Research Topics

RAUN 2017 – 2018

In total, there will be 12 different research projects to choose from for this year's Academy. Note that some topics are still vaguely formulated leaving you space to determine the final research agenda/question with the respective Agency. Below you find the titles and interested Agencies for the topics as well as a short description of the research question. Please state your preferences in the online survey form by **not later than Monday May 8 in the evening (23.59pm)**. Once you were assigned a research topic, you will receive a more complete description for the respective project provided by the Agencies. You will learn about your assigned research topic and group on the first day of our session in Bratislava (May 10). If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us!

1. UNODC I   -   Demographic impact of violence / violence against women

UNODC is planning to produce a new edition of the Global Study on Homicide and this research is intended to feed an analysis on the impact of violence among selected population groups. Using data on homicide, the analysis will look at how violence affects mortality rates particularly among the most affected population groups. The aim is to estimate the demographic impact of violence particularly among youth in Central America as compared to other regions. Impact of homicide as compared to other causes of deaths for sub-population groups highly affected by homicide. What is the impact of homicide in mortality rates and life expectancy (with a focus on pockets of high homicide levels)? What are the demographics of the sub-populations most at risk of homicide? What is the impact of homicide on educational attainment/enrolment?

2. UNODC II   -   The impact of social media on the smuggling of migrants

Smuggling of migrants is a transnational organized crime that is now taking place in the context of an unprecedented displacement crisis. More than 65 million people are estimated to be forcibly displaced today as a result of violent conflicts and natural disasters. Reports imply that a large percentage of migrants and refugees are smuggled at some point in their journey. The aim of this research is to increase knowledge on migrant smuggling patterns, trends and flows. How do smugglers present themselves on social media? What are the different routes and modes of transport being offered? What are the prices? What are the assurances and how do smugglers deal with questions of safety? What are the range of services, i.e., provision of citizenship documents, other fraudulent documents, marriage, arrival assistance? How do migrants organize themselves on social media? What do migrants post about their experiences en route and at destination?

3. UNODC III - Private sector - civil society partnership in fighting corruption in Southeast Europe (SEE): Women as Agents of Change

Corruption is a global challenge which undermines democracy and denies citizens their civil, economic, political, social and cultural rights. In addition to its impact on development, corruption has significant consequences for businesses as it undermines fair competition, distorts investments and deprives governments of the resources needed to promote economic growth, and development. Neither governments nor companies can fight corruption alone: the private and public sector, as well as civil society need to work together in this effort. UNODC and its donors continue efforts to curb corruption in SEE, including in areas related to civil society-private sector partnership in fighting corruption. In order to better understand the role women, play in fighting corruption, the research should analyze the latest developments and challenges in civil society and private sector engagement in anti-corruption efforts in SEE, and the role women have played as drivers of change.

4. UNODC IV - Prevention of violent extremism and radicalization: The role of women and girls

UNODC and its Terrorism Prevention Branch is interested in supporting research dealing with the role of women in preventing violent extremism leading to terrorism and crimes associated with the radicalization, incitement and recruitment of individuals for terrorist purposes. In particular, we are interested in studies concerning the involvement of civil society, including women's organizations and local institutions, in improving the role and influence of women and girls in the prevention of violent extremism and radicalization. What are the possible measures for enhancing the role of women and girls in preventing violent extremism and crimes associated with the radicalization, incitement and recruitment of individuals for terrorist purposes, particularly within and by criminal justice institutions?

5. UNODC V - Gender parity/balance in the UN system: Policies and strategies

Gender equality and empowering all women and girls is not only a stand-alone Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5, but also recognized as a driver of progress across all the SDGs, including the goals that are relevant to UNODC's mandate. This research aims at providing an overview of gender policies and strategies in the UN system as well as outside, both when it comes to gender mainstreaming and gender parity; providing an overview of the gender architecture that various UN entities and other international organizations and NGOs have developed to implement the commitments on gender equality and gender mainstreaming, such as employment of Gender Advisers & Gender Teams, where these are located and how are they used; existing structures for gender mainstreaming projects; how is gender analysis used in policy and project development; providing an analysis of best practices and challenges to implement the commitments on gender equality and gender mainstreaming across the UN system and other international organizations and NGOs.

6. UNODC VI - Women, drug policy and human rights

Throughout the world, people who inject drugs are too familiar with stigmatization, vulnerability, marginalization, violence and high risks for HIV. The situation is even worse for women who inject drugs who are often ignored and invisible within the larger drug-using population. Violence against women remains endemic worldwide. However, certain groups of women are particularly vulnerable to violence, yet their specific needs are continually ignored. Women who use drugs often suffer structural violence resulting from punitive legislation and law enforcement practices that increase harms associated with drug use. Furthermore, evidence also indicates that intimate partner violence is more commonly experienced by women who inject drugs than women in the general population. Despite their heightened vulnerability to diverse forms of violence and abuse, the majority of women who use drugs are unable to access services. This research aims at exploring the situation of female drug users in the world and to study policies and general strategies to reduce their vulnerabilities.

