DEMIAN PAPO
IS THERE A PLACE FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES EXPERTS IN THE IT WORLD?

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NOVE TEORIJE br. 1/2022

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scientific inter_view **vol. 1**
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Osijek and Centre for Interdisciplinary Research, Osijek, 2020

Centre for Interdisciplinary Research (CIR) of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Osijek was founded in December 2019. During spring of 2020, members of the Centre's administrative Committee have established and organized a cycle of popular scientific online lectures named *scientific inter_view*. The cycle *scientific inter_view* is Centre's first project and it is in accordance with the Centre's fundamental mission, which consists of overcoming the formal division of social sciences and humanities and the so-called STEM as an answer to the challenges which 21st century poses. The goal of the first cycle was to answer the following research question: "Is There a Place for Social Sciences and Humanities Experts in the IT World?" In order to do so, we have invited five experts to share their knowledge and experience with the general public.

The first lecturer of the cycle was Boris Rauš, Master in Computer Engineering, co-founder and CEO of an IT company named *Bamboo lab*. His answer to our research question was affirmative. In his experience, IT companies who hire only STEM experts are less successful than those who have social sciences and humanities experts in their teams. Furthermore, Rauš pointed out that the key to success lies in the synergy and complementarity of IT, social sciences and humanities worldview. As Rauš accentuated, IT companies are in need of experts in economy, psychology, sociology, pedagogy, linguistics, philosophy and arts. He ranked his criteria of assessing new employees as follows: personality traits; academic competencies; ability to work in a team; technical competencies. Finally, he concluded that IT companies should nourish interdisciplinarity and that everyone who has the skills, knowledge and willpower to engage in a creative process can and will find their respective place in the IT world.

Our second lecturer was Marin Seleš, Master in Information Sciences, founder and CEO of the *Čas posla design & copywrite* IT company, and principal of the *Pučko otvoreno učilište Osijek*. He summarized his answer to our research question in the following manner: there is no IT world without social sciences and humanities, and every social sciences and/or humanities expert can work in an IT company. Monodisciplinarity, as Seleš puts it, does not and never will offer solutions to challenges the 21st century society faces on a daily basis. The 21st century market encourages interdisciplinarity, lifelong learning and constant progress. Seleš also said that the animosity between STEM on the one side, and social sciences and humanities on the other needs to vanish, as well as the ideological adversities among the private and public sector. Seleš concluded his lecture with a general piece of advice: if you have a story and you know how to tell it, success is guaranteed.

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The third lecturer of the cycle was Tomislav Jakopec, PhD, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek. Professor Jakopec's answer to our research question was that social sciences and humanities experts undoubtedly have their place and role in the 21st century IT world. He highlighted that Croatian universities are constantly trying to fulfill the needs of the labor market which is overwhelmed with IT companies. The crucial thing for future progress is to enhance the cooperation between different university constituents in achieving the goal of educating experts who can find their place in the IT world. However, professor Jakopec accentuated that it is of utmost importance that university students incessantly broaden their interests, knowledge and competencies outside the academic environment. Students should refine their academic with technical knowledge and *vice versa*. Finally, professor stated that it is equally important to develop social sciences, humanities and STEM simultaneously in order for the IT world to progress.

The fourth and last lecture in the first cycle of *scientific inter_view* included two lecturers: Davor Banović, Master of Theology, Chief Product Officer in an IT company named *Shoutem*, and Marko Marincel, Master of Psychology, Human Resources Expert in an IT company named *Factory.hr*. Both of them agreed upon the following: social sciences and humanities experts are a necessity in a successful IT company. In his part of the lecture Banović underlined that the 21st century largely resembles previous historical periods in which people were encouraged, if not obliged, to acquire both theoretical and practical knowledge of various domains of human activity. IT world, as Banović sees it, has the urge for recruiting staff members who are able to *think outside the box*, and that is where the social sciences and humanities experts fit perfectly. In the second part of the lecture Marincel pointed out that more than 30% of employees in his IT company come from a social sciences and/or humanities background. Inclusiveness and equality of opportunity are, claims Marincel, two main characteristics of the IT sector. Nevertheless, those who want to get involved in it have to work on developing their personalities, be prepared for lifelong learning, do their research on current and upcoming trends, and become more versatile when it comes to both their knowledge and skills.

In conclusion, all of the five lecturers had given the same answer to our research question: there definitely is a

place for social sciences and humanities experts in the IT world. They are needed in every single part of the creative process, especially in the quality assurance, human resources, as well as sales and marketing departments. However, their academic titles do not guarantee success in IT companies. Their theoretical knowledge has to be reinforced by technical skills, and they have to be highly motivated for lifelong learning and must be willing to work in a team.

Judging by the fact that the first *scientific inter_view* had more than two hundred people as live audience, that it was largely announced in the local media, and that the reach of our posts on social networks (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Centre's official website) was as high as seven thousand people, CIR's first project was a great success. This thesis is also supported by the fact that around seven hundred people had already watched recordings of the four lectures of the first cycle of *scientific inter_view* on the Centre's YouTube channel. Members of CIR's administrative Committee hope that the future cycles of *scientific inter_view* will be as successful as the first one, if not more, and that the first cycle will manage to offer a new, optimistic perspective for future social sciences and humanities experts looking for their place in the IT world.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES EXPERTS IN CIVIL SOCIETY ASSOCIATIONS?

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After successfully organizing the first, Centre for Interdisciplinary Research (CIR) of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Osijek organized the second cycle of popular scientific online lectures *scientific inter_view* during spring of 2021 with the goal of answering a new research question: "What is the Role of Social Sciences and Humanities Experts in Civil Society Associations?". As was the case in the first, the second cycle also had four lectures but with two lecturers on each of them, with the total of eight lecturers. Most of them were social sciences and/or humanities experts with a large working experience in civil society associations. Members of the CIR's administrative Committee invented and implemented one novelty in the second cycle. Namely, starting from the second lecture of the cycle, they included a new section of *scientific inter_view* lectures named *scientific inter_course*. At the end of each lecture, two of the lecturers in a lecture ask each other questions regarding their work, education and/or skills. The