



Institut za društvena istraživanja u Zagrebu  
Institute for Social Research in Zagreb

# TRANSFORMING SUSTAINABILITY



## BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Edited by Dan Podjed and Lana Peternel



### International Conference

Ljubljana, 20 September 2019

**Organised by:** Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Institute of Slovenian Ethnology & Anton Melik Geographical Institute, Slovenia; Institute for Social Research in Zagreb, Centre for Research in Social Inequalities and Sustainability, Croatia

**Organising Committee:** Dan Podjed, Lana Peternel, Katarina Polajnar Horvat, Saša Babič, Tatiana Bajuk Senčar, Mona Menets

**Venue:** Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Hall of the Geographical Museum, Gosposka ulica 16, Ljubljana

This conference is a result of the *Invisible Life of Waste* project ([www.lifeofwaste.eu](http://www.lifeofwaste.eu)). The organizers acknowledge the project (ID: J6-9364) is financially supported by the Slovenian Research Agency.





## PROGRAMME

**8:30-9:00 MORNING MEETING WITH COFFEE AND SNACKS**

**9:00-9:45 OPENING**

**Ingrid Slavec Gradišnik** (Head of ZRC SAZU's Institute of Slovenian Ethnology)

**Dinka Marinović Jerolimov** (Director of the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb)

Official Opening of the Event

**Dan Podjed, Lana Peternel**

Making a Move Towards Planet-Centred Development (Introduction Speech)

**Živa Kavka Gobbo**

Transitioning from Sustainability to Degrowth (Keynote Speech)

**9:45-10:45 FIRST SESSION**

**Marija Brajdić Vuković, Branko Ančić**

Values Underpinning Degrowth Transformations of Socio-political Systems

**Aleš Smrekar**

Do Positive Attitudes Towards the Environment Exist Only on a Declarative Level?

**Maja Pivec, Jane Lu Hsu**

Motivation for Change

**Jelena Puđak, Branko Ančić**

Drivers of Pro-Environmental Behaviour – Worldview, Demographics, Education, or Something Else

**10:45-11:00 COFFEE BREAK**

**11:00-12:00 SECOND SESSION**

**Tatiana Bajuk Senčar**

The Problem of Plastic Waste and Consumer Habits

**Katarina Polajnar Horvat, Dan Podjed**

Combining Approaches to Understand the Invisible life of Food Waste

**Alenka Bezjak Mlakar**

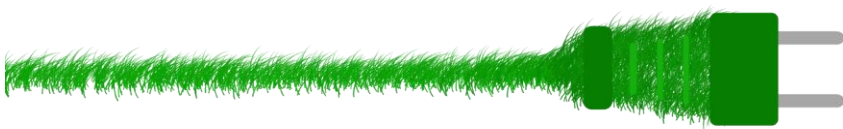
Designing a Waste Management System in a Circular Economy

**Mona Menets**

Dumpster Diving – a Battle Against Food Waste

**12:00-13:00 LUNCH BREAK**





**13:00-14:00 THIRD SESSION**

**Jože Guna, Gregor Burger**

Smart Trash Cans for Smart People

**Jelena Puđak, Nataša Bokan**

Are Farmer Degrowthers and Engineers Pro-growthers? Values and Motivations of Green Entrepreneurs

**Nikola Petrović, Lana Peternel**

The Rejectionist Ethic and the Spirit of Green Economy

**Saša Babič**

Internet Memes on Environmental Problems and Sustainability

**14:00-14:15 COFFEE BREAK**

**14:15-14:45 FOURTH SESSION**

**Saša Poljak Istenič**

Trash for Degrowth: Strategies and Actions towards Sustainability

**Daša Ličen, Dan Podjed**

Making a Change from Below: A Comparative Study of Mass Movements for Waste Reduction and the Promotion of Cycling

**14:45-15:00 DEBATE AND CONCLUSION**





**Dan Podjed, Lana Peternel**

## Making a Move Towards Planet-Centred Development (Introduction)


The conference examines the meaning and relevance of sustainability in relation to contemporary socio-cultural, economic and environmental issues. The questions that contributors aim to untangle are:

- 1) How do people experience and value sustainability as a global trend, personal attitude and survival strategy?
- 2) How does the lack of a common perspective on sustainability prevent future social and cultural transformations?
- 3) Can we define sustainability as a dominant concept for universal social development or do we need to transform its meaning and adapt it to new social, cultural, and economic dilemmas?
- 4) Can sustainable lifestyle and practices, such as recycling, organic food production and responsible energy use, actually improve our health and subjective well-being?

