



Leibniz ScienceCampus
Eastern Europe – Global Area (EEGA)
c/o Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography

Annual Conference of the Leibniz ScienceCampus „Eastern Europe – Global Area“ (EEGA), Funding Phase 2020 - 2024

in cooperation with ReCentGlobe at Leipzig University

15 - 17 May 2023

University of Leipzig, Germany

EEGA Annual Conference 2023 – "Beyond the collapse: Globalization projects in Eastern Europe before and after 2022"

Against the backdrop of recent developments in the region, this years' EEGA Annual conference is asking "How do Eastern European actors respond to the new global challenges? How do they reconfigure their globalization projects?". The in-person event will take place in cooperation with EEGA's main partner, the Research Centre Global Dynamics (ReCentGlobe) at Leipzig University, in Leipzig, city of EEGA's headquarters.

At the two-day congress, scholars from all over the world will present their research on globalization projects in and from Eastern Europe in both panel sessions and round table discussions.

We invite for proposals from the fields of geography, history, sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, global and transregional studies, as well as neighboring disciplines.

Please submit your proposals (up to 500 words) including your name, institutional affiliation and e-mail address by 11 April, 2023 to leibniz-eeга@leibniz-ifl.de.

The call for contributions closes on April 11, 2023.

I Call for Contributions

This congress aims to situate Eastern European actors in historical and recent dynamics of what is often referred to abridgedly as “globalization”. We start from two observations. Firstly, “globalization” is neither new nor does it emerge as a universal trend of increasing connectivity. It is rather the result of a multiplicity of competing globalization projects, i.e. the efforts of a variety of concrete actors with different interests, imaginations, resources and strategies to “globalize” the world, to define the “rules of the game”, to find a most profitable position for themselves. Secondly, Eastern European actors and societies are neither newcomers nor outsiders to such projects. In contrast, they have been both their objects or developed their own in the course of history. The highly heterogeneous region, often perceived as a geopolitical hinge between Asia and Europe, as a backward hinterland or breeding ground of competing empires, have to deal with the challenges of the global condition since the 19th century in their own ways. This includes particular issues related to overlapping empires, linguistic and cultural diversity and interconnectedness, large-scale free and unfree mobilities, post-imperial and post-colonial state-building, the distribution and use of (natural) resources as well as environmental and climatic conditions. Hence, the dynamics of the last years – from the pandemic to the war in Eastern Europe – do not herald the end of “globalization”, yet they have marked a profound rupture for the orientation and strategies of Eastern European actors with their globalization projects.

Actors from Eastern Europe perceive and address global challenges in various fields. They develop a multiplicity of strategies and practices on different spatial levels. Some respond on a local level by developing grassroot activities in rural areas and villages; others seek alliances on a regional level or attempt to establish solutions within international frameworks. There is no question that these already existing processes have been given a completely new dynamic by the current developments in Eastern Europe. The war on Ukraine has also destroyed many established notions of a global/globalized world and the hopes attached to it and requires us to rethink the positionality of actors in it. To gain a systematic understanding of this diversity, the guiding question of the congress is “How do Eastern European actors respond to these new global challenges? How do they reconfigure their globalization projects?”

Recent scholarship in the fields of Transregional Studies and Global History has shown that a broad spectrum of actors enables, and controls flows of people, goods, and knowledge. In the realms of economy and culture, in social affairs as well as in international organisations, to name but a few, individuals navigate between local, national, regional, and international spaces, using the frameworks that the state provides while at the same time challenging national control mechanisms. This perspective has so far only partially informed the study of Eastern Europe. By applying a rigorous actor-centred perspective, panels at the conference do not take the nation-state as the main frame of reference but contextualizes the national in the multitude of other spaces people use to cope with global dynamics. In an interdisciplinary approach, we seek to combine studies from Cultural History, Economics, Political Science, Geography, Anthropology

and Sociology with perspectives from Comparative and Entangled Area Studies. By so doing, this congress brings to the fore a new global history and new global studies from the perspective of Eastern Europe and suggests pathways for the productive communication with and integration of yet other histories and historiographies from different world regions.

Papers are invited to address the following themes, e.g.

1) Cultural imaginations, knowledge orders and their transformations in the wake of crises: How is “the global” imagined as well as the position of the region in it? How are transregional and intraregional (dis)connections represented, circulated and negotiated? How is knowledge about such connections produced, institutionalized, or applied?

2) Alliances, mobilities and global flows: Which partnerships and tensions do emerge between actors from the region and beyond? Which institutional arrangements are formed in the region to create infrastructures for such alliances? How are flows of goods and people organized, managed, controlled? How are mobilities enabled, enforced, controlled? How do societies react to mobilities of people and goods, including e.g. in the form of xenophobia and racism?

3) Resources and infrastructures: How are environmental and climate challenges addressed in the region? How are resources identified and framed to forge new globalization projects? How are the relevant infrastructures planned, implemented, used?

4) Crisis and reliance: How do societies in the region frame crises in military, economic, health, climatic aspects and how do they cope with it? Which effects can be observed for the reconfiguration of globalization projects in the region? How do ruptures in a global order relate to transformations in the region and vice versa?

At the first day of the conference, panels and roundtable will explore these themes in interdisciplinary perspectives. Day two of the congress is centred on transregional connections beyond the region. The history of the ties that existed between African liberation movements and the socialist bloc in the decades in which African countries moved to independence are in the focus of a book presentation in cooperation with the University of Évora (Portugal). A guest lecture on *Überreichweiten* (Engl: “overreaches”) in cooperation with ReCentGlobe Leipzig (Germany) extends the discussions to perspectives of a global history of ideas. Opening the view to other regions of the world, those contributions respond to another facet of EEGA's global perspective, rounding off the conference programme.

The EEGA Annual conference is an established format that attracts scholars from around the world each year. After a successful congress in April 2021 on “Globalising Eastern Europe – New Perspectives on Transregional Entanglements” in cooperation with the British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies (BASEES), then still online, a joint effort was made together



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with the Regional Studies Association (RSA) on „Bridging Old and New Divides: Global Dynamics & Regional Transformations“ in September 2022. The conference in 2023 continues the discussions along these lines.

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