

# **Extended Abstracts of Contributions to the PhD Conference of Members to the Alps-Adriatic Rectors' Conference**

Contributions to the Topics of Quality of Life for Youth and Circular Economy in  
the Alps-Adriatic Region in the Year of the Presidency of Slovenia over the  
European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region

Editors

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# The Four Pillars of Successful Doctoral Research: Approaches to Research Within Scientific Communities

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The presentation depicts the expected “way of life” of doctoral students as opposed to that of their former university studies to help them *become integrated members* of the scientific/research community of their own chosen fields.

The metaphor of the “four-legged-chair” is introduced as pillars of *pursuing successful doctoral studies*: (1) student-supervisor cooperative learning, (2) peer-to-peer learning, (3) self-organised learning and (4) problem-solving learning environments.

It has been observed that becoming an integrated member in the scientific community is warranted by *membership in a scientific community* which is to be acquired by (a) observed interest in shared problem fields (*engagement and*

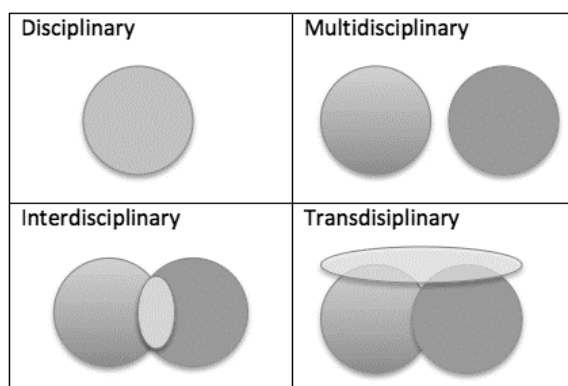
*enthusiasm*), (b) shared knowledge of the disciplinary knowledge background (*mainstream paradigm*), (c) shared vocabulary (terminology, taxonomy, concept interpretation, etc.), (d) documented publications achieved as a “good citizen” in line with the scientific community’s mainstream journals (*scientific narratives*) and (e) committed adherence to a paradigm (*disciplinary matrix*).

It must be taken into consideration that *different scientific approaches* need to be adopted and applied for **natural sciences, life sciences, engineering sciences, social sciences, arts – philosophy, etc.**

The most conspicuous differences lie in the distinction between

**An Explanation versus Interpretation** in scientific research, where **explanation** is propositional (*declarative knowledge*) and **interpretation** is procedural knowledge. These *two modes of knowledge generation* are not necessarily in opposition. Scientific research can make use of both declarative and procedural knowledge.

**B disciplinary – multidisciplinary – interdisciplinary – transdisciplinary approaches**



**Figure 1**

**Adopting the transdisciplinary approach**, scientific research is being pursued as the **quest for solving complex problems** - organisational, technical, financial, managerial, social, societal, etc. In the real world, hardly any problem exists whose solutions are provided by only one discipline.



Adopting a **methodology** means commitment to *certain perspectives* derived from the big picture of science and *approaches* derived from plausible reasoning. A chosen **methodology** corroborates the conceptual framework of a research project.

Adopted **methods** are well-defined *procedures* for carrying out research by testing proposed hypotheses.

The desired case - under appropriate circumstances - doctoral research should be carried out in the **community of** (i) *doctoral students* and (ii) *faculty members*.

Opportunities for both (i) *individual research* and (ii) *problem-solving community discussions* should be provided.

The metaphor of the “four-legged chair”

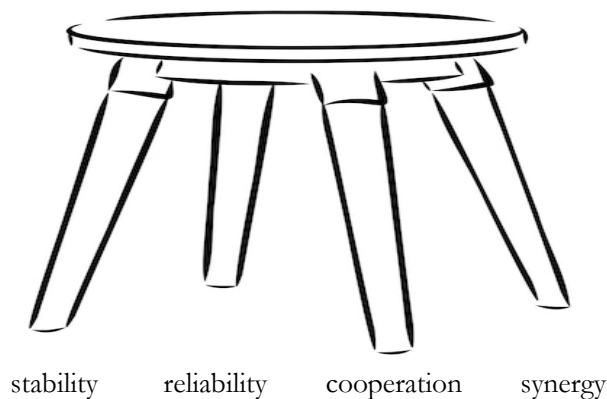


Figure 2

The supportive community for doctoral research should be constituted by the following entities:

