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University of Sarajevo  
Professor Zdravko Grebo  
Center for Interdisciplinary Studies

INTERDISCIPLINARY SUMMER SCHOOL

# RIGHTS OF CHILDREN AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

18-22 MAY 2026, SARAJEVO, BIH

## INTRODUCTION

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The **Interdisciplinary Summer School: Rights of Children and Future Generations** is an international educational initiative that brings together students, researchers, and professionals from Southeast Europe, the EU, and beyond. It brings together professors, students, young researchers, activists, and professionals from Southeast Europe and the EU to critically engage with some of the most urgent human rights challenges of our time — including children’s rights, intergenerational justice, climate change, digital rights, migration, poverty, and child participation.

In an era of unprecedented global challenges—from rising inequality and forced migration to digital exploitation, climate change, and democratic backsliding—there is an urgent need to rethink how societies protect and promote the well-being of both present and future generations. Children, as key rights-holders today, and future generations, as those whose voices are not yet heard, must be central to this vision. The summer school provides an interactive, critical, and inclusive space for engaging with these issues through interdisciplinary dialogue, case-based learning, and regional cooperation. It seeks to equip a new generation of leaders with the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to promote and protect the rights of children and future generations in a rapidly changing world.

Upon successful completion of the summer school, participants receive a **Certificate of Participation**, awarded by the **University of Sarajevo – “Prof. Zdravko Grebo” Center for Interdisciplinary Studies**, confirming active participation in all academic activities of the summer school and awarding **3 ECTS**.

## PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

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The programme is rooted in a commitment to social justice, human rights, and sustainable development. Structured over five intensive days, the summer school offers lectures, workshops, and group projects led by leading regional and international scholars. Topics covered include international human rights law, child poverty, participation, digital safety, migration, intergenerational justice, and environmental rights. The program emphasizes interdisciplinary dialogue, experiential learning, and advocacy tools, with field visits and hands-on sessions that bridge theory and practice.

Programme offers:

- **An interdisciplinary curriculum** addressing child rights, environmental justice, digital ethics, migration, advocacy, and intergenerational equity, grounded in international law and contextualized for Southeast Europe.
- **40 hours of interactive academic engagement**, including lectures, workshops, round tables, field visits, and collaborative group work.
- **Renowned faculty** from leading universities and institutions across the region and Europe, combining legal, sociological, political, philosophical, and policy expertise.
- **Participant-centered learning methods**, including participatory pedagogy, project-based collaboration, experiential tasks, and critical reflections.
- **Networking and peer exchange**, fostering regional solidarity and cross-border academic partnerships among a diverse group of emerging professionals.

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The pedagogical approach of the Interdisciplinary Summer School: Rights of Children and Future Generations is grounded in the principles of participatory learning, critical pedagogy, and interdisciplinary dialogue. The summer school is designed to be a dynamic and inclusive learning space that values both academic knowledge and experiential insight, and places strong emphasis on reflexivity, mutual learning, and real-world application.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

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The Summer School: *Rights of Children and Future Generations* is envisioned as an interdisciplinary, mobile, and transformative educational initiative, designed to respond to regional and global challenges related to child rights and intergenerational justice. It aims to serve as a dynamic platform for intellectual exchange, critical reflection, and regional cooperation among students, early-career scholars, practitioners, and educators from Southeast Europe and EU. Its main objectives are:

1. **To create an interdisciplinary and participatory learning environment**
2. **To strengthen regional cooperation and academic mobility**

3. **To promote transformative education**
4. **To encourage youth-led advocacy and leadership**
5. **To fill critical educational gaps on the rights of children and future generations**
6. **To contribute to regional and international debates on children's rights**
7. **To lay the foundation for a long-term academic network** of educators, students, and researchers who are committed to promoting children's rights and advancing the understanding and realization of rights across generations.

