



**YEARS OF ASPIRATIONS  
FOR EQUALITY**

**25 achievements  
of the Peace Institute  
on its 25th Anniversary**

## 25 achievements of the Peace Institute on its 25th Anniversary

The Peace Institute (Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies) originates from the new social movements that represented democratic, anti-nationalist and anti-racist political alternative in the former Yugoslavia in the 1980s. It was formally established in June 1991. The 25th anniversary of the Institute and the achievements of us, its staff members, are a proof of legitimacy and the necessity of the existence of such an independent institution. Throughout our engagement in the fields of research and activism, we have existed as an independent and non-profit private institution which has never been supported by any institutional or state funding programmes, in spite of the fact that our work is in the public interest. Those public resources allocated to us were only to co-finance individual projects. Long-term institutional support, which was provided from 2001 to 2014 by the Open Society Foundation as an acknowledgement of our work, represented a part of our resources while we were trusted to choose freely the topics and the course of the research and operation.

After twenty-five years of research and aspirations to equality, we would like to highlight the following 25 diverse achievements in the numerous fields of our work:



# 1

## Peace initiatives and topics related to peace

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In conjunction with the peace institutes of the former Yugoslavia, we dedicated our efforts to preventing or stopping the war in the former Yugoslavia that started in 1991 as soon as possible, establishing and maintaining a network of peace initiatives that was one of the first to be based on electronic connections in the region and in Europe. We immediately initiated a thorough consideration of the reasons for the war (the *Yugoslavia War* book). As the first institution of this kind in Slovenia, the Peace Institute started to systematically research and deal with the topics that are important to comprehend the reasons for violence and wars on a daily basis: (in)equality and discrimination, racism, nationalism, the exclusion of certain groups and mass mobilisation for violence. We have consistently given lectures at the [European Peace University in Austria](#) and at the [Peace Academy in Sarajevo](#).

# 2

## Theoretic work and activism

Since the beginning of our Institute's existence, we have combined theoretic work and activism and tried to operate through social and political thought. Our research, translation, publishing and events have positioned on the Slovenian intellectual agenda authors such as Hannah Arendt, Susan Brownmill-

er, Bhikhu Parekh, Iris Marion Young, Henry Huttenbach, Jerome Kohn, Wolfgang Heuer, Ivan Čolović, Selma Sevenhuijsen, Srdjan Vrcan, Val Plumwood, Fiona Williams, Floya Anthias, Chris Atton, Karol Jakubowitz, John Downing and many others. In our projects, we have cooperated with so many institutes and universities from countries around the world that it is almost impossible to list them all.

# 3

## Education of young intellectuals

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In conjunction with the Workers' and Punks' University ([DPU](#)), a special form of education and political thought that ran between 1998 and 2013, we created an original and open space for theoretical and critical reflection among the younger generations. DPU was an independent initiative conceived by the young people, based on self-management, which for quite many years practised plurality of perspectives, provided space free of the anti-intellectualism of the University, and exposed people to a plethora of ideas. Numerous speakers have given lectures and seminars at DPU and many of the younger intellectuals and theoreticians whose thinking was formed at DPU over those fifteen years have gone on to work in various institutions. DPU also took credit for some new initiatives and institutions. Since 2014, a new study activity has been running at the Peace Institute: a [seminar on political theory](#), that takes place primarily as a reading seminar and lectures.



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## Research of feminism, women's equality and men's studies

We were the first to perform research studies on the feminist movement in Slovenia (the book [How We Attended High School](#)) and the political equality of women (the book *Women, Equality, Opportunities*, project OPENN). Since 2005 we have pursued critical studies on men and manhood ([Fostering Caring Masculinities](#), [The Role of Men in Gender Equality in Europe](#) and [Fathers and Employers in Action](#)).



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## Research in the field of the ethics of care and intersectional inequality

Since 2000 we have been opening up issues of the relationship between care and democratic deficits by means of publications and debates on the ethics of care (the books [Invisible Work](#), [Politics of Care](#)). We study the position of women in the media, migration processes and analyse the practice of engenderisation in specific industries, related to prostitution and human trafficking (the book [Prostitution and Human Trafficking](#)).