- A      **SUPERVISOR:** *master-apprentice cooperative learning*
- B      **COURSE WORK:** *peer-to-peer learning*
- C      **ATELIER:** *self-organised learning environment*
- D      **PROBLEM-CENTERED WORKSHOPS:** *problem-solving learning environment*

As a conclusion, one can state the targeted tasks for the progress of doctoral students as follows:

1. Sharing joint responsibilities in the student-supervisor collaboration
2. Developing the ability and skills in literature search
3. Accomplishing a systematic and critical literature review: identifying the relevant keywords, the problem scope and formulating the research questions
4. Problem corroboration: data collection, data analysis and rethinking the initial research questions
5. Conceptual framework: rethinking concept use, rethinking metaphors, rethinking complexity
6. Refining the problem-solving process: narrowing down the problem, an unending quest
7. Wrestling with journal reviews
8. Workshops: internal consistency of the research, relevance and applicability of the novelty

I wish all of us - **members in scientific communities** – unceasing scientific interest, enthusiasm in our unending quest, stamina and resilience, well-deserved results and enjoyable community life.

**Keywords:** student-supervisor cooperative learning, peer-to-peer learning, self-organised learning, problem-solving learning environments, membership in a scientific community, shared problem fields, shared vocabulary, methodologies and methods, documented publications

#### About the author

**László Imre Komlósi** is a professor of leadership and organisational communication at the Kautz Gyula Faculty of Economics, Széchenyi István University in Győr, Hungary and the director of the *International Transdisciplinary Doctoral Program in Business Administration since 2019*. Five doctoral students have received their PhD degrees under his supervision in the Doctoral Program. He is currently supervising four doctoral students. Professor Komlósi has been widely publishing in international journals in the fields of philosophy of science, digital transformation, cognitive linguistics, AI and new workplaces.

# Prevent, Rescue or Recycle: Mapping Innovative Food Waste Business Models in a Circular Economy Context

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Addressing food waste is a significant challenge with economic, social, and environmental implications, necessitating attention from both practitioners and innovation management scholars. Innovative business models are emerging to tackle food waste, offering opportunities to prevent, reduce, and reuse it and associated byproducts while delivering new products and services in the bioeconomy and circular economy contexts. Despite the importance of these businesses in combating food waste, there is hardly any systematic evaluation of their existence. No broad collection of their business models and a grouping or mapping has been done yet. This publication aims to bring structure to the diverse set of food waste-related

business models by conceptualising 36 business model types derived from organisations focused on food waste prevention, rescue, and recycling to show a system behind those business models. These models are based on twelve attributes identified in this study. We reviewed over 500 food waste prevention or saving companies or organisations in Europe, assessing them based on these attributes and categorising them according to their similarities. By using two theoretical frameworks – the sustainable business model canvas and the morphological box- we could determine those attributes and compare similar business models. This research contributes to the provision of a concise market overview, it guides business model design, and assists potential entrepreneurs with potential arch

**Keywords:** food waste, food supply chain, business models, entrepreneurship, sustainability

#### About the authors

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**Björn Sven Ivens** is a Professor of Business Administration at the University of Bamberg, where he holds the Chair of Marketing and Sales. His research focuses on customer relationship management, marketing organisation, digitalisation of business processes, pricing, and brand management. Key areas of interest include customer retention, marketing structures, consumer behaviour, and brand trust.

# From Mission to Profession: Using Project-Based Innovation to Improve the Professionalisation and Competencies of Adult Learning Professionals in Non-Formal Education

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The area of adult and lifetime learning is changing dramatically—from a mission-driven engagement to a structured, competency-based profession. This article investigates the shifting role of adult learning professionals in non-formal education, with a special emphasis on the abilities needed to negotiate this changing terrain. Drawing on the **Nairobi Recommendation** (UNESCO, 2015), the **Marrakech Framework for Action** (UNESCO, 2022), and comparative insights from the **European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA)** and the

**Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)** education process (ASEM LLL Hub, 2020), the study highlights the growing demand for professionalism, quality assurance, and evidence-based practices in adult education.

