

## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

### **International Scientific Conference “Utilizing Big Data and the Social and Policy Sciences 2018”**

Split/ Vis, June 11-16 2018

The overarching theme of the Conference will be “Utilizing Big Data and the Social and Policy Sciences”. The phenomenon of digital connectivity is increasingly transforming the way humans interact and deal with problems of collective action. Such a paradigmatic change is expanding the frontiers of research in terms of theories, methods and analysis. Considering this context, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb, faculty from Mississippi State University, George Mason University, the University of Split and the University of Applied Sciences VERN at Zagreb will lead a week-long conference on Big Data and Social Sciences.

The conference consists of a series of panels in which participants will engage with lecturers to learn and discuss research on big data in social sciences, and big data research methods workshops. More information on the conference is available at <https://ssrc.msstate.edu/resources/seminars/croatia2018/>

#### **Registration fee:**

**750,00 kn (HRK) (for all participants except those coming from the organizing institutions: Faculty of Political Science – University of Zagreb, Mississippi State University, George Mason University, Faculty of Philosophy – University of Split and University of Applied Sciences VERN at Zagreb)**

The registration fee includes the following:

- Oral presentation
- Lunch on the day of presentation
- Admission to all panels
- Access to all workshops
- Certificate of attendance

Payment is enabled through bank transfer to the following account:

Account holder: Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb

Address: Lepušićeva 6, 10 000 Zagreb

Correspondent bank: Zagrebačka banka d.d

Address: Trg bana Josipa Jelačića 10, 10 000 Zagreb

HR1423600001101217644

SWIFT: ZABAHR2X

Reference number: 3005

**Registration deadline: May 14 th, 2018**

### **Panel 1: *Big Data and Social Media Research***

Proposed by Dr. Viktorija Car, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Political Science, Journalism Department, e-mail: [viktorija.car@fpzg.hr](mailto:viktorija.car@fpzg.hr)

Social media has enabled the shift from one-to-many to many-to-many communication, which provides support for the heterogeneity of communicational content and activities. However, beside bringing the advent of more multidirectional forms of participation, social media has become repositories of personal big data of billions of users.

There is an ongoing discussion on the case of Cambridge Analytica – the data analytics company which, without permission, used personal information harvested from more than 50 million Facebook profiles, and based on their psychological profiles it built a system to target US voters with personalized political advertisements. This case really shakes the idea on social media as democratic media which just connect people. Henry Jenkins argues that convergence culture, based on the new media technology, helps consumers envision a liberated public sphere, free of network controls, in a decentralized media environment. Sometimes corporate and grassroots efforts reinforce each other, creating closer, more rewarding relations between media producers and consumers, sometimes these two forces are at war (Jenkins, 2006). The question to argue is if the social media endanger democratic political culture.

It was back in 2010 when Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook founder, said that privacy was no longer a “social norm.” He said: “People have really gotten comfortable not only sharing more information and different kinds, but more openly and with more people.” Eight years later it became clear that people should not feel fully comfortable sharing personal information, even likes, because only by analyzing our likes it is easy to make our personal political profile. Public reaction on this scandal with Cambridge Analytica was that many companies and persons decided to close their Facebook profiles.

For this panel we invite papers on big data research on communication over social media.

#### ***References***

Barnett, E. 2010. *Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg says privacy is no longer a 'social norm'*. The Telegraph. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/facebook/6966628/Facebooks-Mark-Zuckerberg-says-privacy-is-no-longer-a-social-norm.html> (accessed January 15, 2018).

Jenkins, H. 2006. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York and London: New York University Press.

**Panel 3:**

**Big Data, Politics and Society (organized by the Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb)**

Proposed by Dr. Dana Luša, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Political Science, Department of International Relations and Security Studies, e-mail: dana.lusa@fpzg.hr

Big data as the capacity to process unprecedented amount of information is influencing many different fields. The social sciences are among the most affected. One can for example analyze millions of calls or tweets that provide insights into social structures, or statements issued by different politicians in the long period of time and discover correlations between them. Big data is also influencing the way some government act internationally by generating millions of bits of information about the location of military facilities or equipment. Big data may even allow us to predict major political events with greater accuracy or to interpret political communication in way that is more efficient. It has induced a hyper-networked world society in which is easier than ever before to engage in common political causes irrespective of national boundaries. Everything is becoming data-driven.