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## Intimate citizenship and LGBT rights

We were the first to launch studies on (intimate) citizenship and LGBT population rights. In addition to the first PhD on this topic undertaken at the Peace Institute, we conducted the first research into the everyday life of gay men and lesbians ([The Unbearable Comfort of Privacy](#) was published in 2005). For numerous years the Institute has been supporting and advocating LGBT rights. For instance, we participated in the initiative for the constitutional review at the Constitutional Court that led to the first decision on unconstitutionality regarding the inheritance of homosexual partners.



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## Remedying of the erased persons' rights

This is the greatest achievement of the Peace Institute in the field of human rights. We conducted the first research into the erasure, published a great many books about the situation of the erased people, and helped disclose as well as present the facts and the serious nature of this extreme deprivation of rights. We supported the people directly in the procedures and at the same time we played a part in the procedure before the European Court of Human Rights where justice for the erased was served. For this, we have been

presented with two international awards (the [Pasos](#) and the [PilNet Pro Bono Award](#)), and the case was renowned internationally. The success is proof of what can be achieved with engaging research in relation to counselling, not bound exclusively to project financing.

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### Continuous work in the media field

One of the flagship outputs was the publication of [Media Watch journal](#) dedicated to critical analyses of media policy and media practices that was not only well read among media experts and professionals, but was also widely used by students of this field. As a journal of a large format, lengthy analyses and short reflections on a wide range of media issues, with “excrements” section, and whole-page photos contributed by photo-journalists, it was the first media journal created jointly by professors, students, civil society activists and media practitioners aiming to overcome the divide between “theory and practice”. The [MediaWatch book series](#) in Slovene and English provided, for instance, exceptional analyses of media ownership patterns and media privatisation processes. The Peace Institute has worked as a regional coordinator and a partner in seminal research studies and debates on media reforms in the countries of South East Europe (within the SEENPM network). It has also collaborated for more than 15 years with the Guardian Foundation, which has enabled numerous journalists

from Slovenia to make study visits to the Guardian. In cooperation with the Union of Journalists of Slovenia, we facilitated the initial steps of the union’s section of freelance journalists.

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### Media and minorities

We encouraged the establishment and participated in launching of the first Roma radio station in Slovenia (Radio Romic), in the inclusion of Roma in *RTV Slovenija* radio and television programming and in including minorities from the former Yugoslavia in *RTV Slovenija* programmes. In all our activities, we follow the principle of including minorities as active partners/contributors. (videoclips from project Responding to Hate Speech – Activation of an Independent Conjunctive Body (ACT) – [part 1](#) in [part 2](#)).

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### Asylum, refugees, migration, integration

We have conducted a series of research studies in this field and contributed to the classification of the results in study literature in universities. In the last fifteen years we have problematised migration and asylum politics, discussed the controversial issues of integration processes, multiculturalism and the “securitisation” of migration and studied precarisation and its effects on the inequality of migrants. In 2015, at the very beginning of the “refugee crisis”, we

started to monitor the events, performed monitoring at the borders and critically considered the politics of migration through publications (the [Razor-wired](#) book) and a new research study into the criminalisation of migration (“cimmigration”).

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### Racism and hate speech

Since the mid-1990s, we have studied political extremism and violence towards those who are different, and from 2001 to 2006 we published [Intolerance Monitor Reports](#) that empirically analysed processes, actions and events related to racism and intolerance towards “others and those who are different” in Slovenia. For 12 years a national focal point of the European Monitoring Centre for Racism and Xenophobia ([EUMC](#)) operated at the Peace Institute, subsequently a focal point of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights ([FRA](#)). We have published several books on racism and populism in the context of growing ethno-nationalism and re-traditionalisation in the Slovene and European contexts. In the very same context we established an [independent body the “Anti-Hate Speech Council” and the “Coalition against Hate Speech” in 2015](#). The written publicly presented responses of the Council have awakened a wide-ranging debate on the problem of hate speech, its motives and consequences.

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### Research of (collective) violence, genocides and transitional justice

Since the beginning of the millennium we have researched relations between authority, violence and terror, and since 2008 also the dynamics of the elements of collective violence and mass crimes in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda and the consequences of those crimes on post-war life (the book [Evil of Thoughtlessness](#)). Besides books and articles that have been written in this field, we would like to draw attention to the topic of interpersonal violence and culture ([the CEINAV project](#)) and the award of the European Consortium for Political Research that a young researcher at the Peace Institute received for the best PhD thesis on the topic of transitional justice.

