

Jelena Tešija

PhD Candidate in Comparative History
Department of Historical Studies
Central European University, Vienna
tesija_jelena@phd.ceu.edu; jelenatesija@gmail.com

Education

- 9/2020– PhD Student
Department of Historical Studies, Central European University, Vienna, Austria
Dissertation (working title): *The divided and shared labor universe of the International Co-operative Women's Guild: Social democrats, communists, and activists from Eastern Europe, 1920s–1960s*, supervised by Professor Susan Zimmermann
(Doctoral candidacy: June 2021)
- 2013–2014 MA in Gender Studies
Central European University, Budapest, Hungary
Thesis Title: *The End of the AFŽ – The End of Meaningful Women's Activism? Rethinking the History of Women's Organizations in Croatia, 1953–1961*
- 2010–2013 MA in Journalism
Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia
- 2007–2010 BA in Journalism
Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia

Research Experience

- 3/2026– Research Assistant
Institute of Contemporary History, Ljubljana, Slovenia
- 9/2024– Research Affiliate
1/2026 Central European University, Vienna, Austria
ERC Advanced Grant research project ZARAH: Women's labour activism in Eastern Europe and transnationally, from the age of empires to the late 20th century (<https://zarah-ceu.org/>)
- 9/2020– Doctoral Researcher
8/2024 Central European University, Vienna, Austria
ERC Advanced Grant research project ZARAH: Women's labour activism in Eastern Europe and transnationally, from the age of empires to the late 20th century (<https://zarah-ceu.org/>)
- 2017–2018 Researcher
Organized Women on the Left – Periods between World Wars, during the WWII and after the Liberation; research project supported by RLS SEE.
Zagreb, Croatia
- 2015 Researcher
Feminism, Organization and Cooperation: Relations between Women's Antifascist Front of Croatia and Workers' Movement; research project supported by RLS SEE.
Zagreb, Croatia

Publications

Books

- 2025 *Women's Labour Activism in Eastern Europe and Beyond. A New Transnational History*. London: UCL Press.
Co-authored with Selin Çağatay, Mátyás Erdélyi, Alexandra Ghiț, Olga Gnydiuk, Veronika Helfert, Ivelina Masheva, Zhanna Popova, Eszter Varsa, and Susan Zimmermann.
<https://uclpress.co.uk/book/womens-labour-activism-in-eastern-europe-and-beyond/> (Open Access)

Edited Volumes

- 2024 *Through the Prism of Gender and Work: Women's Labour Struggles in Central and Eastern Europe and Beyond, 19th and 20th Centuries*. Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill.
Co-edited with Selin Çağatay, Alexandra Ghiț, Olga Gnydiuk, Veronika Helfert, Ivelina Masheva, Zhanna Popova, Eszter Varsa, and Susan Zimmermann.
<https://brill.com/display/title/68995> (Open Access)

Co-edited Special Issues

- 2023 Women's Labour Activism in Central and Eastern Europe and Internationally in the Twentieth Century, *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe* 31 (2).
Co-edited with Alexandra Ghiț, Veronika Helfert, Ivelina Masheva, Zhanna Popova, Eszter Varsa, and Susan Zimmermann.