7. UNIDO - Women and industrial development:
The role of changing technologies/automation

New technologies have a strong effect on employment. While they have a potential to create new job opportunities, they may also render jobs in certain fields/sectors obsolete, for instance due to increased automation. Given that industrial upgrading tends to be skill-biased, it will replace jobs traditionally carried out by unskilled workers with new tasks requiring more qualified workers. In particular, the use of more capital-intensive production technologies, such as mechanization or automation, instead of labor-intensive ones, displaces routine jobs and polarizes the labor market. As demand for labor becomes increasingly biased in favor of workers with higher skills relative to those in the low- and middle-skill categories, technological change contributes to worsening income inequality. This research aims to explore whether women stand to lose more than men from automation. What are the key theoretical arguments and the empirical evidence so far? This question would require first identifying the sectors and jobs that are most likely to be affected by automation either in a negative sense (e.g. robots replacing specific tasks) or in a positive sense (e.g. jobs created in the industries producing robots).

8. UNEP - Women and sustainable (environmental) development

Gender inequality is one of the most pervasive threats to sustainable development. It has negative impacts on access to, use of and control over a wide range of resources, and on the ability to meet human rights obligations with respect to enjoyment – by women and men – of a clean, safe, healthy and sustainable environment. As household managers, women play a critical role in sustaining and managing important environmental resources, with a rich bank of distinctive skills and knowledge. However, they are often more vulnerable and disproportionately affected by the environmental consequences of climate change and natural resource

degradation. As part of the research case studies from different regions and possibly (based on students' backgrounds) on Carpathians and Alps should be developed. How can you evaluate women access to natural resources, participation in natural resource preservation and management with a particular focus on mountain areas? How can you evaluate women access to natural resources, participation in natural resource preservation and management in mountain areas?

9. UNODA - Women and disarmament & disarmament education for young female professionals

Women are not only among the groups mostly affected by conflicts, but they can also play a pivotal role in conflict resolution. As the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 65/59 in 2010, the UN recognized for the first time the importance of gender-sensitive disarmament. In 2012, the General Assembly adopted an expanded resolution (67/48) that encourages women's participation in all disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control decision-making processes and calls for special attention to be paid to the valuable contribution women can make to practical disarmament measures at the local, regional and national levels. This research aims at exploring the role women play in disarmament and (local and global) security issues. What theoretical concepts consider the role of women for fighting violence and promoting disarmament? What role do women play in disarmament? How can educational efforts and initiatives help reaching improvements?

10. OSCE - Women and political participation

Although in the 21st century, it appears that the biggest part of the world is still not ready to trust in female leaders. This phenomenon can be easily proven by looking at today's percentage of female representatives in the parliaments across the globe. The goal of this research is to conduct a thorough analysis on the root causes that have led to the present gender gap in political empowerment, which although slowly improving is still wide open. As part of the research, it is important to identify existing hurdles and how they vary from one region to the other. In order to further enrich the paper, in the final chapter I suggest to incorporate a subchapter elaborating on best practices and solutions how to achieve a gender balanced representation in the political front (e.g.: implementing gender quotas, convenient and controversial at the same time?). Why empower women's political participation in the 21st century? What are the present challenges in increasing women's participation in the political sphere? When elaborating on the above-mentioned topic, following the steps I have listed, the research question will be answered in the process.

11. IOM I - Women and migration: Migration strategies, risks, and mitigation

Migration has a deeply gendered nature; this becomes evident in, to name but a few topics, the various reasons for women and men to leave their countries of origin, the fact that women and men face different challenges in transit- and host countries, or the changing gender roles and power relations in families during and after the migration. Furthermore, during the migration process migrant women are often more exposed to risks and exploitation and face different forms of violence e.g. sexual violence from smugglers, locals, other migrants or state authorities. This phenomenon can be approached from various angles. This research aims at exploring the migration process and risks faced by women on the move as well as their strategies to cope with these risks. What specific risks and insecurities face women during the migration process? What migratory strategies and coping mechanisms develop women to reduce or avoid risks during the migration process? What strategies and offers to protect migrant women have International Organisations such as IOM or UNHCR developed?

12. IOM II - Women and income generating activities in Afghanistan/Iran

The research topic is developed from the project experience of the IOM in supporting voluntary return and reintegration of returnees from Austria to Afghanistan and Iran: Very few women return back to Afghanistan and Iran as project participants. If they do, however, their reintegration choices are, for various reasons, often not the same as those of male project participants. IOM is keen to counterbalance potential disadvantages women may be facing. The research should explore what kind of activities IOM could undertake to facilitate economic activities of women and promote their empowerment. What kind of income generating activities can women in different regions of Afghanistan implement? What challenges do they face, and are there suggestions to overcome these challenges? Eventually the research could include a comparative analysis of woman's' situation in Afghanistan and Iran.