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### Research in the field of cultural sociology

Since the establishment of the Peace Institute, we have studied the cultural industry, and subsequently cultural policies (the book [Cultural Revisionism](#), 2004); we have researched Slovene reading cultures ([The Culture of Books](#), 2005), deconstructed ideologies on cultural industries and the regeneration of cities ([Culture Ltd.](#), 2005), defended public access to culture (reports

*Management of Copyright and Related Rights*, 2008 and 2010), and encouraged freedom in scientific work (report *Implementation Plan for a Web Portal for Scientific and Literary Magazines*, 2011).

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## Work in the field of international development cooperation

Not only did we research the topics of collective violence and genocide in Rwanda, but in 2008 also established a self-help centre for women in the slums of the capital Kigali ([Nyamirambo Women's Center](#)). It has become one of the most visible non-governmental organisations and co-operatives in Rwanda. It employs no fewer than 50 people. We empowered women with formal and informal education and training and raised awareness of gender equality among the public and representatives of the local authorities. We opened a library that children love to visit. We developed a penetrating idea of [collective tourism and designed guided tours](#) that people from all over the world come to experience. Sewing and handicrafts courses for women grew into a cooperative [Umutima](#): around 45 women make wonderful children's clothes, toys, decorative products for the home, jewellery and other unique products.

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## Campaigns

In 2003 we participated in the pre-referendum campaign regarding the accession of Slovenia to NATO. We selected and published numerous professional, ethical and practical arguments for and against the accession to NATO and published them in a special publication [NATO – Pro et Contra](#) and published a collection of essays [No to NATO – Give Us a Break!](#) We participated in numerous debates and in the end the results were 33,92 % against, which, compared to other states, was a considerably high percentage. Our statements were very high-profile – we were even cited in the [New York Times](#).

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## Special actions

In 2001 we performed an effective [campaign to collect toys for the children of “illegal aliens” in Slovenia](#); in 2015, a drive to collect toys and teaching materials for migrant children in Albania; and in 2009 a campaign against multiple discrimination (“[When are you going to run out of glue?](#)”).

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## The Peace Institute library

According to some, it is a miniature, intimate, neatly arranged room, with the ability to surprise with its contrast to large library systems. Estab-

lishing a library with books purchased with project resource finances which is open to the public and included in the library system of Ljubljana, so people can access the 7,000 books with the Urbana city bus card, is more of an exception than a rule, especially at a time when, even for private faculties, a library is not necessarily an imperative.

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## Regular employment and training for young people

In all its years of existence the Peace Institute has provided regular employment for 38 mostly young people – including 35 researchers, most of whom are/were women. During their work and training at the Peace Institute, 9 people have received a Master's degree, 13 researchers have received a PhD and 3 are currently working towards it. We have also worked with so many external consultants, experts and students that it is impossible to list them all here. Currently there are 16 regularly employed members of staff at the Peace Institute.

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## Books and publications

We have published 104 books. Publications and books, chapters and articles that have been published by our staff members in other, national or foreign publishing houses and in Slovene and international magazines are nearly impossible to count.

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## Research and other projects

We have implemented 277 national and international projects and research studies: [www.mirovni-institut.si/en/projects](http://www.mirovni-institut.si/en/projects)

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## Conference participation

We have participated in at least 500 Slovene and international conferences, presenting our projects, research studies and other activities.

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## Public operation

Our staff members have continuously participated as expert voices in the news on numerous occasions; we have written articles for daily and weekly newspapers and staff members have participated in numerous interviews published in the media.

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## Public events

We have organised more than 400 public events: seminars, reading circles, round tables, presentations, forums, debates, journalists' evenings, expert and scientific conferences.

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## Films

We have filmed several documentary videos/films, related to exclusion and development, among others: Save yourself: The life of a development project in Kigali (2010), [Cross Border Experience](#) (2011) and [Here I Am!](#) (2014).

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## Membership in networks and associations

The Peace Institute and its staff members were and have been members of more than 30 national and international professional associations and networks.



**The Peace Institute**

Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies

The Peace Institute

Address: Metelkova 6,  
1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

Tel: + 386 1 234 77 20

Faks: + 386 1 234 77 22

E-mail: [info@mirovni-institut.si](mailto:info@mirovni-institut.si)

URL: [www.mirovni-institut.si](http://www.mirovni-institut.si)