## THEMATIC UNITS

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### **RIGHTS OF FUTURE GENERATIONS - INTRODUCTORY EXPERT LECTURE**

*Aoife Nolan, Full Professor, University of Nottingham; President, Council of Europe - European Committee of Social Rights*

The lecture addresses an issue of growing importance in international human rights law (IHRL): namely, the relationship between children's rights and future generations' rights. This matter is particularly pressing in the context of the growing body of standard-setting, scholarship and practice in the areas of climate justice and environmental protection. However, it has also been a longer-standing (albeit often lower profile) concern in the context of sustainable development and other work in IHRL addressing issues of inter-generational equity and justice. In all of these contexts there have been increasing linkages made between the rights of children and those of future generations – linkages that have been reinforced by the growing body of climate litigation and adjudication at the national level (and the discussion generated by such) which has been focused on the impacts of environmental harm on the rights of born children and as future generations (whether defined as those already born or those not yet born). While children's rights is a well-established and developed area of IHRL, FG rights is at a much more nascent stage. The thus far under-explored relationship between children's rights and future generations raises a number of key questions about the application, scope and content of IHRL, that the speech will address.

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### **CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND FUTURE GENERATIONS: A LEGAL PERSPECTIVE**

*Wouter Vandenhoele, Full Professor, Law and Development Research Group, University of Antwerp*

This module offers a legal perspective on children's rights and future generations. By way of background, it provides a general introduction to legal instruments (in particular the Convention on the Rights of the Child), norms, principles and mechanisms. It then moves on by exploring how children's rights engage with time and generations. Particular attention will be paid to the question whether children belong to present, future or in-between generations, and how that

plays out in the context of climate change litigation before the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and the European Court of Human Rights.

## **REGIONAL CHILD RIGHTS CHALLENGES AND THE ROLE OF UN CRC**

*Nevena Vučković-Šahović, expert, Child Rights Center, Belgrade*

Since adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989, all countries in the region have ratified the CRC, undertaking legal obligations to implement all rights set forth in that international treaty. In more than 30 years of the CRC implementation in the countries of the regions, significant progress is made, in particular with regards to legislative and administrative measures. The CRC implementation also inspired societal changes and positively affected attitudes towards children, enabling a slow but steady move from pure protection to empowerment of children. However, full implementation of the CRC rights in the region is still far from achieved. There are many factors that impede implementation of the CRC in our region and often, patterns are similar. This module will provide opportunity for discussion on those missing links that would enable further progress in implementation of the CRC.

## **THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD IN CASE LAW OF THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS: NEW APPROACHES TO FAMILY LIFE**

*Borjana Miković, associate professor, Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Sarajevo*

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This session examines how the European Court of Human Rights has developed and applied the principle of the best interests of the child in cases concerning family life, particularly under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Participants will explore how the Court navigates complex and evolving family structures — including surrogacy, adoption, and child separation— while balancing children's rights with those of parents and state interests. The session places these issues in the broader context of intergenerational justice and the dynamic recognition of children as autonomous rights-holders in European human rights jurisprudence.

## **UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING CHILD POVERTY: TOOLS FOR ADVOCACY**

*Prof. Sanela Bašić, PhD, University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Political Science, Department of Social Work*

This session explores the multidimensional nature of child poverty and equips participants with knowledge and practical advocacy tools to address it in Southeast Europe. Emphasis will be placed on the intersection of poverty with children's rights, social protection systems, and sustainable development. The lecture will blend theoretical insights with real-world examples and provide students with strategies to advocate effectively for systemic change. This session

is especially relevant for students and professionals in social work, education, public policy, and human rights.

## **CHILDREN IN MIGRATION**

*Natalija Perišić, PhD, Full Professor, University of Belgrade*

*Anita Burgund-Isakov, PhD, Full Professor, University of Belgrade*

This session introduces the fundamental concepts related to children in migration, often referred to as “children on the move,” and highlights the importance of understanding their specific experiences, vulnerabilities, and protection needs. Participants will explore key principles, approaches, and frameworks relevant to working with migrant children, including the international, regional, and national legal standards that guide protection systems. The session also emphasizes the importance of a child-centered approach and cross-sectoral collaboration in supporting children affected by migration.