By answering these questions, two more recent developmental models, *green economy* and *degrowth*, will be discussed theoretically and analytically. As described by Kallis et al. (2018: 292), economic growth is “an integrated cultural, political, ecological and economic process manifested as an increase in the total market value of all goods and services (GDP)”, and degrowth, as its opposite, “a process of political and social transformation that reduces a society’s throughput while improving the quality of life”. The conference attempts to:

- 1) evaluate these and other similar terms such as “circular economy”, “steady-state economy”, “post-growth” and “buen vivir”;
- 2) present them from the viewpoint of the social sciences and humanities;
- 3) identify new concepts and meanings that could be compatible with contemporary research approaches and useful for academics and practitioners.

Special emphasis at the conference is placed on mobility, energy consumption, waste management, agriculture and gardening, as well as other human activities and practices that have a significant impact on the planet and wellbeing of current and future societies.








## Živa Kavka Gobbo

### Transitioning from Sustainability to Degrowth (Keynote Speech)

Sustainable development has been linked to environmental protection in Slovenia since the beginning of the post war environmental movement. Due to various reasons, it remained strongly associated with the environment, while very weak in linking the social component and even less the economic component. Through the domestication of the concept in the last 10 years across various sectors (political parties, policy makers, and economic subjects), the concept was emptied as it was used in every possible context. Everything was sustainable, even when completely against any kind of logic. Therefore, various non-governmental organisations adopted the new narrative (the concept arose in the 1970s) of degrowth, which is linked to systematic changes of the system needed in order to achieve the true sustainable development. The term has an interesting meaning when translated into Slovenian (*odrast*), as it means turning away from (economic) growth and at the same time becoming an adult (growing up). The concept of degrowth focuses as well on the quality of life, which is a new focus or just a shift in the narrative?

**Živa Kavka Gobbo**, MA in the field of cultural anthropology, chairperson at Focus Association for Sustainable Development; in the last ten years she has been working in the field of the critics of consumerism, sustainable consumption, global education, degrowth and global responsibility.





**Marija Brajdić Vuković, Branko Ančić**

## Values Underpinning Degrowth Transformations of Socio-political Systems

This paper deals with the research problem of the potentiality of a socio-political system to become more degrowth-oriented and therefore realistically sustainable in the context of climate change mitigation. As described by Kallis et al. (2018: 292), economic growth is “an integrated cultural, political, ecological and economic process manifested as an increase in the total market value of all goods and services (GDP)”. In contrast, degrowth, is “a process of political and social transformation that reduces a society's throughput (the energy and resource flows in and out of an society) while improving the quality of life”. The analysis to be presented is based on different modules of the International Social Survey Program carried out in Croatia since 2005. The main indicator of (social) degrowth potentiality is the “degrowth scale” (Domazet-Ancic-Brajdic Vukovic, 2018), consisting of 9 added variables related to different dimensions of the degrowth attitude. The potential for degrowth attitude is, through different statistical procedures and analyses, contextualized within the wide spectrum of different ideological attitudes, values and behaviours. It aims to describe the degrowth society paradigm – a unique construct that can shed the light on which values and ideologies should be supported in order for the degrowth social transformations to have a chance to succeed.

**Marija Brajdić Vuković** is Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology of the Centre of Croatian Studies, University of Zagreb, where she teaches qualitative methodology, social impact analysis and the sociology of science and technology. She is a sociologist and an STS researcher, whose current work focuses on relationships between science, technology and society with particular interest in disciplinary cultures and communities, their complex relationships with different public, policies, economy, and their socio-political power and influence in general.