This study uses a project-based innovation approach to investigate how targeted interventions and reflective practices can improve professional competencies such as learner-centred facilitation, intercultural communication, digital literacy, and evaluation skills (Research voor Beleid, 2010; Nuissl and Lattke, 2008). The theoretical framework draws on critical pedagogy, lifelong learning theory, and the competence framework created by the German Institute for Adult Education (DIE) (DIE, 2016).

The study employs a qualitative approach, combining document analysis with case studies of project-based initiatives in Germany, to assess competency gaps in areas such as digital literacy, intercultural communication, and learner-centred facilitation (Research Voor Beleid, 2010; Nuissl & Lattke, 2008). The study is based on critical pedagogy and lifelong learning theory (Freire, 1970; Jarvis, 2004), which provides a theoretical framework that sees educators as not just facilitators but also agents of social transformation.

The findings show that, while strategic frameworks exist, implementation is uneven and depends on institutional goals and financial conditions. Project-based innovation, which incorporates reflective practice, peer learning, and global cooperation, emerges as a scalable and effective approach for competence development. The research contends that professionalising adult educators needs more than just institutional alignment; it also necessitates cultural recognition, policy consistency, and ongoing investment in lifelong learning systems (Egetenmeyer et al., 2020). This study contributes to the wider objective of SDG 4, which advocates for inclusive, egalitarian, and high-quality lifelong learning for everyone, by connecting global educational goals to country realities.

**Keywords:** education, non-formal, learning, innovation, competencies

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# Community Aspects of Integration and Inclusion of Ukrainian Refugees in Riga, Latvia

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This study delves into the dynamics of integrating vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, particularly Ukrainian refugees, in the urban environments of Riga, Latvia, highlighting the multifaceted challenges and opportunities that influence their assimilation into local and regional communities. The research framework utilises quantitative data from surveys and qualitative insights from in-depth interviews, offering a robust understanding of the integration processes.

The findings emphasise the critical role of language proficiency in facilitating smoother integration across various life dimensions such as employment, social interaction, and access to public services. Refugees proficient in the local or English languages exhibited significantly better employment opportunities and easier access to educational and health services. Furthermore, the study identifies the duration of stay as a pivotal factor enhancing social integration, marked by increased

participation in cultural and social activities. However, the integration journey of some of the interviewed refugees is marred by challenges, including discrimination based on nationality or ethnicity, particularly evident in workplaces and educational institutions, according to some of the interviewed.

The research underscores the necessity for targeted support measures aimed at enhancing language skills and facilitating employment opportunities. It advocates for policy interventions that address both the immediate needs of refugees and their long-term integration into society. By focusing on creating inclusive communities, the study suggests that local and regional governments can significantly influence the successful integration of vulnerable groups, thereby fostering environments of mutual respect and enhancing social cohesion.

In conclusion, while the initial stages of refugee integration in Riga show promising engagement in cultural and societal participation according to both questionnaires and interviews, sustained efforts and strategic policies are required to overcome the barriers that prevent these communities from fully thriving in their new environments.

**Keywords:** integration, refugees, language proficiency, employment, discrimination, policy interventions

### **Acknowledgment**

This contribution is a result of the research project KO-SPACEs (Community Observatory and Co-design Atelier for Inclusive Spaces) funded under the Slovak Recovery and Resilience Plan (09I01-03-V04 -00110).

### **About the authors**

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# Legal Regulation of Personal Assistance in Circular Economy and Quality of Life for Youth in the Alpine-Adriatic Region

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The legal regulation of personal assistance (PA) in Slovenia plays a crucial role in promoting social inclusion, independence, and quality of life for individuals with disabilities. The Personal Assistance Act (ZOA), enacted in 2017 and effective from 2019, establishes the right to personal assistance, ensuring that persons with long-term disabilities receive support to live autonomously and actively participate in society. This legislation aligns with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), emphasising dignity, autonomy, and equal opportunities. The link between legal PA regulation and the circular economy is increasingly relevant in fostering sustainable and inclusive societies. The circular economy promotes efficient resource utilisation, waste reduction, and social sustainability, all of which intersect with PA services. By integrating circular

