

Call for Papers

The Yugoslav Wars, the Transformation of Europe, and the Post-Cold War Order

International conference, 9–11 December 2026

Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies, Regensburg

The Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s marked a watershed in the history of Europe and the international order. With the end of the thirty-year embargo period for archival material, recently declassified documents are enabling a re-evaluation of the events of the 1990s and to fully explore the huge impact of the wars on Europe and the international system, including international law. Therefore, this conference aims to bring together scholars from various disciplines such as international history, Southeastern European studies, and social sciences to shed new light on the Yugoslav Wars; to cover the history of the wars from their origins and the outbreak of violence in 1991 to the Kosovo War of 1998-99; and to address a broad range of methodological questions.

We welcome proposals for presentations on all aspects of the Yugoslav Wars, including case studies on local developments in their transregional contexts as well as contributions about the impact of the Yugoslav Wars on European and international politics. We want to focus on the following issues:

- **Conflict, war, and violence:** Which new insights help to improve our understanding of the local, transregional, and international factors leading to the escalation of violence? How did everyday life develop during the war? Did the interactions between various actors on the ground – military and paramilitary actors, foreign fighters, political leaders, international troops and organizations, etc. – result in a rearrangement of social and gender relations, and what was the long-term impact of institutions and relations forged during the wars? How were ownership and property redistributed during the wars?
- **State collapse, state building, and the reordering of the post-Yugoslav space:** How did the wars shape the reconfiguration of national, regional, and European identities of post-Yugoslav societies? How did local actors utilize transregional connections to advance their goals? How did the conflict parties try to influence international politics? Which new insights can be gained from recently declassified governmental documents into policies of the United States,

European countries, Russia, or the members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference? What role did international organizations (EC/EU, CSCE/OSCE, NATO, UN, etc.) play?

- **Humanitarianism, human rights, and refugee policies:** How did international organizations, NGOs, expert committees, and civil society actors try to handle humanitarian suffering on the ground? How did they interact with the political and military actors in the region? Which role did local stakeholders and initiatives play? How did European states and international organizations adjust their refugee policies in response to the humanitarian crisis? Which new institutional instruments for humanitarian action were forged?
- **The end of communism and the transformation of Europe:** How can the history of the Yugoslav successor states be integrated into the broader history of post-communist Europe? How were the Yugoslav Wars perceived in Central and Eastern Europe and how did they influence the transformation processes there? Which role did they play in the process of EU and NATO enlargement? How did they impact the emergence of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the EU and the international regimes for the protection of national minorities in Europe?
- **The emergence of a post-Cold War order:** How did the Yugoslav Wars shape the renegotiations of international norms such as state sovereignty, territorial integrity, and democracy after 1989/91? Which role did they play in the history of humanitarian interventionism, human rights, and the international refugee regime of the 1990s? Which lessons can be learned from an entangled history of the Yugoslav Wars for further research on the European and international post-Cold War order?

This conference is part of the project “Reordering Yugoslavia, Rethinking Europe. A Transregional History of the Yugoslav Wars and the Post-Cold War Order”, funded by the Leibniz Association and conducted by the Leibniz Institute of Contemporary History Munich-Berlin, the Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies Regensburg and the Chair for Southeast European History at the Humboldt University Berlin. It will take place in English from **9-11 December 2026** at the Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies **in Regensburg**. Travel costs for the participants will be reimbursed.

Please submit an abstract of your proposed paper (max. 300 words, indicating research question, approach and the material you work with) and a brief CV in **one** PDF file to the following mail address by **1 March 2026**: bressensdorf@ifz-muenchen.de.

All proposals are expected to be based on original research, since we plan to publish a selection of papers in an edited volume. Please indicate whether you are interested in contributing an article

to this publication. We expect the papers to be submitted before the conference as we plan to pre-circulate them among all participants in advance.

If you have any questions, please contact Agnes Bresselau von Bressensdorf (bressensdorf@ifz-muenchen.de).

Conveners:

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