Articles and Book Chapters

- 2024 "Women's Labour Struggles in Central and Eastern Europe and Beyond: Toward a Long-Term, Transregional, Integrative, and Critical Approach." In *Through the Prism of Gender and Work: Women's Labour Struggles in Central and Eastern Europe and Beyond, 19th and 20th Centuries*, edited by Selin Çağatay, Alexandra Ghiț, Olga Gnydiuk, Veronika Helfert, Ivelina Masheva, Zhanna Popova, Jelena Tešija, Eszter Varsa, and Susan Zimmermann, 1–80. Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill. Co-authored with Selin Çağatay, Mátyás Erdélyi, Alexandra Ghiț, Olga Gnydiuk, Veronika Helfert, Ivelina Masheva, Zhanna Popova, Eszter Varsa, and Susan Zimmermann.
- 2023 "‘Millions of Working Housewives’: The International Co-operative Women's Guild and Household Labour in the Interwar Period." *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe* 31 (2): 321–338. doi:[10.1080/25739638.2023.2227517](https://doi.org/10.1080/25739638.2023.2227517).
- 2023 "Women and the Gendered Politics of Work in Central and Eastern Europe, and Internationally, in the Twentieth Century: Activism, Governance, and Scale." *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe* 31 (2): 227–240. doi:[10.1080/25739638.2023.2227512](https://doi.org/10.1080/25739638.2023.2227512).
Co-authored with Alexandra Ghiț, Veronika Helfert, Ivelina Masheva, Zhanna Popova, Eszter Varsa, and Susan Zimmermann.
- 2014 "The Analysis of Female Characters in the Pula Film Festival Award-Winning Films, 1992–2011." In *Young Women in Post-Yugoslav Societies: Research, Practice and Policy*, edited by Mirjana Adamović, Branka Galić, Anja Gvozdanović, Ana Maskalan, Dunja Potočnik, and Lejla Somun Krupalija, 321–356. Zagreb, Sarajevo: Institute for Social Research in Zagreb and Human Rights Centre, University of Sarajevo.
Co-authored with Viktorija Car and Josip Šipić.

Other Academic Contributions

- 2025 Contributor to the 13-language open access publication project, Emily Gioielli, "Striking Activism: Women's Labour Struggles in Eastern Europe and Beyond in the Long 20th Century. A Public History Volume in 13 Languages" (in print preparation)
- 2025 Contributor to the ZARAH public history website [Women's Labour Activism](https://zarah-ceu.org)
- 2021–2023 Curator of ZARAH blog series (coordinating publication process; reviewing and editing submissions; managing the visual aspects; disseminating blog posts on social media); <https://zarah-ceu.org/blog/>

Scholarships, Fellowships, Awards

- 9–12/2025 Erasmus+ Internship Mobility Grant – External Associate at the Institute of Culture and Memory Studies of the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ZRC SAZU), Ljubljana, Slovenia (4-month traineeship)
- 9/2024–8/2025 Marietta Blau Grant for Doctoral Students – Visiting research fellow at the Institute of Contemporary History, Ljubljana, Slovenia (one-year grant); <https://inz.si/gostujoci-raziskovalec/jelena-tesija-visiting-fellowship-2023-24/>

- 2010–2012 Scholarship of the City of Split, Croatia, awarded in the category of students with exceptional success in education
- 2010 Award by the Faculty of Political Science for the best student of the 3rd Bologna generation of undergraduate studies in journalism (Zagreb, Croatia)
- 2008 Award by the Faculty of Political Science for the best first-year student in journalism studies in the academic year of 2007/2008 (Zagreb, Croatia)
- 2007–2010 State scholarship of the Republic of Croatia, awarded in Category A for specially gifted regular university and professional studies students

Teaching Experience

- Fall 2022 Teaching Assistant
Central European University, Department of Gender Studies
MA Course: Foundations in Gender Studies I
- 2015–2017 Lecturer
Centre for Women’s Studies, Zagreb, Croatia
Courses taught: *The role and importance of the Antifascist Women's Front in the history of women's organizing in Yugoslavia*