economy principles, PA services can become more resource-efficient through the reuse of assistive technologies, shared service models, and employment opportunities in the care sector. In the Alpine-Adriatic region, which faces challenges such as demographic shifts, geographic isolation, and accessibility issues, PA plays a critical role in enhancing the quality of life for youth, particularly those with disabilities. Young people in the region benefit from personal assistance in several ways. It enables greater mobility, educational access, and social participation, reducing barriers to inclusion. Furthermore, the PA sector creates employment opportunities for young people, addressing regional labour shortages and offering meaningful careers in sustainable and community-based support services. The development of PA services in the Alpine-Adriatic region also fosters stronger community ties, preventing depopulation and ensuring that young individuals, including those with disabilities, can remain in their local communities with adequate support. From a broader perspective, integrating social services like PA with circular economy models enhances sustainability while reinforcing human rights and social justice. The employment of young people as personal assistants aligns with circular labour models that prioritise skills development, job-sharing, and service-based economies over material consumption. Moreover, incorporating digital solutions and assistive technologies into PA services can enhance efficiency, reduce environmental impact, and create new opportunities for innovation. The Alpine-Adriatic regions share strong economic, cultural, and environmental ties, making cross-border cooperation in personal assistance and sustainability essential. European Union strategies, such as the Alpine Space Programme (Interreg) and the EU Strategy for the Adriatic - Ionian Region (EUSAIR), emphasise inclusive growth, sustainable tourism, and environmental conservation, all of which are interconnected with PA services. By promoting accessible, community-centred, and environmentally sustainable PA models, these regions can improve the overall quality of life for young people, including those with disabilities, while fostering economic stability and social resilience. In conclusion, the legal regulation of personal assistance in Slovenia serves as a model for balancing social inclusion, sustainability, and economic viability. Its integration with circular economy principles ensures resource efficiency and job creation while improving the quality of life for youth in the Alpine-Adriatic region. Future policy enhancements should focus on expanding PA eligibility, improving financial sustainability, and leveraging technology to strengthen both environmental and social outcomes.

**Keywords:** personal assistance, legal regulation, circular economy, social inclusion, quality of life, Alpine-Adriatic region, sustainability



# History and Reform for Professional Development of Teacher Education in Myanmar

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The 21st-century demands to expand a knowledge-based society tend towards a global organisation and require quality teachers. The teachers are required to study a new approach to knowledge and abilities for the requirements of the education sector or lifelong learning institutions. Teachers are responsible for training the children to become the future leaders of a country. Continuing professional development means obtaining new knowledge and new skills for a current job, to improve career opportunities in a field through systematic education (OECD, 2000). Additionally, curriculum, teachers, teaching methods, and assessments are impacted by globalisation. Education systems are being implemented in every country according to their culture and tradition. New educational innovations promoted a new modern society. The prime objective of this paper is to explore the history of teacher education and teacher education's role in the reform of the education system through an overview of Myanmar teacher education. An analysis of literature reviews

is used in this paper to achieve the results. Currently, one of the most important tasks for our country is to modernise teacher education so that it can meet new challenges. Therefore, the government strives to improve education quality, accessibility, and diversity. We can find the overview of teacher education and the challenges of Myanmar teacher education. Therefore, it is hoped that the facts in this paper will provide some benefit to the reader.

**Keywords:** teacher education, continuous professional development, teacher educator

### **Acknowledgment**

I would like to express my gratitude to people who kindly and warmly helped, motivated, supported and guided me through my PhD journey.

### **Note**

I expect higher education specialists, teachers in lower and upper primary and secondary levels, early childhood educators, special education teachers, conductors, and psychologists who are ready to participate in professional exchanges of ideas about the renewal of pedagogy. The conference organisers welcome participants who apply with a presentation and are interested in professional work. One of the most valuable aspects of a conference is the opportunity to create new professional relationships. It's easy to surround myself with people I already know or are comfortable meeting with others. By cramming a lot of information quickly, I give myself time to process everything. If I refer back to my notes about the lectures I listened to and the people I met, I will begin implementing them when I get home.

### **Reference**

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### **About the author**

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# Signalling System: ‘Overhaul’ of Some Family and Children’s Rights Institutions

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My presentation is both a brief description of my research topic and a call for all of the EU countries. I was a conference speaker at the II National Conference of Forensic Psychologists and Psychiatrists and, as a doctoral student at the Faculty of Law of Eötvös Loránd University, for the 2024 and I was also invited to give a presentation at the Border Sciences Police Conference of the Hungarian National University of Public Service.