**Branko Ančić** is a Research Associate at the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb where he is Head of the Centre for Research in Social Inequalities and Sustainability. His scientific and research interests include sociology of religion, sociology of health and social ecology. His publications include an analysis of atheism and non-religiosity in Europe, an exploration of connections between religion and health, research of pro-environmental attitudes and behaviour in Europe, public perception of climate change and interpretation of degrowth attitudes in Europe.






## Aleš Smrekar

### Do Positive Attitudes Towards the Environment Exist Only on a Declarative Level?

Including the wider public in the process of managing water as a natural asset is very important for encouraging change in dealing with the water situation. While it is generally believed that the population of Slovenia is quite environmentally aware, this stereotype crumbles rapidly under more thorough scrutiny.

An extensive field survey of the population of Ljubljana and its surroundings was done with a sample of 900 people in urbanized and suburbanized areas. Of particular interest to us were the answers regarding personal participation in the protection of the groundwater or wider environment. Those questioned agreed that as individuals they could do much to protect the drinking water; however, the majority were only prepared to verbally support such endeavours. Most had done almost nothing themselves in the past, and only a few were prepared to participate actively in the preservation of this natural resource in the future. Even the few who favoured the idea of healthy drinking water were willing to contribute more than a token monthly amount, even though they agreed on the extreme importance of providing pure drinking water for the future. These results are transferable to people's attitudes to the environment in a broad sense.

**Aleš Smrekar** is a Senior Research Fellow at Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Art, Anton Melik Geographical Institute. He graduated from geography and ethnology and holds a PhD in geography. He is the head of the institute's Department of Environmental Protection. His fields of interest are environmental pollution, nature conservation, protection and interpretation of natural values, cultural heritage and environmental awareness. He has collaborated in numerous fundamental and applicative research projects in Slovenia and the EU.





## Maja Pivec, Jane Lu Hsu

### Motivation for Change

This presentation will report on applied research and aspirations to find ways to increase sustainable behaviour by applying game mechanics and playful solutions. One of the main questions is what motivates each of us towards more sustainable behaviour and sustainable consumption.


To create a better understanding of the problem, researchers and students looked into awareness and different perceptions of sustainability in a variety of different cultural settings, with special focus on waste separation, energy and water consumption. Besides documenting details about current sustainable behaviour, additional questions included where and how do people come into contact with sustainability concepts and how these concepts are taught.

The international field research journey culminated in a co-creation event, where students faced the challenge to increase green skills in a playful way, to motivate sustainable behaviour(s) in everyday life. Five intercultural and interdisciplinary mixed student teams – from Slovenia and Austria, students of anthropology, media and interaction design – presented their holistic and gamified solutions.

An exemplary collaboration between three universities, a research centre and several research projects, showed that this important topic of sustainability and changing behaviour can be tackled only by talking and working together as well as considering different perspectives.

**Maja Pivec**, PhD, is a professor of applied game-design and gamification at the Institute for Design and Communication at FH JOANNEUM in Graz, Austria. Her research interests include digitalization of education, introduction of innovative elements in education and sustainability education.

**Jane Lu Hsu**, PhD, is a professor and director of Marketing Department at National Chung Hsing University in Taichung, Taiwan. Her academic research focuses on market analytics and consumer studies, and her research interests include environmental education.





## Jelena Puđak, Branko Ančić


### Drivers of Pro-Environmental Behaviour – Worldview, Demographics, Education, or Something Else

Since the 1970s and the rise of the environmental movement, there has also been a rise in public awareness for environmental risks (Dunlap, Van Liere, Mertig & Jones 2000; Ančić, Puđak, Domazet 2016.). However, self-reported environmental concern is not necessarily accompanied by a change in attitudes or behaviour. Pro-environmental behaviour (PEB) is the one that consciously seeks to minimize the negative impact of one's actions on the natural and built world. Pro-environmental behaviour can be classified as household PEB, recycling, purchasing sustainable and organic products, public involvement, and others. In our study (national representative sample, N=1000), the scale was constructed from 31 statements that measured the frequency of behaviour through an assessment scale (1 - never to 4 - always). Using factor analysis, seven components were isolated: recycling, pro-environmental socialization, pro-environmental household activities, pro-environmental activism, weak and strong pro-environmental consumerism and pro-environmental transportation habits.