Conference Papers and Workshop Presentations

- 2025 “Gender Histories: Spaces and Relationships.” Second Forum for Doctoral Candidates and Researchers in Austria and Neighbouring Regions, University of Graz, Graz, Austria, 23–24 October 2025
- Dissertation chapter presented: They (Don’t) Only Know How to Carry Baskets to the Market?: Socialist Yugoslavia in the ICWG, 1951–1963
- 2025 7th International Conference Socialism on the Bench “Global Socialism and Non-Alignment”, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, Pula, Croatia, 18–20 September 2025
- Presentation: Co-operative Women’s Labour Activism in the Yugoslav Countryside and Internationally (1950s–early 1960s)
- 2025 EURHO Rural History Conference 2025, University of Coimbra, Coimbra, Portugal, 9–12 September 2025
- Paper presented: Peasant Women, Co-operative Activists and Reproductive Labour: The Case of Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1950s
- 2025 “Revolutionary Technocracy: The State and Mass Organizations in Socialist Governance since the 1950s.” Workshop at the Institute of Contemporary History, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 17 June 2025
- Presentation: Mass Women’s Organization in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1950s: Goal, Position, Structure
- 2024 “Why Socialism Matters? Approaches to Research of the Political Idea and the Historical Period.” Doctoral workshop at the Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, Pula, Croatia, 28–31 August 2024
- Presentation: Social Democrats, Communists and Cooperative Theory and Practice: Yugoslavia and the International Co-operative Women’s Guild
- 2024 “3rd Labour Transfer Summer School.” Summer school on establishing links between labour research and workers’ activism, organized by an independent group of global labour scholars, Buggerru, Italy, 20–25 June 2024
- Presentation: Building Alliances Across the Social Democrat-Communist Divide in the International Co-operative Women’s Guild: The Example of *The Family Wash*
- 2024 5th European Labour History Network Conference, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden (remote participation), 11–13 June 2024

- Paper presented: Social Democrats and Communists in the International Co-operative Women's Guild, 1921–1939: Tensions and Collaborations
- 2023 “Modern History and Anthropology of Work.” Summer School organized by the Department of History, Jagiellonian University, Cracow, Poland, 27 August–2 September 2023
- Presentation: Labour Activism Beyond the “Main Suspects”: Central and Eastern Europe in the International Co-operative Women's Guild, 1921–1963
- 2023 “(Post)-Yugoslav Studies in Vienna.” Networking workshop organized at the Department of Slavonic Studies, University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria, 16 June 2023
- 2023 European Social Science History Conference, Gothenburg, Sweden, 12–15 April 2023
- Paper presented: “Millions of Working Housewives”: The International Co-operative Women's Guild and Household Labour in the Interwar Period
- 2022–2023 “Women's Intellectual History, Care, and Social Thought.” Online seminar series organized by the Who Cares in Europe COST Action and the Intellectual History in ECE Research Network, September 2022–April 2023
- Presentation: Who was the Housewife? – The International Co-operative Women's Guild and the Ambiguity of Self-representations in the Interwar Period (20 March 2023)
- 2022 Third ZARAH International Workshop, CEU, Vienna, Austria, 10–12 October 2022
- Paper presented: Working Women Discussing the Problems of Their Home Life: Eastern European Countries and the International Co-operative Women's Guild
- 2022 “Pulling the Threads Together. Individual Themes and Common Research Interest in a Collaborative Study of Women's Labour Activism in Eastern Europe and Internationally (late 19th to late 20th century).” ZARAH Team presentation as a part of an online lecture series organized within the framework of ERC funded project “Sociobord”, hosted by the European University Institute, Florence, Italy, 24 March 2022
Co-speakers Selin Çağatay, Olga Gnydiuk, Veronika Helfert, Ivelina Masheva, Zhanna Popova, Eszter Varsa, Susan Zimmermann
- 2021 “At the Nexus of Voluntary Action and Public Policies: Rethinking Care in Southeastern Europe.” International workshop organized within the framework of the COST Action Who Cares in Europe? at the Institute of Contemporary History, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 26–27 August 2021
- Presentation: Writing Gender and Labour History of the Yugoslav Co-operative Movement from the End of the 19th Century to the Early 1950s

Institutional Responsibilities and Professional Service

- 2023 Panel co-organizer. “An Inclusive History of Women's Labour Activism: Forms and Scales of Organizing and the Politics of Women's Work I and II” at the ESSHC, Gothenburg, Sweden, 12–15 April 2023
Co-organized with Selin Çağatay and Susan Zimmermann
- 2022 Organizer and the moderator of the conversation with Stefan Berger “Memory Cultures of Social Democracy and Trade Unionism”, an online event, CEU, 27 January 2022