I focus on the dysfunctional family environment and its harmful effects on children that contribute to the development of deviant personalities. The personality disorders that develop during dysfunctional family socialisation induce later criminality, which hinders intergenerational social mobility, leading to a reduction in the economic productivity of Hungarian society. I outline my complex solution while examining past and present alternatives.

Children are particularly vulnerable, both within and outside the family. Unfortunately, they are subjected to increasingly frequent and brutal atrocities. Taking into account the latency, it is safe to estimate that the actual number of child victims in Hungary may be in the tens of thousands every year. Injuries suffered in early childhood have a particularly devastating impact on the personality, which is reflected in the victim's behavioural symptoms in childhood, the development of his or her life, the family relationships chosen and the methods chosen to raise the child.

Personality disorders developed during childhood in a dysfunctional family induce later criminality. Restraint, which is the main task of the enforcement of punishment, is unable to achieve the re-education that can sort out the emotionally damaged, morally and behaviourally distorted personality. Deterrence as a function can therefore only have a tangential effect, in most cases only leading to a temporary adaptation to social norms of coexistence, but not to a real, full-fledged resocialisation. In my opinion, to achieve effective re-education and a sustainable future, we should focus on the health, protection and individual-specific education of children, and thus create a stable system capable of screening out damaged children who may become potential offenders in later life. I believe that family health is a public issue, to create a strong social 'safety net' that can significantly reduce the number and severity of crimes against children.

My presentation aims to provide a knowledge base as a guide for the early detection and prevention of these disorders. In the first part of my thesis, I will describe the harmful effects on children of a dysfunctional family environment, which contributes to the development of a child's deviant personality, leading him or her down the path of criminality. In the second part, I outline my vision of what could provide a complex solution to this issue, while examining past and present alternatives.

**Keywords:** social mobility, future generations, children's rights, family law, prevention

# Sustainable Hydropower Production and the Wef-Nexus in Multi-Stressed Industrialised River Landscapes: Challenges and Solutions for Science and Management

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Human activities are increasingly altering river systems worldwide, particularly within Industrialised River Landscapes (IRLs). These transformations are driven by factors such as population growth, rising food demands, and the need for sustainable energy, which in turn lead to the construction of hydropower dams and the expansion of irrigation systems, further exacerbated by changing drought patterns. These challenges underscore the significance of understanding the “Water-Energy-

Food-Ecosystem” (WEF-E) nexus, as these interlinked systems require a multidisciplinary approach combined with participatory approaches to ensure comprehensive analysis and sustainable solutions centred on socioeconomic shifts.

Anchored to the concept of “coupled socio-eco-hydrological systems”, this research examines the evolution of Human Rivers in the 21st century (HR 21) in response to a rapidly changing world. Through the WEF-E nexus lens, an interdisciplinary approach—integrating natural sciences, engineering, and social sciences—explores the co-evolution of socio-ecohydrological systems for of sustainable management of natural resources. By analysing the interactions between effects of hydropower production and multiple stressors, including nutrient pollution and hydro-morphological alterations such as channelisation and riparian modifications, the study identifies pathways driving degradation processes in riverine ecosystems.

Well-planned and coordinated policy efforts, such as the EU Water Framework Directive, the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) and the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), also face inefficient implementation of management actions on the ground. This research framework thus integrates reviewing EU directives and large-scale dataset analyses to reveal the complexities of IRLs in the context of governance towards resource sustainability, circularity and ecosystem health. Mesocosm experiments are used to explore the interactions of multiple stressors and inform tailored management measures for sustainable development.

Results and approaches from this research, derived in the EU, particularly in Austria, will foster ecologically sustainable outcomes, ranging from land use to water budgeting and the sustainable production of hydropower energy. This can also serve as a further blueprint for upscaling to other regions, including sub-Saharan Africa, such as Zambia and its neighbouring countries in the SADC region.

**Keywords:** Hydropower, Multiple stressors, WEF-E-Nexus, Multi-disciplinarity, Hydro-morphology, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

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## **About the co-author**

**James Nkhoswe.** As an emerging researcher in the Water-Energy-Food (WEF) nexus, I am dedicated to advancing blue-green and circular economies to promote climate resilience through nature-based solutions (NBS). My current research focuses on the sustainability of hydroelectric power production (HP) and addressing how it interacts with multiple stressors, such as pollution in aquatic ecosystems. With an interdisciplinary perspective, I explore innovations in built environments—including concepts like Sponge Cities—while also engaging with fields such as Ecotoxicology, Tropical Medicine, Equity and Inclusion, Integrated Agro-Aquaculture, Urban Planning and Global Health. Driven by the goal of contributing to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs), my work aligns with key themes such as food security, marine and freshwater ecosystem conservation, and climate resilience. By integrating scientific research, engineering, and social considerations, I aim to develop sustainable and equitable solutions that address global environmental challenges.