## **AI AND DIGITAL RIGHTS OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH: DIGITAL WELLBEING AND RESILIENCE**

*Lucija Vejmelka, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Zagreb*

This module investigates the relationship between artificial intelligence (AI), digital rights, and the promotion of digital well-being and resilience among children and youth. The module critically examines how AI-based systems, ranging from content recommendation engines and data profiling to facial recognition and digital surveillance, shape children’s and young people’s online experiences, while also exploring the potential benefits of personalized support, predictive tools, and digital education. Participants will analyze both opportunities and risks posed by AI in relation to safety, equity, autonomy, and participation. Key legal and ethical frameworks will be discussed alongside case examples. Special emphasis is placed on youth participation in designing intergenerational digital education interventions that foster digital resilience and critical technology use. Drawing on intergenerational justice principles, the session highlights how professionals and young people can collaboratively shape transparent, inclusive, and empowering digital environments responsive to the needs and rights of future generations.

## **VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN SEE: PROTECTION AND CHALLENGES**

*Jelena Brkić - Šmigoc, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Sarajevo*

This session explores the complexity of violence against children in South-East Europe (SEE), focusing on both institutional protection systems and deeply rooted socio-cultural challenges. It examines various forms of violence—physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, and online—and their normalization within contexts where the dominant mentality often reflects the harmful logic: “*keep quiet and endure*.” Although formal legal frameworks and protection protocols are in place, the

session highlights the persistent gap between policy and practice. It critically assesses the limits of institutional capacity, poor coordination, and legal uncertainty, particularly in cases involving vulnerable groups such as Roma children, children with disabilities, and migrant children. Special attention is given to the perspective of professionals who often experience systemic helplessness, as well as to the insecurity of child victims navigating opaque and unreliable systems. Drawing on the UNCRC and the concept of intergenerational justice, the session encourages critical reflection and advocacy for responsive, inclusive, and culturally grounded child protection mechanisms.

## **CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES**

*Anita Burgund-Isakov, PhD, Full Professor, University of Belgrade*

This session will explore the principles and practices of involving children meaningfully in decision-making processes, especially within the contexts of research, policy, and service design. Through a combination of presentation and interactive workshop, participants will have the opportunity to reflect on ethical considerations, methods for enabling child participation, and the balance between protection and empowerment. The session aims to strengthen participants' capacities to create inclusive environments where children's voices are heard, respected, and translated into action.

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## **INTERGENERATIONAL JUSTICE: CLIMATE CHANGE AND RIGHTS OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

*Mladen Domazet, PhD, research associate, Institute of Philosophy, University of Zagreb*

This seminar examines the moral and ethical imperatives of protecting the rights of future generations in the face of climate change. Drawing from political philosophy, environmental ethics, and real-world activism, participants will explore what we owe to those who are not yet born and how our present actions shape their world. The session will delve into theories of justice across time, concepts like moral standing, responsibility, and the commons, and will spotlight the powerful role of youth movements and intergenerational solidarity. While legal frameworks will be briefly touched upon, the focus will be on ethical reasoning and civic engagement as driving forces for change. The 'change' referred to is the substantial reorganization of global social metabolism so that future generations may have the necessary material conditions for their own reproduction.

## **SPEAKERS AND LECTURERS – SHORT BIOGRAPHIES**

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### **Prof. Nevena Vučković-Šahović, expert, Child Rights Center, Belgrade, Serbia**

Nevena Vuckovic Sahovic is a retired professor of International Public Law and Rights of the Child. She is the founder of the Child Right Centre and Belgrade Centre for Human Rights, both in Belgrade. Between 2003-2009 she was the member and the General rapporteur of the Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva. Between 2014-2020, Nevena was member and Chair of the UN Voluntary Fund for the Contemporary Forms of Slavery. Nevena has taught at universities in Serbia, and abroad, including in the Netherlands, the USA, Germany, Switzerland, UK, Hungary, Kazakhstan and Bosnia and Herzegovina. She is the author of numerous publications. She has participated in numerous projects and conferences in the country and abroad and led professional meetings, among others, in Montenegro, Croatia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Moldova, Cyprus, Ukraine, Romania, Albania, Switzerland, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Lebanon, Oman, Turkmenistan, Ghana, Somalia and other, in close co-operation with international organizations such as the UN, UNICEF, OHCHR, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and international NGOs.