There are many drivers for pro-environmental behaviour besides personal motivation; those drivers are structural and can be seen in general predictors such as residential status, education and income. Besides those, values and worldviews are also a strong predictor of some pro-environmental behaviour. The New Ecological Paradigm scale is a measure of endorsement of a “pro-ecological” worldview. It is used extensively in social sciences where differences in behaviour or attitudes are believed to be explained by underlying values, a worldview, or a paradigm. The scale is constructed from individual responses to fifteen statements that measure agreement or disagreement. Analysis shows that drivers shaping PEB differ in terms of the variety of the types of behavioural patterns significant for the preservation of the environment.

**Jelena Puđak** is a research fellow at the Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar in Zagreb, and a lecturer at Croatian studies (sociology department), University of Zagreb. She received her PhD in sociology from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at University of Zagreb in 2013. Her research interests include sociological aspects of climate change such as climate justice phenomenon, climate adaptation and policy, as well as broader topics of integral sustainability and social ecology.

**Branko Ančić** is a Research Associate at the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb where he is Head of the Centre for Research in Social Inequalities and Sustainability. His scientific and research interests include sociology of religion, sociology of health and social ecology. His publications include an analysis of atheism and non-religiosity in Europe, an exploration of connections between religion and health, research of pro-environmental attitudes and behaviour in Europe, public perception of climate change and interpretation of degrowth attitudes in Europe.






## **Tatiana Bajuk Senčar**

### **The Problem of Plastic Waste and Consumer Habits**

In this paper, the author will present an ongoing ethnographic study of the problem of plastic waste in Slovenia, which will serve as a foundation for further field research about waste practices in Slovenian households. While the issue of plastic waste is multi-sided, with many different actors contributing to it, the author will discuss theories pertinent to the study of household members and their roles in the production of plastic waste. A particular focus will be on the link between consumption and waste production as well as on the role of consumers in changing everyday habits linked to waste reduction.

This analysis is complemented by a presentation of ongoing ethnographic research on Ljubljana residents' options when trying to embark on a lifestyle that produces less plastic waste. In particular, this presentation will focus on the newly established store Rifuzl, which hails as the first store in Ljubljana that does not use any plastic packaging, and on its approach to promoting changes in consumer habits.

**Tatiana Bajuk Senčar**, PhD is a research fellow at the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology at the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts. As an anthropologist, her recent research has focused primarily on issues linked to sustainable development and globalization, including sustainable tourism, management of natural and cultural heritage, sustainable mobility – rural and urban – and multilocality.







**Katarina Polajnar Horvat, Dan Podjed**


## Combining Approaches to Understand the Invisible life of Food Waste

In recent years, food waste has become a complex phenomenon attracting attention of scientists, consumers and activists. In fact, the global “heap of food waste” is currently expanding at an alarming rate. According to the World Bank, one third of food produced for human consumption is lost or wasted, with direct economic consequences put at \$750 billion globally annually. In Slovenia, almost 131,800 tonnes of food waste were generated in 2017 or 64 kg per person on average.

