

## Editorial

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Guest Editor

Also in the educational space, social pedagogy has been receiving an increasingly relevant position. In their contributions the authors display a wide array of activities of the rather young discipline, with orientation into work with children and adolescents with behavioural and emotional difficulties and disorders representing the dominant content. Confronted with an inflation of studies and publications of the quite small circle of research cadre, the papers represent an important scientific contribution. **Krajnčan** thus explores the issue of the quality of work in educational institutions - or now professional centres - that requires especially systematic, comprehensive, and multilayered approach, i.e. the knowledge of the demands of the population, of professional requirements, organisational and systemic frameworks, and understanding into detail the operation of each individual institution. It also requires critical assessment and desire for insight into both the quality of one's own work and the quality of the work of the institution. In a comparative analysis he creates a scheme that allows for both professional orientation and self-reflection and self-assessment.

In their paper the authors **Gazilj, Borić and Čosić** seek the challenge of understanding and improving educational institutions in the multidimensional nature of treatment and the living environment. The objective of the study is to provide a deeper insight into experiencing educational placements from the perspective of adolescents and the educational staff. The topic of the research was focused on experiencing and describing educational placements as well as on the relationship between the perspectives of the adolescents and the staff.

In the research 14 adolescents and 7 professional staff were involved. The results indicate that both the adolescents and the staff have negative attitude toward educational placement. The teachers emphasise their disappointment with the inappropriateness of the system of intervention and the complexity of the work with children with a number of threats and difficulties. From both perspectives the quality of the relationship between the adolescents and the teachers is the key element of the treatment. Creating an environment where adolescents achieve positive outcomes, safety, openness, and recognition are the key elements of improving the treatment.

In his paper, **Schwaiger** analyses 25 European projects through the lens of opportunities and limitations of in-depth technologies, namely from virtual and augmented reality (VR and AR) to mixed (MR) and extended reality (XR) in educational (socio-pedagogical) work. The author finds that technical and infrastructure requirements have been becoming a minor - although still existing - problem, while comprehensive knowledge of these technologies and their potential as teaching tools is what trainers and teachers still lack the most.

The paper by **Berdajs** follows, focused on the topical area of care and work with the older part of the population. As a relevant factor, social pedagogy is involved in the shaping of an inclusive social environment and varied everyday of elderly citizens. Social pedagogues must possess the knowledge and competences needed for the assessment of psychological, emotional, cognitive, and social competences of elderly persons. They must identify the rank of the independence of elderly persons in diverse life situations and find the sources of support in them and in their environment. In the review paper the author points out that social pedagogues understand the problems of elderly persons and seek solutions in relation with their personal social resources.

In the following paper, relevant for the development of the theory of social pedagogy, **Bogdan Zupančič** analyses radicalisation as part of the modern-day liberation processes that can be identified in the interplay of the emancipatory potential in social pedagogy and mobilisation dimension in the community development theory. We problematise parallelly the internally split social-pedagogical stance that on the one hand wishes to liberate, while on the other hand it time and again finds itself trapped in the preservation of the existing relations.

For its development, social pedagogy needs research in historical, epistemological, contextual, and functional dimensions that allow it to apply the important principles of professional operation - critical attitude, self-reflexivity, evaluation, meta analyses or social analyses - on their own.

The paper follows, in which **Vukovič** evaluates survival camps in the wild as a form of exercise, training children and adolescents in social skills. Training social skills offers tools which people can avail themselves of to meet their objectives. Social skills belong to the many skills “learnt” at survival camps. Experiential survival camps are primarily targeted at adolescents with behavioural and emotional difficulties. They include staying in the wild, survival, solidarity, psycho-physical efforts, and active participation. The participants must thus learn to sustain the result of the transfer, to translate it, to use it under various conditions, in various situations. Intensive, socially isolated projects with attractive content and locations and qualified professional staff should be implemented into the education system. For children and adolescents who find it difficult to cope with institutional rules, such intensive programmes would be extremely welcome.

The last paper, by **Vrhunc Pfeifer**, concludes the area of working with children and adolescents with behavioural and emotional difficulties and/or with disorders with an analysis of crisis situations in educational institutions or in professional centres. Crisis situations can escalate to so severe forms that in certain situations leave the professional staff without adequate procedures. The most often they must cope with diverse forms of violence, self-aggressivity, use of illegal substances, and with abuse. Cases of children and adolescents are also common to whom mental health issues can be attributed. Crisis interventions differ according to the complexity of the situation; regardless of the approach, however, attitude is crucial for any kind of intervention. The review article on crisis situations and interventions is also a theoretical basis of the target research project about the production of baselines for the preparation of guidelines for working with the population discussed above.