

# Introduction

Community development principles, values, innovative tools and practices, structures, processes and outcomes can be approached in various local, regional or international contexts, starting from the following issues: intercultural mediation and communication, diversity, education, social inclusion, participation, cultural policies, strengthening the civil society and local democracy, employment opportunities, upgrading of the neighbourhood, sustainable development, mutuality and solidarity, worldwide civil society. A powerful knowledge-based society is a society where cultural, political and educational practices join their forces in order to ensure economic prosperity, cultural progress, individual growth and social strength; in other words, community development.

Therefore, the proposed focus of the 4th edition of the International Conference on “Communication and Education in Knowledge Society - CESC” (October 17-18, 2019), lays on the theme of *Innovative instruments for community development*. While numerous individual processes have beneficial outcomes, community development is focused on both individuals and groups, creating interventions with collective outcomes that change the collective lives of the community as a whole. CESC 2019 proposed stimulating reflection and dialogue on how communication and education could increase the progress and development of communities in some of the most complex social, cultural, political and economic contexts of today.

Traditionally, the CESC Conference takes place every two years and is organized by the West University of Timisoara, Romania, through the collaboration of the Faculty of Political Science, Philosophy and Communication Sciences and the Department of Educational Sciences of the Faculty of Sociology and Psychology. CESC 2019 was special as it also celebrated an anniversary: “20 years on LIS Studies [library and information sciences] in Timisoara”. We were honoured by the

presence of collaborators and professional friends from Romania, Hungary, Serbia, Croatia, Italy, Switzerland, and France.

The contributions to this volume gather into a hand fan which, if turned around its own axis, is transformed into a circle whose rays delimit information which extends like wings into the opposite side of the circle, thus making the transition from one topic to the other.

The first four studies of the volume form the first wing of this hand fan and deal with educational issues of persuasion and manipulation in political campaigns through case studies. The first chapter discusses the mental filters used in voting manipulation through electoral posters which contain religious symbols (Gheorghe Clitan, Oana-Adela Barbu-Banes Kleitsch), while the second one discusses the problem of diaspora mobilisation during presidential campaigns (Alina Elena Romascu, Maria Micle). The other two chapters refer to how actual communicational situations are modelled: the formal and informal logical structure of manipulation (Tomi Paula Pompilia) and the potential persuasiveness of storytelling in today's professional communication (Ștefania Bejan).

The second wing of the hand fan, formed of the next five studies of the volume, examines contemporary education from various angles, starting with the intersection between higher education and public development and learning (Simona Sava, Laura Malița, Simona Negomireanu). Further on, it discusses contemporary education from the perspective of the world of work in the knowledge society (Aleksandra Pejatović, Miomir Despotović), the institutionalization of the relationship between kindergarten and family (Otilia Bersan), anxiety problems in adolescence (Remus Runcan), as well as issues of the professional formation of teachers in media competencies (Ileana Rotaru).

The third wing is that of cultural inheritance, comprised of the next four studies, which discuss the duty of intergenerational justice regarding cultural heritage (Ileana Dascălu), the education and vocational training in library science (Regula Feitknecht, Jasmine Lovey), the role played by digital libraries in the construction of communities (Victoria Frâncu), as well as the social inclusion role of public libraries for local communities (Elena Tîrziman, Maria Micle).

The fifth wing encompasses five studies dealing largely with the relationships between community and collective and cultural identity.

One of these studies discusses a philosophical basis for restoring political dignity to communities through various norms of cultural heritage governing (Oana Serban). Another study conceives the communication space as the point of a needle towards the space of community (Ferenc András). The other three studies theorize and find solutions for issues regarding the European capitals of culture: the participatory practices in European capitals of culture (Corina Tursie), the narrative practices regarding the development of the European identity through European capitals of culture (Codruta-Diana Simionescu), and sustainable development in cross-border regions through the European capital of culture programme (Ilie Radoi).

The last wing, which closes the circle, gathers several studies on practical and applied philosophy, in particular in the field of philosophical counselling. They discuss the communicational background of philosophical counselling (Aurel Codoban), the secular approach of the problem of evil through the perspective of philosophical counselling (Florina Haret), Plato's attitude towards suicide (Armand A. Voinov), frank speech in the Epicurean philosophical school (Cristian Hîrjoi). Furthermore, the chapters in this wing discuss immortality through a socio-anthropological approach (Delia Nadolu, Bogdan Nadolu), as well as the formal approach between real and imaginary (Ionel Narița), and the absurdity of diagnostics through the allegory of a quantum persona (Tea Radović).

The metaphor of the hand fan is enlightening for understanding the complementarity of the issues presented in this volume, the case studies discussed, as well as the representation of the issues from various socio-cultural perspectives to which the authors belong (Switzerland, France, Romania, Serbia and Hungary).

The making and preparation of this volume was the final act of CESC 2019. The publication process took place during 2020, a difficult year due to the global pandemic crisis generated by COVID-19, in which universities had to overcome unprecedented challenges, but at the same time they opened to new perspectives for revitalizing education. For the effort and fidelity of having stayed with us in this editorial approach, we thank the authors who contributed with studies for its realization, the team of reviewers who provided the double blind peer review process, and Teodora Artimon, PhD Publisher of Trivent Publishing.

The editorial committee of this volume includes: Simona Bader, Ștefania Bejan, Otilia Bersan, Simona Bursașiu, Gheorghe Clitan, Regula Feitkecht, Ramona Hurduzeu, Florin Lobont, Claudiu Mesaros, Maria Micle, Antonio Momoc, Ionel Narița, Aleksandra Pejatović, Iasmina Petrovici, Cristina Popescu, Alina Romascu, Ileana Rotaru, Codruta Simionescu, Elena Tirziman, and Corina Tursie.

Maria Micle and Gheorghe Clitan  
West University of Timisoara, Romania