

Belarusian and Russian Migration

Belarusian and Russian Migration within the Baltic region in the shadow of the war in Ukraine

We invite you for an open seminar at the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, at which we will host Florence Fröhlig (Södertörn University, Stockholm), Olga Sasunkevich (University of Gothenburg) and Maarja Saar (Mid Sweden University).

Kategorie: Seminarium



Useful information**Place:** Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Warsaw, ?urawia 4, room 108

Start date: 09-04-2025

Time: 10:30

The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has triggered an unprecedented wave of forced migration, not only from Ukraine but also from Belarus and Russia. Individuals and families are relocating due to displacement, coercion, survival imperatives, or aspirations for a better future. The feasibility of migration depends on both the conditions in their home countries and the policies of host societies, which shape their legal status and prospects for integration. The present research project examines the identity negotiations and social positioning of Belarusian and Russian migrants in Lithuania and Poland—two EU states with historical experiences of Russian imperialism and direct exposure to the geopolitical consequences of the war. Using a translocality and conviviality framework, we analyze how these migrants justify their displacement, navigate their legal and social status, and adapt to their new environments. Our ongoing fieldwork focuses on the challenges faced by Belarusuin and Russian migrants resettling in Warsaw and Vilnius. We will present preliminary findings on their experiences, including legal, social, and cultural barriers to integration. Additionally, we will explore how this wave of forced migration is reshaping the ethnic and demographic landscape of the Baltic region.

Biographies:

Florence Fröhlig, is an associate professor of Ethnology. Her research focuses on the instrumentalization of the past, mourning processes, transgenerational memory transmission, and the heritagization of industrial sites. Since her postdoctoral work within the NORFACE research program on the future of Welfare States in a transnational Europe (TRANSWEL), she has also studied transnational processes, particularly mobile EU citizenship and the portability of Social Security Rights. Currently, she is collaborating with Olga Sasunkevich and Maarja Saar on a research project exploring the identity construction of Russian and Belarusian migrants in Lithuania and Poland following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Olga Sasunkevich is an Associate Professor in Gender Studies at the University of Gothenburg. She is a PI for EU Horizon Project *MAGnituDe. Migration, Affective Geopolitics and European Democracy in Times of Military Conflicts* and Research School *FUDEM – Future of Democracy: Cultural Analyses of Illiberal Populism in Times of Crises*. Olga's research interests revolve around the questions of gender, sexuality, migration and ethnicity in Eastern Europe.

Maarja Saar is an assistant professor in social work and engaged in studies on CEE migration, welfare access, transnational social care and urban segregation. She is currently involved in two projects one focusing on Russian and Belarussian migrants in Lithuania and Poland and the other one on transnational elderly care in Nordic-Baltic region.

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