### **Aoife Nolan, PhD, Full professor, University of Nottingham; President, Council of Europe - European Committee of Social Rights**

Aoife Nolan, LL.B (Dublin), PhD(EUI) is Professor of International Human Rights Law and Director of the University of Nottingham Human Rights Law Centre. Prof. Nolan is President of the Council of Europe's European Committee of Social Rights, the leading European monitoring mechanism on economic and social rights, having joined the Committee in 2017. She is an Academic Expert at Doughty Street Chambers, where she is co-lead of the Children's Rights Group.

### **Sanela Bašić, PhD, Full professor, University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Sanela Bašić is a professor and Head of the Department of Social Work at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Sarajevo. She holds a degree in social work (Sarajevo, 2001), a master's in intercultural work and conflict management (Alice Salomon University, Berlin, 2004), and a PhD in social work (Sarajevo, 2010). Since 2002, she has taught courses on social work history, welfare policy, poverty and social exclusion, gender – based and domestic violence, and social work ethics. She was a board member (2009–2017) and secretary (2015–2017) of the European Association of Schools of Social Work (EASSW), and has held leadership roles in regional networks, including the Eastern European Sub-regional Association of Schools of Social Work and the Initiative for Women's Academic Leadership in Southeast Europe. In 2017, she was a visiting professor at the University of Applied Sciences in St. Gallen.

**Wouter Vandenhole, PhD, Full professor, University of Antwerp, Netherlands**

Wouter Vandenhole is full professor of human rights and children's rights and directs the Law and Development Research Group of the University of Antwerp's law faculty. His research interests include children's rights, economic, social and cultural rights, the relationship between human rights law and sustainable development, and thicker human rights accountability. Recent research topics include a post-territorial and post-state human rights paradigm; transformative equality; early marriage, future generations and intercountry adoption.

**Borjana Miković, PhD, Associate professor, University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Borjana Miković is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Sarajevo. Her academic and professional interests focus on human rights, with a particular emphasis on the rights of the child, family law, and social protection systems in Southeast Europe. She has been engaged in teaching and research related to adoption, child welfare policies, and the legal regulation of parental responsibilities. Her work has also addressed issues of legal capacity and the rights of adults with diminished decision-making ability, situating these concerns within broader human rights frameworks. She is the author of several peer-reviewed articles and books in the field of human rights and social policy.

**Anita Burgund-Isakov, PhD, Full Professor, University of Belgrade, Serbia**

Anita Burgund Isakov is a dedicated social work professor, researcher, and child protection advocate, with a strong focus on resilience, trauma-informed care, and participative methodologies with children and youth. She is a systemic therapist, TRE practitioner, vegan animal supporter, and an active volunteer at ACT Foundation. Anita is the founder of Re-inventance — a place of self-encounter, and the author of over 50 scientific papers published in national and international journals. She is a professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade, Department of Social Policy and Social Work, and a lecturer at the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, University of Sarajevo. With rich experience as a national and regional consultant, Anita has worked with UNICEF, SOS Children's Villages, and numerous international organizations on child protection, care reform, and social welfare strengthening. She is a licensed trainer for accredited lifelong education programs for social care professionals and a member of the Regional Child Protection Centre (RRC) Southeast Europe and the COST European Family Support Network. Currently, Anita is involved in several international projects, including: FLOURISH — Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of young people; EuroFam-Net — The European Family Support Network; ERASMUS LINK — Creating an innovation lab for vulnerable populations; Zemunsko chavororo — UNICEF-supported innovation lab for strengthening early childhood interventions with Roma families. She remains committed to research and practice that empower vulnerable children and strengthen child protection systems.

### **Natalija Perišić, PhD, Full Professor, University of Belgrade, Serbia**

Natalija Perišić is a Full Professor of Social Policy at the University of Belgrade – Faculty of Political Science, Department of Social Policy and Social Work where she lectures on the national and European social policy, ageing and migration at the under-graduate, master and PhD studies. She is a Visiting Professor at the University of Tuzla – Faculty of Philosophy, B&H. Her scientific and research interests in the migration field are within the nexus between migration and welfare state, services for migrants provided by the public and civil sectors, migrants' integration policies, etc. She has been particularly interested in the mechanisms for social inclusion of migrants. Natalija has been very active in making connections among the academia, civil sector organizations and public services, regarding the support to migrants. She has published about 50 papers in national and international journal. She leads the MIGREC - Migration, Integration and Governance Research Centre at the Faculty of Political Science ([www.migrec.fpn.bg.ac.rs](http://www.migrec.fpn.bg.ac.rs)).