Membership and Community Activities

- 2021– Member of the European Labour History Network (ELHN) Working Group on Feminist Labour History
- 2021–2023 Member of the reading group “Women's Labor under State-Socialism”, organized within the Working Group 4: Intersecting Marginalities, COST action “Worlds of Related Coercions in Work” (WORCK)
- 2016–2021 Co-founder and member of the feminist collective fAKTIV that organizes 8th of March (International Women's Day) Night Marches, Zagreb

2015–2019 Editor/journalist at Libela.org, a news-portal on gender and politics, Zagreb; <https://libela.org/>

Public Outreach

Lectures, Panels and Conferences (selection)

- 2025 “Navigating a divided labour universe: Social democrats and communists in the International Co-operative Women’s Guild, 1920s–1960s.” Invited lecture at the ZRC SAZU Institute of Culture and Memory Studies in Ljubljana, Slovenia, 11 December 2025
- 2025 “They (don’t) only know how to carry baskets to the market?: Yugoslavia and the International Co-operative Women’s Guild, 1951–1963.” Lecture at the Institute of Contemporary History, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 4 June 2025
- 2024 “Reproduktivni rad i položaj žena u Jugoslaviji [Reproductive labour and the position of women in Yugoslavia].” Invited lecture at the Centre for Women’s Studies, Belgrade, Serbia (remote participation), 18 November 2024
- 2018 “Feministkinja, a komunistkinja? Primjer međuraća [A feminist and a communist? An example of interwar].” Presentation at the conference “Organizirane žene na ljevici između dva rata [Organized women on the Left between World Wars],” organized by the Centre for Women’s Studies (Zagreb, Croatia) and the Association for Culture and Art – Crvena. Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, BiH, 13 October 2018
Co-presenters: Barbara Blasin, Ana Lovreković, Ivana Pejić, Jelena Petrović, and Gordana Stojaković
- 2017 “Žene na levici pre, za vreme i posle Drugog svetskog rata [Women on the Left before, during and after the Second World War].” Panel discussion organized by Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung Southeast Europe (RLS SEE). Community Centre “Oktobar“, Belgrade, Serbia, 16 December 2017
Co-speakers: Barbara Blasin, Chiara Bonfiglioli, and Andreja Dugandžić. Moderator: Adriana Zaharijević
- 2017 “Lijeve emancipatorne prakse – što nas (ni)je naučila povijest feminističke borbe [The emancipatory practices of the Left – What the history of the feminist struggle has not taught us].” Panel discussion at the Faculty of Political Science, Zagreb, Croatia, 24 May 2017
Co-speakers: Danijela Dolenc, and Karolina Leaković. Moderator: Jakov Kolak
- 2016 “Ja od jutra nisam stala – problematika neplaćenog kućanskog rada [I haven’t stopped since morning – The issue of unpaid housework].” Panel discussion organized by the Organizing committee of the 8th of March Night March. MaMa, Zagreb, Croatia, 29 April 2016
Co-speakers: Vedrana Bibić, Ankica Čakardić, and Ana Rajković. Moderator: Andreja Gregorina
- 2015 “‘Ti si tako hladna’ – o borbi za ženska i socijalna prava u Hrvatskoj 1917. –1961. [‘You’re so cold’ – About the struggle for women’s and social rights in Croatia 1917–1961].” Panel discussion organized by the Workers Initiative and Democratization Base (BRID). MAZ, Zagreb, Croatia, 18 December 2015
Co-speakers: Marija Čaćić, Ivana Pejić, and Stefan Treskavica

Community-oriented articles, blog posts, interviews (selection)