# **Food Agency and Its Contributions to the Health of International Students: A Comparative Study Between Rennes, France and Ghent, Belgium**

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The concept of food agency explores the ability of individuals to acquire, prepare, and consume food based on their preferences, nutritional needs, economic capabilities, and cultural background. Taking inspiration from Amartya Sen's capability approach, this study investigates how food agency connects with health functioning and the freedom to make choices that support one's health and well-being. Focusing on the experiences of international students in Rennes, France (n=11) and Ghent, Belgium (n=17), this comparative study examines how they navigate new food environments while studying abroad. It analyses the ways international students exercise their food agency as they acquire the food they prefer to eat, maintain culinary traditions from their home countries, and adapt to their current food choices. Through semi-structured interviews and interpretative

phenomenological analysis, the study shows that a high degree of exercising food agency entails a significant level of adaptation to local food choices while maintaining cultural connections through food. These adaptations include compromising on ingredients, budgeting carefully, and turning to social networks to access familiar foods. The study presents ideal-types, which are categorical representations of the characteristics describing a certain phenomenon. In this study, these are the occurrences and experiences of international students navigating new food environments. It also shows that eating nutritious and quality foods constitutes being healthy, which is perceived not just as being physically fit, but also feeling mentally well and having strong social and emotional connections. It indicates that food and health are highly integrated and that health, adaptation strategies, and increased food agency are interconnected. Finally, the results are significant for enhancing policy development aimed at improving the food experiences of international students, and they offer insights for strategies to better support their cultural and nutritional well-being while studying abroad.

**Keywords:** food agency, food security, international students, capability approach, health and well-being

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### Notes

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### About the author

**Mitchiko Paulette Aljas** is currently pursuing a PhD in Integrated Rural Development, Economics and Management at the Slovak University of Agriculture, where her research explores Community Supported Agriculture as a model for sustainable economic and social development. She completed



the International Master of Science in Rural Development at Ghent University, Belgium as a recipient of the Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters scholarship, building on a prior Specialized Master in Integrated Management of Health Risks in the Global South from the University of Liège, Belgium under the Académie de Recherche et D'Enseignement Supérieur, and a bachelor's degree in Community Development from the University of the Philippines Diliman. Her career spans roles in corporate social responsibility in healthcare, community health, and Indigenous Peoples education. Outside academia, she enjoys kayaking, karaoke, and cats.



# The Impact of the Circular Economy on Noise Pollution and Air Quality in the Alpine-Adriatic Region

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The circular economy is a modern approach to organising production and consumption, based on the fundamental principles of reusing and recycling existing materials (Lisita et al., 2022; Popović and Radivojević, 2022). It serves as an important tool for reducing environmental impacts, especially in areas where industrial activity contributes to pollution. Industry and traffic negatively affect human health through air pollution and noise, causing stress and health problems, and overall contribute to a lower quality of life (Magiera and Solecka, 2021; Lima and Marques, 2016).

In our research, we examined the impact of industrial activity on noise pollution and air quality in the Alpine-Adriatic region. This investigation aimed to determine how such activity contributes to environmental degradation and how it, in turn, influences the quality of life in urban environments. Experimental measurements were carried out in autumn 2024, during which we assessed the levels of noise pollution and air quality in Slovenian cities with significant industrial activity. We compared noise levels and air quality near industrial facilities, traffic routes, and residential areas to evaluate the impact of industry on the daily lives of residents and the natural environment.

Our results were also compared with official data available in European and Slovenian databases (ARSO, EEA), allowing us to gain insight into the current pollution status and the influence of industry on air quality and noise pollution. We found that particulate matter and noise levels were highest in more urbanised areas with a long-standing industrial presence. Areas where industry is interwoven with residential environments pose a greater health risk and contribute to a lower quality of life.

