

## RN30 Mid-Term Conference

### *Youth and Young Adults in a Radically Changing World: Stagnation, Continuation and New Beginnings*

#### *Practical Information and Abstract Submission*

- **Conference dates and venue:** October 15-18, 2025, Zagreb (location to be specified later)
- **Participation fees:** approximately 500 € (discounts are available for ESA members, PhD students, and individuals with limited funding). The cost includes the conference fee, accommodation, food, and transfers between Zagreb and the conference venue.
- **Submission deadline: the 31<sup>st</sup> of May, 2025**
- **Abstracts (maximum 250 words)** should outline the aims, research questions, and theoretical framework. Empirical papers should also include details of the research design, methodology and methods, as well as research results or preliminary findings. Please submit your abstract by completing this form: <https://forms.gle/R3PYAsALwiU3d7nCA>. If the link does not work, copy and paste it into your browser. Kindly note that the first author, or at least one of the co-authors submitting an abstract, is required to present it in person.

Because of practical limitations, the conference will host a maximum of 50-60 in-person participants and attendees. Please note that those presenting an abstract are required to attend in person. We will try to arrange online streaming for those who wish to follow the event remotely. Remote participation is only available for attendees, not for presenters.

#### *Local Organizing Committee*

**Anja Gvozdanović** (Institute for Social Science and Research, Zagreb)

**Marko Mustapić** (Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, University of Zagreb)

**Bruno Šimac** (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Zagreb)

**Dino Vukušić** (Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, University of Zagreb)

#### ***Croatian Sociological Association***

#### *Keynote Speakers*

**Geoffrey Pleyers** (ISA President; CriDIS, University of Louvain)

**Benjamin Perasović** (Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, University of Zagreb)

#### *RN30 Scientific and Organizational Committee*

**Annalisa Dordoni** (Coordinator of RN30, University of Milano-Bicocca), **Dragan Stanojevic** (Co-coordinator of RN30, University of Belgrade), **Lotta Haikkola** (Finnish Youth Research Society), **Paula Joanna Sillat** (Tallinn University), **Azad Heydarov** (University of Wroclaw), **Carmen Leccardi** (University of Milano-Bicocca), **Maria Bruselius-Jensen** (Aalborg University), **Lidia Lo Schiavo** (University of Messina), **Demet Lukuslu** (Yeditepe University).

## *Call for Papers*

The contemporary era is marked by rapid and intersecting political, economic, cultural, and environmental transformations, profoundly affecting the experiences and possibilities of youth and young adults. These shifts reshape transitions to adulthood, employment prospects, educational trajectories, and democratic participation.

The ESA RN30 Youth and Generation Mid-Term Conference 2025 aims to explore how young people navigate these challenges and act as agents of change within the shifting global landscape. The conference asks: how are young people affected by these structural changes, how do they navigate and cope with them, and how do they develop new practices to engage and influence the changes?

The conference will first examine the changes of transitions into adulthood, which for some are prolonged and more uncertain as they are shaped by economic instability, precarious labour conditions, and growing intergenerational divides, especially in work and housing issues. These suspended transitions intersect with broader shifts in democratic participation and social cohesion. Exploring how youth experience and respond to these changes in transitions provides critical insights into their evolving social roles.

Second, a central focus will be on youth engagement in civic, cultural, and political life and how they take part in shaping their conditions and defining new ways to become young. Emerging forms of political activity, including new social movements, digital activism, and critical consumerism, are transforming traditional understandings of collective action. Youth are both at the forefront of efforts to uphold democratic values and resistance amidst political instability and erosion of social cohesion, while there are also increasing tendencies for young people to engage in anti-democratic movements.

Additionally, the conference will delve into youth perspectives on security and war, exploring their experiences in navigating geopolitical tensions, conflict, and global uncertainty. Young people often grapple with the personal and collective challenges of maintaining safety and resilience in complex contexts. Also, their responses, whether through advocacy or involvement in these conflicts and even in wars, reveal their critical role in reimagining security frameworks and democracy.

Moreover, youth experiences and responses to ecological crises and environmental challenges will be a crucial area of inquiry. Environmental degradation and climate change pose urgent threats, disproportionately affecting younger generations. These crises have spurred the rise of youth-led movements and innovative practices aimed at sustainability, political ecology, environmentalism, climate justice, and systemic change. Examining how young people mobilize and advocate for ecological futures highlights their role in addressing one of our time's most pressing global challenges.

Furthermore, the conference will explore the implications of technological advancements for youth, particularly regarding employment prospects, social mobility, and identity information. The transformations brought by automation, artificial intelligence, and the gig economy profoundly affect the future of work, data management and privacy as well as labour instability and social isolation. At the

same time, digital technologies influence how young people construct identities, build relationships, and engage with their communities *onlife* blurring the boundaries between the digital and physical worlds.

In addition, the role of migration, mobility, and global inequalities in shaping youth paths and everyday lives will be a key theme. Young people's experiences of migration, mobility, and disparities between the Global North and South highlight the importance of understanding the global dimensions of youth inequalities and global solidarities. These issues are further enriched by examining generational fractions and their intersections with socioeconomic inequalities and migratory backgrounds.

Finally, the cultural dimensions of youth identity, personal and social, will also be a central focus. Digital and local cultures and subcultures offer young people spaces to express themselves, form connections, and engage in collective and individual action. Conversely, digital contexts may also serve to express destabilization, frustration, and rage, reflecting broader social and political dynamics that undermine social cohesion and increasing frictions between social groups, categories, and minorities, creating networks for the reproduction of discrimination and violence.

In conclusion, papers may draw on a range of social science methods (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods) and engage with topics such as:

- Changed transitions to adulthood, job instability, flexible work practices and the paradox of mobility and socioeconomic and labor inequalities
- Generational differences and intergenerational conflicts as well as generational dialogues and solidarities
- Youth engagement in both everyday life, traditional and emerging forms of activism and participation
- Youth self-awareness as for their generational inter-and intra-generational relations
- Youth perspectives and engagement in security, war, political conflicts, and the crisis of democracy
- Responses to ecological crises and youth-led (anti) environmental movements
- The role of technology in shaping youth identities, opportunities, and social interactions
- Migration, mobility, and the migratory background experienced by young generations
- Digital and local cultures or subcultures in shaping youth experiences and expressions
- Emotions, aspirations, real utopias in youth social and political representations.

We invite colleagues to submit abstracts of up to 250 words that address the diverse and multifaceted experiences of youth and young adults across the globe, including theoretical, methodological, and epistemological reflections, as well as empirical research utilizing diverse social science methods, both quantitative and qualitative, or mixed methods. By engaging with these themes, we invite interdisciplinary studies illuminating youth studies' complexity. We also welcome comparative perspectives on youth experiences in different regions beyond Europe.

We look forward to your contributions and to fostering meaningful discussions that deepen our understanding of young people and young adults in a transforming world.