- 2025 “Kako je pranje rublja učinilo arhivsko istraživanje zanimljivim [How doing laundry made archival research interesting].” *VoxFeminae*, 9 April 2025.
<https://voxfeminae.net/pravednost/kako-je-pranje-rublja-ucinilo-arhivsko-istrazivanje-zanimljivim/>.
- 2025 “The Potential of Doing Laundry? Let the Source Speak!” *Fernetzt - Der Blog*. Online publication, blog post, 16 March 2025.
<https://fernetzt.univie.ac.at/20250316-2/>.
- 2024 “Reproduktivni rad i ujedinjenje žena radničke klase [Reproductive labour and the unity of working-class women].” *Libela.org*, 8 December 2024.

<https://libela.org/sa-stavom/reproduktivni-rad-i-ujedinjenje-zena-radnicke-klase/>.

- 2022 “Through the Lens of Women’s Work and Activism: Introducing the ZARAH Guest Blog Series.” Online publication, blog post, 3 November 2022.
<https://zarah-ceu.org/through-the-lens-of-womens-work-and-activism-introducing-the-zarah-guest-blog-series/>.
Co-authored with Selin Çağatay.
- 2021 “Jelena Tešija: ‘Neki još smatraju da je feminizam opasan’ [Jelena Tešija: ‘Some still think that feminism is dangerous’].” Interview by Ines Madunić. *Gloria Glam*, 8 March 2021.
<https://gloriaglam.hr/gg-talk/jelena-tesija-neki-jos-smatraju-da-je-feminizam-opasan-3113>.
- 2019 “Fighting the Backlash: Feminist & LGBTQI+ Futures.” *Green European Journal*, 13 March 2019. (A part on Croatia).
<https://www.greeneuropeanjournal.eu/fighting-the-backlash-feminist-lgbtqi-futures/>.
Co-authored with Ivana Živković.
- 2017 “Hrvatistan’da neo-muhafazakar hareket ve feminist mücadele / Jelena Tesija ile söyleşi [Neoconservative movement and feminist struggle in Croatia / Interview with Jelena Tesija].” Interview by Cemre Baytok. *Çatlak Zemin*, 18 January 2017.
<https://catlakzemin.com/hrvatistanda-neo-muhafazakar-hareket-feminist-mucadele-jelena-tesija-ile-soylesi/>.
- 2015 Jušić, Adela, and Andreja Dugandžić. “Arhiv AFŽ-a čuva najvažnije emancipacijsko naslijeđe koje imamo [The AFŽ archive preserves the most important emancipation heritage we have].” Interview by Jelena Tešija. *Libela.org*, 2 July 2015.
<https://www.libela.org/razgovor/6310-arhiv-afz-a-cuva-najvaznije-emancipacijsko-naslijedje-koje-imamo/>.
- 2015 “Gradimo socijalizam, pomažemo radnoj ženi i uvjeravamo drugove da je to bitno [We are building socialism, helping the working woman and convincing our comrades that this is important].” *Libela.org*, 28 January 2015.
<https://www.libela.org/sa-stavom/5875-gradimo-socijalizam-pomazemo-radnoj-zeni-i-uvjeravamo-drugove-da-je-to-bitno/>.
- 2014 “Više konja nego žena* ili kako je AFŽ vraćen iz zaborava i što s ostalima [More horses than women* or how AFŽ was brought back from oblivion and what about the others].” *Libela.org*, 6 December 2014.
<https://www.libela.org/sa-stavom/5736-vise-konja-nego-zena-ili-kako-je-afz-vracen-iz-zaborava-i-sto-s-ostalima/>.
- 2012 “Analiza medija [Media Analysis].” In *Ženski glasovi u parlamentarnim izborima 2011. godine [Women’s voices in the 2011 parliamentary elections]*, edited by Tajana Broz, 23–31. Zagreb: CESI. Co-authored with Svjetlana Knežević (Lead Author), Tajana Broz, and Maja Gergorić.

Languages

BHS	Native
English	Fluent
German	Intermediate
Slovene	Intermediate