Finally, we presented the circular economy as a sustainable solution that helps reduce negative impacts on the environment and, as a result, improves the quality of life for the entire society. The results of the study can serve as a basis for local decision-makers to adopt measures aimed at reducing the environmental and health impacts of industrial activity.

**Keywords:** circular economy, noise pollution, air quality, industry, environment, Alpine-Adriatic region, quality of life

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# Types of Dialogues and Interaction on the Example of Comic Books

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When thinking of modern disciplines that focus on the theories of language and speech, one should always be aware of the roots of the ways of expression, for which we can with certainty say that they derive from ancient rhetoric. The scope of this study is to show classical rhetorical structures throughout the form of a dialogue applied to the modern form of art that we define as a comic book. Since comic books are also a medium of a dual nature, the focus of the research is to link all of the ways it can dialogue both internally and externally with other means of art, media and its audience. The importance of reading a comic book, in great part, lies in understanding and perceiving the connection between the written text and the visual presentation of the image in one scene and the logical sequence of events depicted in one comic strip. The research bears on different means of communication, figurative speaking, as well as the power of suggestion and expressiveness. These are further viewed through the lenses of the rhetorical elements posed as the basic ground for any form of dialogue expression. The comic book model that the study was based on comes from Italy, representing the vast production of this media and

art that had a major impact on European and Balkan cultural reception and production, with the utter success in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia at the turn of the XX century. This is a great example of how not only can a language be embraced, but how language barriers can be overcome and enrich multiple cultures with a determinative influence on their growth and development. Furthermore, the production of Italian comic books is divided into different genres and styles, but these will be shaped to accommodate the topic of the conference and cover the impact on young generations and the ways that comic books can enhance the quality of life.

**Keywords:** comic books, dialogue, duality, expression, interaction, language, perception, rhetoric.

### Acknowledgment

I would like to thank the University of Maribor and the AARC committee for this great occasion to participate in such a diverse yet unified conference. It was an honour to be a part of it, and I hope the AARC tradition lives on. Really grateful for the opportunity to speak and connect on human sciences with interactive examples that I hope offered at least one new point of view and perspective.

### Notes

This research is intended as part of a larger study dedicated to understanding and perceiving comic books.

### About the author

**Jovana Tutić.** Born and raised in Belgrade, Serbia. Abandoned my first novel at the age of 9 and am still trying to learn the discipline. I had a classical education in Philological Gymnasium, where I studied Ancient Greek and Latin. Continued my education at the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philology, Department of Italian studies. Obtained a master's degree in *Italian Crime Comic Books in the XX Century*, during which I completed an internship in Naples, Italy. In 2017 founded a bilingual magazine *Stagionale* (Serbian - Italian) that we are still publishing with the Italian Institute of Culture in Belgrade in collaboration with the Department of Italian studies. Currently enrolled in a PhD program with the research topic of comic books. A big nature lover, tennis player, runway model in spare time and a street wanderer.

# EXTENDED ABSTRACTS OF CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PhD CONFERENCE OF MEMBERS TO THE ALPS-ADRIATIC RECTORS' CONFERENCE: CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TOPICS OF QUALITY OF LIFE FOR YOUTH AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN THE ALPS-ADRIATIC REGION IN THE YEAR OF THE PRESIDENCY OF SLOVENIA OVER THE EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGY FOR THE ALPINE REGION

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University of Maribor hosted this year's AARC PhD Conference titled "Thinking of the Quality of Life for the Young Generation in the Alpine and Adriatic Region through the Eyes of a Young Researcher in Circular Economy and Human and Social Science". PhD students of Alps-Adriatic Rectors' Conference and Danube Rectors' Conference member universities from Albania, Austria, Germany, Hungary, India, Myanmar, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine presented their doctoral studies and research related to the conference topic. The introductory note was given by Prof. Dr. László Komlósi from Széchenyi István University on the elements of a successful PhD study. The background of the conference topic is two annual priorities of the Presidency of Slovenia over the European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP), namely the circular economy and the quality of life of the youth in the Alpine region. The participants had an opportunity to compare their understanding of their mission as future creators of the destiny of the area that they live in with other opinions and thoughts of colleagues from different countries and scientific fields. The submission of abstracts was voluntary, so about 50% of all contributions held at the PhD conference are contained in this publication.

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