### **Jelena Brkić - Šmigoc, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Sarajevo**

Jelena Brkić Šmigoc is an Associate Professor of Psychology at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Sarajevo. She holds a PhD in Psychology and focuses on social psychology, supervision, psychotherapy, radicalization, and child protection. She teaches courses in general, social, and political psychology as well as prevention programs. Her research covers interpersonal relations, youth, violence, and community resilience. She is actively involved in various projects, including the EU-funded RESILIENCE project, where she leads Work Package 5 on impact assessment. Prof. Brkić Šmigoc is committed to social engagement and believes strongly in collaboration and positive change.

### **Lucija Vejmelka, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Zagreb, Croatia**

Lucija Vejmelka is an Associate Professor and experienced researcher at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Law, Department of Social Work. Her academic focus includes digital well-being of children and youth, peer relations, problematic internet use, child protection, child and youth participation, group work and children in care. In addition to serving as Editor-in-Chief of the *Annual of Social Work* (WoS & Scopus), she leads the university's lifelong learning program *Benefits and Risks of Modern Technologies*. A permanent expert advisor for the *Safer Internet Centre Croatia*, Vejmelka has coordinated numerous national and international child protection projects, including *deSHAME* and *Children's Subjective Well-Being*. She is a member of the Management Board of **Eurochild** and leads the Faculty of Law's research team selected to the **Europol Advisory Group on Research and Development**. As an appointed expert for the European Commission, her contributions support reforms in foster care and digital policy. Her academic output includes a scientific monograph and over 80 conference contributions. Vejmelka is also co-founder of FICE Croatia and chaired its 35th scientific international conference.

## **Mladen Domazet, PhD, Research associate, Institute of Philosophy, Zagreb, Croatia**

Mladen Domazet is a research associate at the Institute of Philosophy in Zagreb, Croatia, and a researcher at the Institute for Political Ecology, currently engaged in Horizon Europe collaborative research on post-growth transformation. He holds a PhD in philosophy from the University of Zagreb, and a BA in physics and philosophy from the University of Oxford. He was a research fellow at Oxford, Central European and Corvinus universities. His main fields of research and teaching are global sustainability and degrowth, environmentalist attitudes in South Eastern Europe, and theories of scientific explanation and societal transformation. His recent publications include: 'Doughnuts for Strategies: A Tool for an Emerging Sustainable Welfare Paradigm', an introductory chapter on Anthropocene in Handbook of Critical Environmental Politics (Elgar), and 'Mental Models of Sustainability: the degrowth doughnut'. M. Domazet co-edited the Croatian language translations of Degrowth: A Vocabulary for a New Era, and Fossil Capital, co-organized the 5th and 9th International Degrowth Conferences in Budapest and Zagreb, and regularly teaches degrowth-related topics at universities in SEE.

## **ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION AND CONTACTS**

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**INSTITUTION:** Prof. Zdravko Grebo Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, University of Sarajevo

**DIRECTOR:** Prof. Sanela Bašić, University of Sarajevo

**ACADEMIC BOARD MEMBERS:** Prof. Anita Burgund Isakov, University of Belgrade; Prof. Wouter Vandenhole, University of Antwerp; Prof. Borjana Miković, University of Sarajevo

**ORGANISATION:** Global Campus Southeast Europe – European Regional MA Programme in Human Rights and Democracy in Southeast Europe

**ORGANISATIONAL TEAM:** Mariana Hadžijusufović, Alina Trkulja, Nejira Pašić, Mileva Piralić

**SUPPORTED BY:** Global Campus of Human Rights

**CONTACT INFO:** [alina.trkulja@cis.unsa.ba](mailto:alina.trkulja@cis.unsa.ba); [sanela.basic@fpn.unsa.ba](mailto:sanela.basic@fpn.unsa.ba)