Tretji sklop teoretsko in raziskovalno naslavlja prosti čas otrok in mladostnikov. V prvem poglavju dr. Mirjana Nastran Ule teoretsko naslovi spremembe otroštva in mladosti ter negotovosti v vodenju življenjskih potekov, še posebej pa opozori na svojsko zgodovinsko past, v kateri so se znašle sodobne, individualizirane družbe, in sicer na vrnitev otrok in mladih v »zavetje« zasebnosti in družine, ki ob rahljanju vrstniških in mladinskih subkultur neposredno ogroža osebno in socialno avtonomijo mladih.

V naslednjem poglavju dr. Ana Mikuš Kos naslavlja duševno zdravje otrok in zastavi dve ključni vprašanji: kako zmanjšati število otrok z duševnimi težavami in kako zagotoviti pomoč otrokom z duševnimi težavami. Odgovor na prvo vprašanje, poudari avtorica, je preprost – spremeniti svet in njegove vrednote, ki otrokom postavlja izjemno visoke zahteve uspešnosti in odzivnosti, ter odstraniti dejavnike tveganja, kot so npr. revščina, nasilje in družinske disfunkcije. Na drugo vprašanje pa avtorica odgovori nekoliko drugače kot prevladujoča psihološka in pedopediatrična orientacija: namesto medikalizacije in psihoterapije otrok in mladih daje prednost naravnim virom pomoči, to pa so ljudje izven institucij, ki so del socialnega in materialnega okolja otroka. Avtorica opozori, da lahko naravni pomočniki in drobne vsakdanje pomoči delujejo kot protiutež slabim izkušnjam in tako gradijo mala upanja, vero v sočloveka. Nudijo razumevanje, empatijo, podporo, preprečujejo socialno izolacijo, pomagajo pri vključevanju v vse vrste družbenih dejavnosti, nudijo praktično in učno pomoč, vse to pa pripomore k duševnemu zdravju tako otrok kot tudi družbe nasploh: »Obenem krepitev naravnih skupnostnih virov pomoči prispeva k solidarnosti in človečnosti v socialnem tkivu, k dobrinam, ki jih pokriva naziv socialni kapital« (str. 153).

Naslednja štiri poglavja so izvirno in pomembno dopolnilo obeh teoretskih poglavij tega sklopa, saj ju aktualizirajo skozi počitniško varstvo, terensko in ulično delo z otroki ter preživljanje časa v naravi v kontekstu urbanega otroštva. Najprej Daša Cvjetičanin predstavi počitniško varstvo v okviru Male ulice ter ponudi odzive staršev in otrok. Glavni motiv staršev za vključevanje otrok je, da bi preživljali kakovosten, pester in raznolik prosti čas. V naslednjem poglavju dr. Špela Razpotnik v središče diskusije postavi pomembnost terenskega in uličnega dela z otroki, predvsem tistih, ki nimajo institucionalne podpore ali pa imajo slabše izkušnje z obstoječimi oblikami podpornih mrež in so tudi sicer na različne načine izključeni iz (bolj privilegirane) družbe. Tovrstno delo vidi kot mogočo bolj odprto in neinvazivno pot strokovnih delavcev do ranljivih otrok, ki takšno pomoč tudi najbolj potrebujejo. Sledi prispevek Mojce Šubic, ki predstavi rezultate raziskave uličnega dela v blokovskem naselju Celovški dvori, ki ga Mala ulica izvaja od leta 2018 dalje. V zadnjem prispevku tega sklopa se Saša Vochl in Manca Kaliman posvetita gozdni pedagogiki in pomenu spoznavanja narave v okviru urbanega otroštva.

Monografijo skleneta dr. Gabi Čačinovič Vogrinčič in Eva Strmljan Kreslin, ki opozorita na ključni pomen soustvarjanja vrednot, kot so solidarnost, empatija, skrb za sočloveka in boljšo družbo v prihodnosti za vse; slednjo razumeta v okviru prehoda od individualizirane etike k etiki udeleženiosti.

Knjiga ima pomenljiv naslov – otroke in mlade je treba vrniti na ulice, med vrstnike, v svobodo, v igro, v veselje, pa tudi v dolgčas. Treba jih je opremiti s svobodo misli, odločanja, jim omogočiti oz. vrniti samostojno vlogo v vrstniških skupinah, vključno s prerekanjem in nesoglasji, ki so sestavni del odraščanja vsakega otroka na tem planetu. Na drugi strani jih je treba odgnati iz »varnega« zavetja otroških sob in starševskega naročja, ki namesto njih odloča o njihovem počutju, se pregovarja z učiteljicami in se za otroške zmenke dogovarja z drugimi starši. Spet druge otroke je treba iztrgati ulici, kjer jim grozijo vrstniški razdor, slabe navade, slaba prihodnost. Nekatere otroke je treba vrniti v družinsko naročje, še posebej tiste, ki tega privilegija niso imeli.

