

UniRi Institute for Future		
Name and Surname	Organizational Unit	Keywords connected to research interests
Marko Kovačić	Centre for Peace & Conflict Studies	Public policy, youth, education
Tena Prelec	Centre for Peace & Conflict Studies	Corruption, EU enlargement, geopolitics, authoritarianism, academic freedom

SCIENTIFIC SUPERVISOR	
Name and Surname	PhD, Associate Professor Marko Kovačić
UNIRI Faculty	UniRi Institute for Future
Organisational Unit / Research Group	Centre for Peace & Conflict Studies
Research Team (Members)	Dr. Mario Žuliček, prof. dr. Bojana Ćulum Ilić
Research Interests	Public policy, evidence-based decision-making, youth policy, youth participation, civic education
Keywords (max. 5) connected to your research interests:	Public policy, youth, education
EU-funded project experience	Erasmus +, CERV, ESF, IPA; Croatian Science Foundation
Scientific panel	Social Sciences and Humanities
ORCID (link):	https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4114-0678
Personal or Research Team's Website	Pending
Contact e-mail	marko.kovacic@uniri.hr

SCIENTIFIC SUPERVISOR	
Name and Surname	Associate Professor Tena Prelec
UNIRI Faculty	UniRi Institute for Future
Organisational Unit / Research Group	Centre for Peace & Conflict Studies
Research Team (Members)	Dr. Sonja Stojanović Gajić, Dr. Samuel Rogers
Research Interests	My research focuses on corruption and its transnational dimensions, including kleptocracy, enablers, corrosive capital, and strategic corruption. I also explore wider issues of governance, transition, authoritarian influence, and diaspora politics, with a particular interest in the autocratic appeal across countries. I have a strong research focus on EU enlargement and EU studies, especially in relation to geopolitics and the EU's external influence. Additional areas of interest include academic freedom in the context of internationalisation. I am also interested in the role of civil society in resisting corruption and authoritarianism, and would be keen to supervise researchers working on civic activism and anti-corruption efforts. Geographically, my work centres on South Eastern Europe/Western Balkans, the European Union, and the post-Soviet space, including Russia.
Keywords (max. 5) connected to your research interests:	Corruption, EU enlargement, geopolitics, authoritarianism, academic freedom
EU-funded project experience	Horizon Europe: GEO-POWER-EU – Empowering the Geopolitical EU in the Eastern Neighbourhood and the Western Balkans (2024–2027) – Lead of the UniRi team (5 members) and WP Lead at consortium level (13 institutions). Illiberal Capitalist Development: Extra-European Capital, Sectoral Investment, and Changing Ideology in Europe – Supervisor of an ERA/MSCA postdoctoral fellow at UniRi. Grant obtained, expected start in autumn 2025. FCDO / GI ACE: Global Integrity Anti-Corruption Evidencing programme (FCDO), focusing on transnational kleptocracy, foreign policy, and illicit financial flows (since 2019): Gatekeepers, Enablers or Technicians: The Contested Interpretation of Lawyers as Facilitators of Kleptocracy and Grand Corruption – Principal Investigator. Identifying Enabler Networks and Their Vulnerabilities – Team Member. Illicit Finance and Russian Foreign Policy: New Dynamics and Linkages – Team Member. Information Manipulation and Organised Crime – Lead Researcher. Testing and Evidencing Compliance with Beneficial Ownership Checks – Team Member. UNIRI: Strategic Corruption: Deconstructing Geostrategic Goals and Global Impact (2024–2025) – Co-funded by UNIRI and the Independent Social Research Foundation. Role: Principal Investigator. Other Funding Sources: European Climate Foundation - Geopolitics of the Green Energy Transition in the Western Balkans

	(2022–2023) – Co-Principal Investigator (BiEPAG). National Endowment for Democracy - Reputation Laundering in the University Sector of Open Societies (2020–2021) – Team Member. PSSI - Research on ‘foreign influence’ in the Western Balkans (2019–2021) – Lead Researcher. Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) - Full PhD studentship, (2015-2020). LSE Middle East Centre - UAE-Balkans relations (2015-2017) – Team Member.
Scientific panel	Social Sciences and Humanities
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Personal or Research Team’s Website	CAS: https://cas.uniri.hr Google Scholar: https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=toOo5GoAAAAJ&hl=en
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