



5. - 6. NOVEMBER 2025

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH SENSORY DISABILITIES IN THE FIRST AND SECOND YUGOSLAV STATES (1919-1991)

PROGRAMME AND BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH SENSORY DISABILITIES IN THE FIRST AND SECOND YUGOSLAV STATES (1919-1991)

SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE
5.-6. NOVEMBER 2025

ORGANISATION:

Institute of Contemporary
History, Ljubljana

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE:

Dr. Jelena Seferović (Institute of Contemporary History, Ljubljana), dr. Dunja Dobaja (Institute of Contemporary History, Ljubljana), dr. Mojca Šorn (Institute of Contemporary History, Ljubljana), Tamara Logar (Institute of Contemporary History, Ljubljana).

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INSTITUTE
OF CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

PROGRAMME

DAY 1

Wednesday, 5. 11. 2025

8:45 AM – 9:15 AM: Morning Coffee

Location: The Lobby of the Institute of Contemporary History

9:15 AM – 9:30 AM: Welcome Speech

9:30 AM – 10:30 AM: Introductory lecture

Speaker: Jana Javornik

Title: Resources for Whom? Conceptualising Childcare Policy Architecture for Children with Complex Care Needs

10:30 AM – 12:10 PM: Disability, Education and Care in the Early 20th Century (1900–1941)

10:30 AM – 10:50 AM: Martin Kuhar & Stella Fatović Ferenčić - *Rehabilitation of Disabled Soldiers during the First World War in Croatia*

10:50 AM – 11:10 AM: John Paul Newman - *The King Aleksandar School for the Blind in Interwar Yugoslavia: Disability Care inside and beyond the Institutional Frame*

11:10 AM – 11:30 AM: Dunja Dobaja - *Education of Deaf Children in Schools for the Deaf in Ljubljana and Zagreb*

11:30 AM – 11:50 AM: Marko Buljevac - *Education and Employment Opportunities for Persons with Sensory Disabilities in Zagreb Between the Two World Wars*

11:50 AM – 12:10 PM: Sólveig Ólafsdóttir - *Specialized Training and Life Stories – The Impact of Iceland's Special Schools for the Blind and Deaf in the Early 20th Century*

12:10 PM – 12:30 PM: Discussion

12:30 PM – 13:00 PM: Coffee break

Location: The Lobby of the Institute of Contemporary History

PROGRAMME

DAY 1

Wednesday, 5. 11. 2025

13:00 PM – 14:00 PM: Sensory Disability and Education in Socialist Yugoslavia: Personal Narratives and Social Contexts

13:00 PM – 13:20 PM: Darja Zaviršek - *Engendering Disability through Oral Histories of the Specific Era: Sensory Disability and Socialism*

13:20 PM – 13:40 PM: Janja Sedlaček - *Similar Yet Unique: The Educational Experiences of People with Sensory Impairments in Socialist Slovenia*

13:40 PM – 14:00 PM: Dragana Gundogan & Nataša Milićević - *Being Visually Impaired Women in Socialist Serbia – Experiences with Educational Sphere and Employment*

14:00 PM – 14:20 PM: Discussion

14:20 PM – 15:20 PM: Lunch

Location: The Lobby of the Institute of Contemporary History

PROGRAMME

DAY 2

Thursday, 6. 11. 2025

8:45 AM – 9:15 AM: Morning Coffee

Location: The Lobby of the Institute of Contemporary History

9:15 AM – 10:15 AM: Introductory lecture

Speaker: Ina Dimitrova

Title: Beyond Labour: Socialist Disability Policy in the Realm of Mental Health

10:15 AM – 11:15 PM: Vocational Education and Employment of People with Sensory Disabilities in Socialist Yugoslavia

10:15 AM – 10:35 AM: Marta Rendla - *Vocational Education of Individuals with Visual and Hearing Impairments in Socialism from a Comparative Perspective*

10:35 AM – 10:55 AM: Jelena Seferović - *How Have Education and Employment Opportunities for the Deaf Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina Changed from Socialism to Today?*

10:55 AM – 11:15 PM: Nataša Milićević & Dragana Gundogan - *Education and Employment of Visually Impaired Physiotherapists in Socialist Serbia*

11:15 AM- 11:35 AM: Discussion

11:35 PM – 12:05 PM: Coffee break

Location: The Lobby of the Institute of Contemporary History

PROGRAMME
DAY 2

Thursday, 6. 11. 2025

12:05 PM – 13:05 PM: Perspectives on Disability History in the Former Yugoslavia

12:05 PM – 12:25 PM: Miloš Paunović - *Serbia's Failed Transition from Segregation to Integration: Education of Children with Disabilities in SR Serbia 1970s-1990s*

12:25 PM – 12:45 PM: Atila Lukić & Gordan Maslov - *Is a History of Disability in Yugoslavia Possible?*

12:45 PM– 13:05 PM: Magda Karavanić - *The Typhlological Museum as One of the Pioneers of Dealing with the Issues of People with Visual Impairments in Yugoslavia*

13:05 PM– 13:25 PM: Discussion

13:25 PM – 14:25 PM: Lunch

Location: The Lobby of the Institute of Contemporary History

DR. NATAŠA MILIĆEVIĆ

DR. DRAGANA GUNDOGAN

INSTITUTE FOR RECENT HISTORY OF SERBIA, BELGRADE/
INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH, BELGRADE /

Education and employment of visually impaired physiotherapists in socialist Serbia

The professional training and employment of persons with visual impairments in socialist Serbia underwent significant changes after World War II. Efforts were made to develop educational models that would expand the range of traditional occupations (such as brush making, basket weaving, spinning, and weaving), that had historically dominated employment opportunities for visually impaired individuals. These efforts aimed to better prepare them for participation in the labor market shaped by socialist industrial modernization. Drawing on international experiences, it became evident that visually impaired individuals could be successfully trained and employed in therapeutic professions such as massage therapy and physiotherapy. Beginning in the early 1950s, visually impaired individuals were given the opportunity to study at educational institutions on the secondary and tertiary level such as High Medical School and Medical College in Belgrade. For this group of students, this represented a development that continues to have lasting effects today. This paper aims to analyze the processes of education and employment for visually impaired physiotherapists in socialist Serbia. The key research questions include: What were the experiences and organizational structures of professional training in the field of physiotherapy? How did the employment process and professional engagement undergo? What were the major challenges, obstacles, and struggles faced, and how were they addressed by individuals and institutions? The research is based on an analysis of archival documents, written memoirs, and secondary literature.

Nataša Milićević, PhD is a research associate at the Institute for Recent History of Serbia. Her main field of interest is the social history of Serbia and Yugoslavia in the twentieth century, with a special focus on the history of the Serbian middle class, the intelligentsia, relations between the authorities and social groups, and everyday life, as well as the history of historiography. She has recently focused particularly on the history of Serbian society in occupied Serbia during the Second World War. Milićević has coedited two books (Свакодневни живот под окупацијом 1941-1944. Искуство једног Београђанина (ИНИС, 2011) and Коста Ст. Павловић, Дневник 1930-1932 (ИНИС- Историјски архив Београда, 2020)) and she is the author of the monograph Југословенска власт и српско грађанство 1944-1950, (ИНИС, 2009), for which she received an award from the Ministry of Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia for a special contribution in the field of the Social Sciences and Humanities for the year 2009.