However, the use of big data also generates a lot of ethical concerns, serious limitations and obstacles such as its accessibility and interpretation; skill and awareness to make the best use of big data and keeping the data secure.

Big data impacting society and politics in multifold ways, bringing new topics and providing new tools to analyze different societal and political challenges will be discussed at the panel.

In this panel we would like to explore such connections and welcome papers on the following topics:

- Data driven geopolitics and geo-economics
- Big data and diplomacy
- Big data and political communication
- Big data and media
- Big data and society
- Big data and conflict management
- Big data and migrations

References:

Anderson, J., Rainie, L. 2012. The Future of Big Data. Pew Research Centre.

<http://www.pewinternet.org/2012/07/20/the-future-of-big-data/>

Stuenkel, O. 2016. Big Data: What Does It Mean for International Relations? Post-western World. <http://www.postwesternworld.com/2016/03/06/mean-international-relations/>

Zwitter, A. 2016. The Impact of Big Data on International Affairs. Clingendael Spectator. <https://spectator.clingendael.org/en/publication/impact-big-data-international-affairs>

## **Handling Big Data - Innovative Approaches in Social Sciences**

### **WORKSHOPS ON BIG DATA RESEARCH METHODS**

Led by Viktorija Car and Hrvoje Jakopović – University of Zagreb, Faculty of Political Science

In these days, Internet is overwhelmed with user-generated content. Some of the data that researchers before had to collect on the field is now available online. User opinions are posted in different forms on the websites and social networking sites. They provide useful information about attitudes that user have towards various issues. This set of workshops is aiming to provide ideas for conceptualization of big data and developing innovative research designs in social sciences. Each workshop will display software tools that can enable easier management and interpretation of big data. Students will learn how to implement these tools on selected examples and interpret the data.

In the introduction part of the workshop we will present several different open access tools (e.g. Google Trends and Google Correlate) for big data analysis and better keyword search, and we will elaborate how these results can be useful in the phase of setting a research. Further, the workshop will focus on user-generated content and examine easy-to-use tools for sentiment analysis. Sentiment analysis is also known as opinion mining procedure which allows fast insights into a different sized and numerous textual content. The analysis aims to determine polarities of negative and positive opinions but also allows discovering certain emotions such as happiness and sadness. We will focus on sentiment analysis tools (SentiStrength and Twitter Sentiment Visualization) that can be implemented in big data research on emotions and sentiment in communication on Twitter.

NVivo workshop led by Dr. Anka Kekez Koštro – University of Zagreb, Faculty of Political Science

### **Qualitative Data Analysis: Strategies, Techniques and Tools**

In a quest for rich empirical insights meant to enable answers to research questions, social science researchers are often faced with a problem or a task of processing big amount of qualitative information that are located in documents, transcripts from interviews or focus groups, pictures, notes from observations and other data sources that emerge from qualitative methods of data collection. In small N research designs this task can be effectively fulfilled with the qualitative data analyses that is done through three congruent flows of activity: data reduction, data display and patterns seeking/verification. While the data reduction refers to process of making qualitative data manageable through segmenting and coding of data encompassed by written-up field notes or transcripts, data display through matrices, graphs, charts or networks presents an important avenue to valid drawing and verification of conclusions. This workshop will provide participants with an overview of a key concepts, strategies and techniques related to each of these three types of activity. In order to foster the strategic understanding and development of skills for the application of qualitative data analysis in own research, the presentation of strategies and techniques will be followed with guided exercises in data coding and complemented with the demonstration of coding process in the NVivo software package for computer- assisted qualitative data analysis.