

Editorial

Where Re and Re meet: Introduction to special issue

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Call for HSM Special Issue entitled *Re-inventing or Revitalizing: Challenges for the post-pandemic era* was launched in June 2022. This period was marked with strong memories, impressions, and feelings about the COVID-19 pandemic. However, our thoughts were turned towards the future and, as my respective colleague prof. dr. Matjaž Novak wrote, we hoped to “address the themes related to challenges for post pandemic era”. The special Issue was launched with the idea of “encouraging new streams of insightful and influential research related to forecasts of new era in economic, social, societal, technological, and ecological fields”. The focus of special issue was on management, economics, finance, marketing, entrepreneurship, industry research and innovations, tourism, and digitalization in the post-pandemic era.

Since December 2019, when the official outbreak of COVID19 was marked, and March 2020, when the pandemic was announced, we discussed and theorized about possible changes in societies. For example, in June 2020, the International monetary fund published the perspectives of six thinkers, Daniel Susskind, James Manyika, Jean Saldanha, Sharan Burrow, Sergio Rebelo, Ian Bremmer, on how the pandemic had been changing the world [1]. The crossroad of these perspectives was change on the world economy (Sergio Rebelo), geopolitical change (Ian Bremmer), inclusiveness, resilience, and sustainability (Sharan Burrow), global cooperation (Jean Saldanha), “digital economy, with the

rise of digital behavior such as remote working and learning, telemedicine, and delivery services” (James Manyika), and on populism, disinformation, and misinformation (Daniel Susskind). Social life changed along with all areas of life. At the time, it seemed we would have to build a different ‘normality’, as Žižek mentioned in many interviews. We had several discussions in the academic community, in my small ‘academic circle’ how, what, in what way changes will occur. We often talked whether societies, states, companies, organizations, and individuals will, in the process of searching for meaning and making sense of new-old realities, re-invent or revitalize the ‘normality’. Cambridge dictionary provides a definition of re-inventing: “to produce something new that is based on something that already exists” [2]. When I looked around the ‘life in real time’, re-inventing seemed to be the only possible way of envisioning the future. However, this perception was far too narrow to address changes, that resulted from revitalizing the economic, managerial, societal activities, and processes. Cambridge dictionary describes the term re-vitalizing as: “to give new life, energy, activity, or success to something” [2]. The pandemic era revitalized some management and leadership practices, and other fields, some processes, and activities in societies, and opened the space for discussions about what future do we, humanity, want. Digitalization, security, education, motivation, strategic changes and so on, so much to be addressed not only by observations of daily practices but also by theorizing pandemic and post-pandemic era.

In Google Scholar only (accessed 2.11.2023), approximately 392000 articles following keywords,

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COVID-19, pandemic, and management in the years 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023 can be found. Of them, around 80000 articles can be found only in 2023. This is just a superficial presentation of a very limited data. A search of other databases would be needed, other key words to be used, from economics to sustainability and digitalization, human relations and societal changes, and a thorough analysis to make a conclusion. This special issue is a small piece in the mosaic of knowledge on post-pandemic era and has been at the heart of research trends.

However, could it be possible to speculate that we have been theorizing new-old, hence we have re-invented our social world? Have we floated back to new realities, or have we revitalized our social life? Or, both? Is the notion 'post-pandemic' only a marker towards a period in the past or it is a signifier of broad spectrum of re-inventing theories and praxis that mark different era? We don't have responses to all these questions, but we are part of the search for better understanding the world we live in.

Usually, special issues are focused on a specific theme that falls within the scope of a journal. This special issue is devoted to theorizing changes and practices, some of them marked as 'new and post-pandemic', some simply changes that have been accelerated by COVID-19. The variety of themes and methodologies, width, and depth, bring richness to this special issue.

References

- [1] Susskind D, et al. Life post-COVID-19. International Monetary Fund. [internet]. 2020. Available from: <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/2020/06/how-will-the-world-be-different-after-COVID-19>
- [2] Cambridge Dictionary. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [internet]. Available from: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>