This paper presents findings of a research on food waste in households, carried out in Slovenia. Authors of the study analysed what kind of relationships to waste do householders establish in their daily lives. On the basis of their findings, they attempt to explain how, when and why people in the researched area transform “food” into “waste.” In a survey carried out in April 2019, the authors were mainly interested in why people throw away so much food and how the quantity of food waste can be reduced. Analysis shows that people most often buy food in large stores. The majority of the respondents, almost 90%, produce food on their own or get it from relatives and acquaintances. Respondents claim to throw away small amounts of food, most of them less than 20%. They throw away mostly inedible and spoiled fruits and vegetables, bread and cereal products. Most respondents reuse redundant food or freeze it for later use. At first glance, the results show that respondents have a very attentive attitude towards food management. However, it is necessary to draw attention to methodological problems of such surveys. The majority of responses comes from interested public, i.e. people who are well aware of food waste problems and are committed to solving them. In addition, there is one thing what people say and another what they actually do with food in their households. Therefore, the authors propose a combined approach, where survey is supplemented by ethnographic findings from the field.

**Katarina Polajnar Horvat**, PhD, is a research fellow at the Anton Melik Geographical Institute of the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Her research activities are mainly in the fields of environmental protection and sustainable development, environmental psychology, human ecology and regional geography. She is a member of the editorial board of the book collections Geography of Slovenia, Georitem and Regional Development in Slovenia. She is the president of the organising committee of the symposium Slovenian Regional Days. She is currently involved in research projects on the effective management of wetlands, the development of guidelines for the management of tourist destinations, the role of green spaces in cities and the invisible waste of life.

**Dan Podjed**, PhD, is an applied anthropologist from Slovenia, devoted to developing people-friendly and environmentally responsible products. He is a research fellow at the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, a researcher at the Institute for Innovation and Development of the University of Ljubljana, and an assistant professor at University of Ljubljana’s Faculty of Arts. He founded the EASA Applied Anthropology Network (served as convenor from 2010 to 2018), and co-founded the Why the World Needs Anthropologists international symposium, annually organised since 2013. He is the author of many articles and monographs on sustainable lifestyles, human-technology interaction, volunteering, and altruism.






## Alenka Bezjak Mlakar

### Designing a Waste Management System in a Circular Economy

The main objective of the circular economy is to co-create more environmentally friendly and sustainable economic systems and industrial processes. The economy needs to shift from a linear logic, where the waste is something to throw away, to a circular one, where (some) waste can be recycled and reused and put back to the whole lifecycle. The whole process becomes more efficient and reduces the production and consumption. Shifting to a circular economy is not a simple process and requires many changes in the value chain, including waste management. Company CVS Mobile is developing a customized smart telematics, dispatching and planning system that will serve as an effective tool to help waste management companies support the daily operation of their vehicles and machines and subsequently support the company's waste management activities in different countries.

**Alenka Bezjak Mlakar** is the head of research at CVS Mobile and founder of international telematics and fleet management events Telematics Conference, organized since 2011 in Europe and United Arab Emirates. She holds a PhD in anthropology from Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana. Her main research interests are anthropology for business, waste management, technology and development of people-centred solutions.





## Mona Menets


### Dumpster Diving – a Battle against Food Waste

In the context of an increasing population and the exhaustion of natural resources, food waste is an important topic. Each year, 100 million tonnes of food goes to waste in the European Union. Food waste occurs in all stages of food production, which means it can be avoided by different participants and by using different strategies. One option is to practice dumpster diving, which means “saving” food and sometimes other household goods from the dumpsters of grocery stores.

In order to research dumpster diving as a practice, ethnographic fieldwork was done amongst the dumpster divers of Tartu, Estonia. Participant observation included going to the dumpsters with divers to retrieve still consumable food. To find out the motivation behind dumpster diving, interviews were held with various active divers. Dumpster diving is a delicate topic. Different ethical and practical dilemmas were settled by the combined analyse of field work and interviews.

This paper presents the results of research among people who practice dumpster diving for various reasons. Visual materials play a big role in the dumpster diving communities and with the help of examples, this presentation will explain the reasoning behind it.

**Mona Menets** is an anthropologist from Estonia with a background in visual arts. She holds a master’s degree in Ethnology and Applied Anthropology from University of Tartu, Estonia. Her research interests include food culture, food waste and veganism. For her master’s project she researched dumpster divers of Tartu who engage in alternative activities to reduce food waste.