Kje je torej mesto otrokom danes? Zdi se, kot da so danes prav vsa »varna« okolja problematična: šola je preveč osredotočena na instrumentalno znanje, tekmovalna in premalo solidarna, učiteljice in učitelji se lomijo pod pričakovanji in zahtevami staršev, kurikulum, pomanjkanja kadra. Družina je postala preveč varna in varovalna – otroka omejuje in individualizira, odreka ga skupnosti. Ulica ni varna, nevarnosti preživijo povsod, medsebojne solidarnosti je premalo; odrasli prepogosto pretirano skrbimo za svoje otroke in izrazito premalo za druge. Tudi tu se nas polašča neoliberalna logika – vsaka intervencija je lahko tvegano početje, nakopljemo si lahko neodobranje in jezo staršev, kakšno verbalno nasilje, pa še kakšno tožbo.

Zato je monografija pomembna, saj odpira diskusijo o sodobnem otroštvu in starševanju, hkrati pa ponudi nekaj relevantnih praks in poti do otrok in staršev, ki so lahko v veliko pomoč vrtcem, šolam ter socialnim in nevladnim institucijam. Knjiga je znanstveno-strokovna, zato je primerna kot študijsko gradivo, vseeno pa dostopna tudi širšemu krogu bralcev, vključno s starši.

Instructions

1. Submissions for Papers and Short Scientific Articles should be sent to the following e-mail address: editorDR_SSF@sociolosko-drustvo.si; Submissions for Reviews should be sent to: rok.smrdelj@ff.uni-lj.si. Papers can be written in either the Slovenian or English language.
2. Papers should be double spaced with Times New Roman letter font size 12 and aligned to the left-hand margin. The pages should be numbered consecutively.
3. Articles can be submitted in short and standard form. Short scientific articles (see guidelines below) should not be longer than 4,000 words, and should be structured like standard articles. Standard articles should range from 5,000 to 8,000 words in length, including notes, a list of references and a list of graphic images; the length of book reviews/presentations should be between 1,000 and 1,200 words. Graphic images should also be included in the word count – see instruction 12 below.
4. The Editorial Board reserves the right not to commence the review procedure of a paper which fails to meet the standards of formal written language. British English is requested (with e.g. -ise, -sation and -yse spellings, no Oxford comma) is requested.
5. An author will be informed about the results of the reviewing procedure within 2 months of submitting a paper. Unpublished papers will not be returned to the authors. Book reviews and revisions will not be double-blind reviewed.
6. Any past or simultaneous publication of a submitted paper in another journal should be explicitly noted.
7. The author's name and surname, academic title and/or professional title, e-mail address and phone number, along with the title of the scientific paper should appear on a separate sheet. Authors should suggest the classification of their paper in one of three categories: original scientific article, review scientific article or short scientific contribution.
8. The first page of the paper should only contain the title or a possible subtitle of the paper without any designation of authorship.
9. Subtitles should not exceed two levels of numbers, use decimal numbering and be aligned to the left-hand side. The introduction should be numbered as the first chapter.
10. Papers should include an abstract written in both Slovenian and English that should include four elements: aim of the article, methods, findings, and conclusions of the paper. The abstract should not include comments and proposals, and should appear on a separate page before the Introduction. The total length of both versions of the abstract should not exceed 250 words (i.e. the length of each abstract should not exceed 125 words). Five key words should be added in Slovenian as well as English. The English title of the article must be added to the English abstract. When an article is written in English, the Slovenian title of the article should be added to the Slovenian abstract. Authors who do not speak Slovenian may ask the journal's editors for assistance to prepare an abstract and a title in Slovenian.
11. Papers written in Slovenian should also have an English summary attached, ranging from 600 to 800 words. The summary should include a description of the aim of the article, the methods and summarise the analysis or interpretation of the results. It should only contain information that is included in the article. An author must take care of the linguistic appropriateness of the summary. British English (with e.g. -ise, -sation and -yse spellings, no Oxford comma) is requested. The Summary should be placed after the "Conclusion" and before "References" and "Sources".
12. An author should mark the most convenient spaces for graphic images (tables, figures, diagrams etc.) following this example: [Table 1 approx. here]. The final form of the manuscript should have graphic images added at the end of the text. The title of a table or a graph should be written above the graphic image. Titles of tables, graphs and other graphic images should end with a full-stop. The space occupied by graphic images in the article should be added to the length of the paper, either equal to 250 words (half a page) or 500 words (a full page). The Editorial Board reserves the right to place graphic images in the text according to the most appropriate page break in the text. An article should not include more than 8 graphic images.
13. The number and length of notes should be kept to a minimum. They should be written in the text as footnotes and listed consecutively. The final version of the paper may include a short acknowledgement, to appear at the end of the paper before the Bibliography.
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15. Books, articles, scientific materials, research reports or databases used in the paper should be listed alphabetically at the end, under the headings "References" (for books, articles, etc.) and "Sources" (for databases etc.). When providing the webpage, write the date of access in brackets. DOI links should be written in the following format: DOI: <http://doi.org.10.5772/35098>. Each unit in this list should end with a full-stop. The units should be presented as follows:
 - Rus, Veljko (1999): Vrednote zaposlenih do dela in do družbe. Družboslovne razprave, XV (30–31): 113–133.
 - D'Andrade, Roy (1995): A Folk Model of the Mind. In D. Holland and N. Quinn (eds.): Cultural Models in Language and Thought: 112–151. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
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