

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

CALL FOR PAPERS



INŠTITUT INSTITUTE
ZA NOVEJŠO ZGODOVINO OF CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

5 AND 6 NOVEMBER 2025

INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY HISTORY
LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA

The annual international conference of the project “Systems of care and education of children with sensory disabilities in the first and second Yugoslav state” (ARIS - J6-50189) aims to bring together scholars from the humanities, social sciences, and related disciplines to cover a wide range of topics related to the education and employment of individuals with sensory disabilities from 1919 to 1991.

The conference will be held at the Institute of Contemporary History in Ljubljana from November 5 to November 6, 2025.

The history of the education and employment of individuals with sensory disabilities in the two Yugoslav states is marked by numerous transformations that reflected the complex social, economic, and political changes across different epochs. Although First World War sparked broader societal discussions on the value of human life, individuals with disabilities, apart from war veterans, remained marginalized. After Second World War, the approach to this population began to change. An increasing number of social, educational, and vocational institutions for children and youth with sensory disabilities were established, aiming to prepare them for specific professions. In this way, the state sought to facilitate their integration into the labor market, aiming for their active social inclusion into the rest of society. Despite these efforts and growing legal regulations aimed at improving the social status of individuals with sensory disabilities, during the 1950s and 1960s, the medical model of disability prevailed. Under this model, the focus was on their impairments, treating them as medical issues requiring treatment or rehabilitation.



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During the 1970s, in response to the medical model, the social model of disability began to develop, emphasizing the importance of including individuals with sensory disabilities in society. This included the development of educational programs and efforts to promote their employment, encouraging their independence and equal participation in society. By the early 1990s, changes and some progress were observed, yet the question remains as to the extent to which these were achieved on a formal versus informal level.

We invite scholars who focus on the legislative framework for the education and employment of individuals with sensory disabilities in a historical context, as well as the gap between legal regulations and their actual implementation in practice. We are interested in empirical and theoretical research that examines the effects of educational policies and social care policies on self-perception, self-presentation, life choices, and thoughts about the future in the context of employment and broader social participation. Also, topics analyzing the formal structures of curricula and educational programs, as well as methodological approaches to teaching children and young people with sensory disabilities during the specified time period, will be considered. Papers discussing the experiences of vocational education, employment, and everyday work from the personal perspective of individuals with sensory disabilities are also encouraged.

In this context, we invite submissions of short presentations (15 minutes) addressing one or more of the aforementioned topics. If you are interested in participating in the conference, please submit an abstract of up to 250 words and a brief biography (100 words) by 1 June 2025 to the following email addresses.

- Dr. Jelena Seferović: jelena.seferovic@inz.si
- Dr. Dunja Dobaja: dunja.dobaja@inz.si

IMPORTANT DATES

JUNE 1, 2025

Short presentation
submission

5 AND 6 NOVEMBER, 2025

Conference date



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