## Jože Guna, Gregor Burger

### Smart Trash Cans for Smart People

The authors present the design process of building an interactive smart trashcan. First, they provide the overview of the smart trash can field for several domains. They make an overview of professional solutions for city operators as well as garbage collecting facilities. Then they examine home-based solutions for personal use, which offer convenience for households. Technological novelty and excellence has limited reach if people are not using the product or system. Therefore, the authors studied user interactions and used gamification principles to increase adoption of the smart can systems and decrease averseness of environmental and waste recycling topics. Although smart trash can systems provide value for households, they can pose a risk for their privacy or can present inconvenience for them. In conclusion, the authors present their own prototype solution for the smart trash can. In the design, they incorporate the best practices identified in field overview from the technological side and the user interactions with the trash can. The prototype should be easy to use and motivate people to increase care for the environment.

**Jože Guna**, PhD, is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, University of Ljubljana. His area of research focuses on Internet technologies, multimedia technologies and IPTV systems with special emphasis on user centred design, user interaction modalities and designing the user experience, VR/AR/MR technologies, including gamification and flow aspects. Currently he is involved in a number of projects focusing on the development of intuitive user interfaces for elderly users of eHealth application and interactive multimedia HBBTV and VR/AR/MR applications. He is an expert in Internet, ICT and IPTV technologies and holds several industrial certificates from CISCO, Comptia and Apple, including trainer licenses from Cisco and Apple. He is a senior member of the IEEE organization and IEEE Slovenia Section Secretary General.

**Gregor Burger**, MSc, is a Researcher and PhD student at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, University of Ljubljana. He received his master's degree in the year 2017, from the topic of user studies of user experience and usability of mobile applications with an eye-tracking device. His area of research focuses on user-centred design, user experience and usability, eye tracking studies and VR/AR/MR technologies. Currently he is involved in a number of projects focusing on the development and adoption of ICT in education and development of VR/AR/MR applications. He has published a paper in international magazine MDPI Sensors and in several domestic magazines and conferences. He is an active member of the IEEE organization.






**Jelena Puđak, Nataša Bokan**

## Are Farmer Degrowthers and Engineers Pro-growthers? Values and Motivations of Green Entrepreneurs

The aim of this paper is to explore and describe the motivational characteristics of green entrepreneurs in Croatia, namely their stance on alternative economic models. Two sustainability oriented developmental models, the green economy and degrowth, shall be described with the aim to theoretically frame the research results. Qualitative research was conducted in order to describe and compare green economy actors in Croatia, their motives and values, as well as their view on green growth and degrowth. While describing green economy actors' motivational differences in correlation with previous theoretical and empirical framings, we discovered that significant differences regarding green growth and degrowth models depended on the type of job they were doing, which could help explain the context that underlines the appearance of different green entrepreneurial types.

**Jelena Puđak** is a research fellow at Institute of social sciences Ivo Pilar in Zagreb, and a lecturer at Croatian studies (sociology department), University of Zagreb. She received PhD in sociology from Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at University of Zagreb in 2013. Her research interests include sociological aspects of climate change such as climate justice phenomenon, climate adaptation and policy, as well as broader topics of integral sustainability and social ecology.

**Nataša Bokan** is an assistant professor at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Agriculture. She received her PhD in sociology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb in 2012, focusing on environmental social movements and eco-villages as an expression of sub-political engagement with social, economic and environmental crisis. Her main fields of interest include research on rural development practices, sustainability and socio-economic and socio-political changes in rural context, along with interest for social innovations and emancipatory politics of local (rural) communities.








**Nikola Petrović, Lana Peternel**

## The Rejectionist Ethic and the Spirit of Green Economy

This paper deals with green economy actors in food and agriculture in Croatia whose motivation for entering the green economy could be subsumed under the label "rejectionist ethic". Rejectionist ethic is a term that encompasses different modes of rejecting modern economic and social organizations. However, in all of the cases, this rejectionist ethics is limited by the influence of significant others: partners and/or children. A growing trend of healthy lifestyles, especially regarding a healthy diet, allowed these individuals to pursue their careers in one important sector of green economy. Cases of very different actors of green economy – including small family farms, small family firms and medium-sized companies – indicate that one of the prime motivators of becoming green entrepreneurs could be the feeling of being fed-up with contemporary economic institutions. These rejectionist entrepreneurs are compared with four ideal types of green entrepreneurs proposed by Walley and Taylor (2002) as well as Croatian green economy actors from already established economic organizations.

