



University of Ljubljana
Faculty of Social Sciences



ARRS

SLOVENIAN RESEARCH AGENCY

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAUMA-INFORMED BODY-BASED METHODS FOR TRAUMA RECOVERY AND REDUCING ETHNIC DISTANCE

In post-conflict societies, many people feel the consequences of war as well as other social and personal adverse circumstances in the form of traumatic effects. These can manifest on different levels, e.g. physically (e.g. pain of unknown origin, inner state of high arousal or numbness), emotionally (e.g. difficulty in regulating one's own emotions, anxiety and/or depression), mentally (e.g. lack of concentration, re-experiencing traumatic events), identity-related (e.g. altered self-image) and interpersonally (e.g. mistrust, isolation from people). Years of interethnic violence can leave deep emotional scars, feelings of anger, sadness, desire for revenge, etc., which usually leads to negative narratives about "the others" and deep divisions that can hinder reconciliation between citizens and lead to renewed cycles of violence. In recent years, trauma researchers and therapists have developed a deeper understanding of the role of the nervous system in coping with traumatic stress and have developed effective methods to regulate it.

As part of the research project *Anxieties in 'divided cities' and post-conflict societies*, funded by the Research Agency of the Republic of Slovenia (Project No. N5-0178, Head Dr. Rok Zupančič), we are investigating the impact of a contemporary approach to post-conflict trauma. We need an experimental group and a control group. With the experimental group we will conduct a free face-to-face seminar (see the next section for a description of the content), while the participants of the control group will receive an online seminar after the completion of the study. Participants in both the experimental and control groups will complete the questionnaire shortly before the seminar begins (approx. 45 minutes), immediately afterwards and three months after the seminar (approx. 10-15 minutes).

CONTENT OF THE SEMINAR AND WORKING METHODS

The seminar is based on methods that have proven successful in reducing the consequences and symptoms of trauma in many other contexts (e.g. migrants, veterans, people with chronic pain, etc.). We will learn what trauma is, how traumatic experiences affect our nervous system and our thinking, feeling, identity and relationship building. We will learn to recognise states of high anxiety and numbing and other traumatic symptoms. We will practise self-regulation, develop resilience and practise self-care. The seminar is based on the integration of modern knowledge of somatic approaches with a focus on trauma. We will learn about the topics theoretically and practically through experiential exercises.



The seminar will be held in English.



Location of the seminar (in Zagreb) to be announced.



Friday, June 10; 9.00–13.00 & 14.30–17.30 (the first hour is for welcoming and filling in the questionnaire).

Saturday, June 11; 10.00–13.00 & 14.30–17.30



The lead instructor of the seminar, **Elisabeth Schneider Kaiser**, Frankfurt, has about 40 years of therapeutic work with individuals and couples behind her, she is a supervisor and has been teaching groups for more than 20 years. Her therapeutic approach is based on different modalities of somatic and trauma therapy: Bioenergetic Analysis, Conversation Therapy according to C. Rogers, Somatic Experience (P. Levine), NARM (L. Heller), Somatic Attachment according to D. Poole Heller, Integral Somatic Psychotherapy, Biodynamics, Hakomi, Sensorimotor Approach according to P. Ogden.

The experienced somatic and trauma therapists **Zrinka Smolčić**, Zagreb & Offenburg, and **Metka Kuhar**, Ljubljana, will support the seminar process.



If you would like to participate, please fill in the online application form:

<https://1ka.arnes.si/application>

Applications are open until 29 May, 2022.

You will be notified of the selection no later than 1 June, 2022.

Participation requirements

- ✓ Willingness to attend the seminar for its entire duration;
- ✓ Willingness to participate in a study (in the form of questionnaires): immediately before and after the intervention and three months after the seminar.

Contact for possible questions

Prof. Dr. Metka Kuhar, member of the research team; e-mail: metka.kuhar@fdv.uni-lj.si

- ✓ Free participation in a workshop led by experienced trainers.
- ✓ Free online seminar after the study is completed for *control group*.
- ✓ You can make a valuable contribution to psychological and peacebuilding research.