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GUEST EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The articles published in this issue are revised versions of papers presented at the Meeting of Slovenian Sociological Association (SSA) held in November 2015 when Slovenian sociologists celebrated the SSA's 50th anniversary together with colleagues from other sociological communities. Let me therefore briefly say a few words about the SSA and its journal *Družboslovne razprave*.

The Slovenian Sociological Association was established in 1965, although it only took on its present formal name in 1978. From the outset, the Association has endeavoured to develop and promote sociology as both a profession and a scientific discipline.

During the period of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Slovenian sociologists played an important role in the then federal sociological association "Yugoslav Association for Sociology", primarily by focusing on major issues concerning the development of Yugoslav society and issues of the professionalisation of sociology.

The SSA seeks to constantly respond to current social developments and phenomena. This is also reflected in the selection of topics for the regular annual meetings and the scope of their sections in which a mix of Slovenian and international sociologists and other professionals discuss their latest research results and the most burning social issues. The Association also aims to take part and encourage public discussion on weighty issues facing society and to contribute its views on possible solutions in important decision-making processes.

Every year, the SSA organises an annual conference under a different common title. The title chosen for its 50th anniversary meeting was *Sociology between Producing Knowledge and Shaping Society*.

In the call for papers, the organisers underlined they wanted authors to reflect on the work carried out in the previous decades and thus prepare for future challenges. Through such an invitation, the organisers wished to reaffirm their commitment to a multitude of perspectives and approaches for tackling a range of standpoints and expectations concerning the individual and the well-being of a pluralistically structured society.

The focus of the meeting held in November 2015 was on the various forms of scientific output produced and sociology's role in co-shaping society; a society that will create the conditions not only for technological but also for social innovations; a society that will learn how to understand, respect and take from the past, but will chiefly direct its energy to the present and the future; a society not based on excluding 'others' and those who are 'different'; a society whose highest value will be the individual and the common good. In the so-called International Panel, the podium was primarily opened to sociologists from other sociological communities but sociologists from Slovenia were also welcomed. The collection of the papers delivered at the meeting is now published in *Družboslovne Razprave*, a journal that has been publishing sociological research results since 1984. The Journal publishes original research papers addressing topics relevant to the scientific

community in which the journal is grounded and correspond to global research trends in the areas of the social sciences and the humanities.

The articles are published in Slovenian and English languages in the fields of sociology, media studies, political science, cultural studies and other studies that sit on the border with the above-mentioned fields.

Papers in this special issue thus discuss the wide variety of topics announced in the call for papers from knowledge production in scientific journals to questions of teaching sociology in contemporary society.

The paper by Barbara Bach-Hoenig – *Europeanisation of Sociology? A Bibliometric Comparison of Družboslovne razprave and Österreichische Zeitschrift für Soziologie* – seeks to identify the impact of Europeanisation dynamics on the formation and development of sociology in Slovenia and Austria. The author examines in detail the two journals' scientific production over the last three decades and compares their problem choice in research areas, topics, and the language of citations. By applying bibliometric analysis, the author concludes that society's structural change, political transformation and European integration have all been subjected to much more research by Slovenian sociologists than among their Austrian counterparts. Apart from that, her findings indicate the Slovenian sociological community's strong international orientation towards the Anglo-American sociology discourse, whereas their Austrian colleagues are primarily citing scholarly work published in German. The empirical results also show that Slovenian sociology as incorporated in DR has yielded very high proportions of knowledge produced in political sociology compared to a much smaller share in the Austrian journal ÖZS. This is partly due to DR's more interdisciplinary orientation, including contributions from political science and other fields of the social sciences and the humanities. DR also much more strongly highlights the importance of European integration issues and those indicating social, economic and political change and structural transformations in general than the Austrian ÖZS. The author also finds that, as internationalisation pressure on sociological communities grows, both sociological communities are thus at a disadvantage compared to the specialised journals published in the English language.

The paper by Dušan Ristić and Dušan Marinković entitled *The Disciplinary Society and the Birth of Sociology: A Foucauldian Perspective* is genealogical research that aims to present one of the historical ways that led to the emergence of sociology as a modern science. Following a Foucauldian analysis of power and knowledge, the authors describe how disciplinary practices in European societies during the 18th and 19th centuries and the appearance of new institutions show the rise of new discourses of their legitimisation and led to the birth of sociology. The authors conclude the social construction of knowledge is never exclusively one type of social practice, but connected to different spheres of society (the economy, politics, power) and is not emerging from the different settings of power relations – hence power/knowledge. Their even more intriguing conclusion is "that society has become the primary generator of discipline and normalization – through the network of social institutions and knowledge that have emerged during the 18th and 19th centuries" calls for further careful sociological examination.

Krešimir Žažar's paper *Examining the Position of Sociology in an Increasingly Interdisciplinary Environment* focuses on the increasing interdisciplinarity and reflects on the need to establish sociology's position in these relatively new circumstances. His paper addresses two important topics: the heterogeneity of sociology, and the possibility that sociology can create diverse types of interdisciplinary arrangements. The author discusses several issues in this respect: modalities of interdisciplinary conjunctions; attributes of levels at which interdisciplinary cooperation may appear; what sociology could provide to and what it may require from other disciplines; the potential advantages of participation in interdisciplinary scientific ventures, as well as their possible hazards; the preference for multidisciplinary as a 'softer' variant of interdisciplinary connection and the urgency of sociology's pertaining disciplinary uniqueness due to its capability to adequately answer a vast number of social challenges today. The author concludes the paper by advocating the multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary connections of sociology with other sciences as he does not perceive any type of interdisciplinary knowledge able to compensate the possible absence of sociological expertise.

Gábor Király and Péter Miskolczi's paper entitled *Teaching Society? Looking for New Ways of Teaching Sociology in Contemporary Hungary* discusses several different approaches to teaching sociology. The authors refer to the issues of value-free sociology as well as Burawoy's programme of public sociology, and connect them to the Hungarian experience. They are aware that sociology faces constant dilemmas about its possible roles of producing knowledge and shaping society and of the active role of sociology in forming society on the side of those who want to legitimise or those who change the status quo. But for the architects of today's political power in Hungary, this function seems unnecessary. Sociology in Central and Eastern Europe – in the authors' words – lacks credibility in the eyes of a large part of the population, and is also disliked and neglected by politics. Here the authors see an important role for the teaching of sociology whereby this problematic situation could be changed. They are convinced that especially by showing the scientific and dialogic nature of sociology to students, *reflexive and critical sensitivity* to the issues of knowledge production and the possibility of multiple viewpoints can be enhanced.