**Nikola Petrović** graduated in Sociology at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Zagreb. He received his PhD in Sociology at the same Faculty in 2013 with the thesis "Analysis of Defining the European Union by Ideology". He is a research associate at the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb. His research interests are sociology of knowledge and science, sustainability along with European studies.

**Lana Peternel** is a research fellow at the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb. She received her PhD in anthropology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb in 2009, focusing on ethnic identity and the acculturation process among adolescents with a migrant background in Croatia. Her main fields of interest include research on cultural change in contemporary contexts, along with an interdisciplinary approach to different aspects of group and personal identities related to ethnicity, locality and religiosity.








**Saša Babič**

## Internet Memes on the Environmental Problems and Sustainability

Internet memes grew as a concept in the mid-1990s and became a popular way of expressing one's opinion and emphasizing critical viewpoints of social and political reality. They are an image, video or piece of text, often but not necessarily humorous. They are transmitted via the Internet – from person to person via social networks, blogs, direct email, or news sources – and often with slight variations. Internet memes usually evolve and spread rapidly, sometimes reaching worldwide popularity within a few days. That is why memes are being used also as a tool to influence the wider society and to evoke certain emotions and feelings of responsibility. Addressing different topics, but usually the most problematic, they can be traced to different subcultures. One such example are memes on ecology and sustainability, which try to evoke responsibility and emotions for our environment so that we would start to act on constructive solutions to save our world. I will go over most popular Internet memes on environment problems and sustainability that are spread through social media. By analysing their structure and their way of addressing the addressee, I will search for mechanisms that they use to reach the addressee's emotions.

**Saša Babič**, PhD, is a research fellow at the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Institute of Slovenian Ethnology, and an assistant professor of literature at the University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Arts. Her main research focus lies in short folklore forms (proverbs, swearwords, riddles, incantations etc.) and their intertwining with culture. In her research, she uses methods of ethnolinguistic and linguistic anthropology on the basis of folkloristic interpretative methods. In her postdoctoral project, she composed the first open e-database of Slovenian folklore riddles.






**Saša Poljak Istenič**

## Trash for Degrowth: Strategies and Actions Towards Sustainability

While sustainable development has been a popular term since the 1960s and has become highly politicized, degrowth is a fairly new and radical concept utilized by some social movements advocating social and ecological sustainability. The presentation will highlight the contexts of both concepts in which various actors use trash to advocate for sustainability. Their practices generally aim to reduce the amount of waste we produce, re-use the products, and recycle them. The main question remains, however, which of these strategies and actions still support the economy, merely transferring the responsibility from industry to people, and which are more socially oriented, really embodying the degrowth paradigm?

**Saša Poljak Istenič**, PhD, is a research fellow at the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Her research interests include sustainability, creativity, social inclusion, heritage, and tourism. She is a lecturer at the Faculty for Tourism Brežice, external lecturer at the Alpen-Adria Universität Klagenfurt, the editor-in-chief of the Glasnik Slovenskega etnološkega društva and the vice-president of the expert council of the Slovenian Ethnographic Museum. She is involved in several national and international projects and regularly cooperates with cultural and welfare organizations. She organizes children's workshops on cultural heritage advocating recycling and sustainability.





**Daša Ličen, Dan Podjed**


## Making a Change from Below: A Comparative Study of Mass Movements for Waste Reduction and the Promotion of Cycling

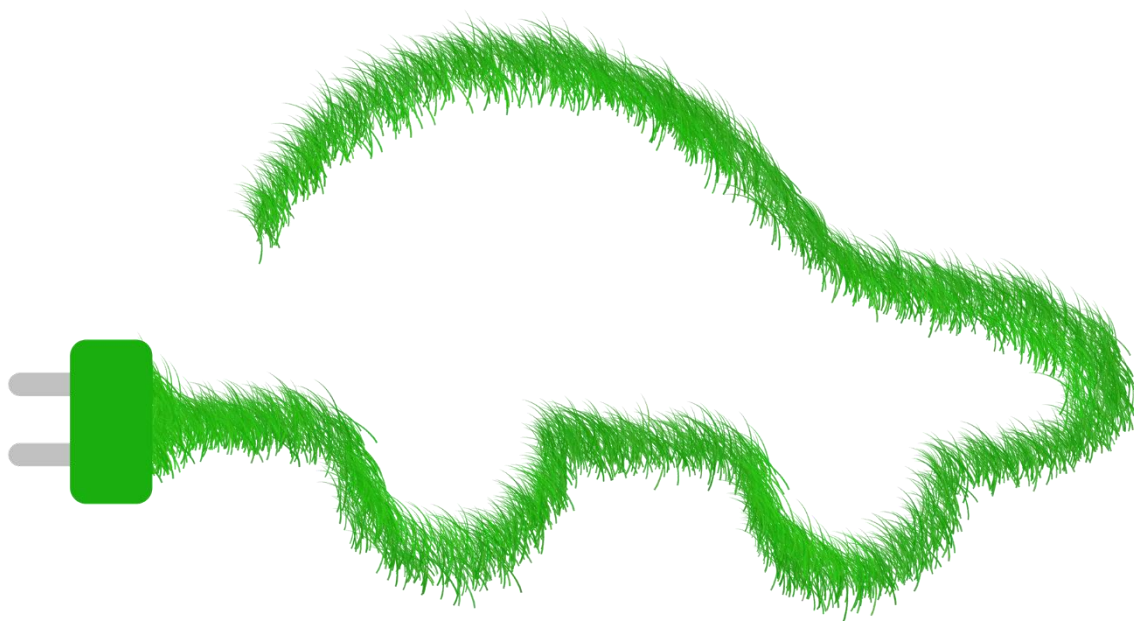
The authors intend to look into two successful environmental movements that sprouted from grassroots initiatives that the authors researched in Belgrade and Budapest: Ecologists Without Borders, the leading waste reduction-oriented NGO in Slovenia, and Critical Mass, an international cyclist movement that strives to claim more public space for urban cyclists. Ethnographic fieldwork was carried out in the researched NGOs in Belgrade, Budapest, and Ljubljana. The authors use these exemplary cases to inspect the social transition such movements support and illuminate how they begin, function, and transform through time, but especially to suggest how NGOs can contribute to making positive changes.

The analysis of the gathered results seems to indicate there are common chapters which the two movements experienced: getting inspiration from a foreign enthusiast, a strong belief in the main objective, an initially irrelevant motivational role of financial support, the importance of a group over an individual, and an immense optimism. What the cases also have in common –and perhaps share with many other similar NGOs – is the fact that regardless of the members' initial eagerness and success, downcast times may and do occur. For, challenges and eventual accomplishments are a normal track in many organisational contexts.

**Daša Ličen** holds a Master degree in anthropology and is employed as a Junior Researcher at the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Institute of Slovene Ethnology. She is a PhD student of ethnology and cultural anthropology at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts. Her main research focuses include collective identifications, national movements, anthropology of food and historical anthropology.

**Dan Podjed**, PhD, is an applied anthropologist from Slovenia, devoted to developing people-friendly and environmentally responsible services, products and solutions. He is a research fellow at the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, a researcher at the Institute for Innovation and Development of the University of Ljubljana, and an assistant professor at University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Arts. He founded the EASA Applied Anthropology Network (served as convener from 2010 to 2018), and co-founded the Why the World Needs Anthropologists international symposium, annually organised since 2013. He is the author of many articles and monographs on sustainable lifestyles, human-technology interaction, volunteering, and altruism.





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