

**The Promise of (Un)Happiness? Gender, Labour, and Migration**  
**Center for Gender Studies,**  
**European Humanities University**

**LINK TO THE ONLINE BROADCASTING <https://www.wintech.me/conference-2024>**

**PROGRAM**  
**17 September 2024**

**10:00 Opening**

**10:15 - 11:30**

**Keynote**

**Olga Sasunkevich (University of Gothenburg)**

**Affective Geopolitics of Migration in Times of Military Conflicts: Towards a New Feminist Agenda in Migration Research**

In my presentation, I draw on the feminist theory of affect to offer a new theoretical and methodological perspective on migration during military conflicts. Russia's war in Ukraine and the unprecedented level of forced displacement caused by Russia's invasion exacerbated already existing affective polarisation in European societies where the anti-migrant sentiment has increasingly gained its momentum since the mid-2010s. This presentation asks what the affect-laden context of the military conflict implies for research on migration and how affect frames the relations of forcibly displaced people with host states, host societies and other migrants.

To answer these questions, I advance the feminist concept of affective geopolitics (Gökarıksel & Secor 2020; Laketa 2016), which defines the presence of geopolitical narratives and imaginations in sensual, emotional, and corporeal everyday encounters. Unlike in traditional geopolitics, where foreign relations between states is a default scale of studying and doing geopolitics, affective geopolitics draws on the feminist understanding of (geo)politics as multi-scalar and pays particular attention to how the scale of personal, intimate relations are shaped and shaping geopolitical tensions and divisions (Massaro & Williams 2013). I operationalise affective geopolitics through three analytical frames: *affective citizenship*, *conviviality* and *belonging*. *Affective citizenship* conceptualises relations between migrants and states beyond the legal framework. *Conviviality* attends to relations between different groups of migrants under the influence of geopolitical contestations. *Belonging* focuses on affective relations between migrants and host societies.

In the final part of my presentation, I consider the methodological and ethical challenges of conducting affect-centred research in the war context and open the floor to discussion with conference participants.

*References*

Gökarıksel, B., & Secor, A. J. (2020). *Affective geopolitics: Anxiety, pain, and ethics in the encounter with Syrian refugees in Turkey*. *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, 38(7–8), 1237–1255.

Laketa, S. (2016). *Geopolitics of Affect and Emotions in a Post-Conflict City*. *Geopolitics*, 21(3), 661–685.

Massaro, V. A., & Williams, J. (2013). *Feminist Geopolitics*. *Geography Compass*, 7(8), 567–577.

**11:45 - 13:15**

**Panel “Challenges for Professional Identity. New States of Labour”**

**Moderator: Almira Ousmanova**

Lidiya Lisovska and Kateryna Protsak (Lviv Polytechnic National University)  
The Impact of Migration on Women's Professional Identity, Career and Working Conditions: The Case of Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine

Dovilė Žemaitaitytė (Vilnius University)  
Navigating Displacement: The Experiences of Syrian Women in Southeast Turkey Post-Earthquake

Anna Alekseeva (University of Modern Knowledge, Kyiv) *online*

Nicole Kronberger (Johannes Kepler University, Linz)

Subjective Well-Being of Migrants in the Context of Professional Identity Transformations

**14:15 - 16:00**

**Panel “Affective Discourse of Displacement. Emotions, Care and Infrastructure”**

**Moderator: Tania Arcimovich**

Yana Sanko (University of Lund)

“You need to monitor them a little bit”. The ambivalence of psychologising the refugee experiences.

Oksana Shmulyar Gréen (University of Gothenburg) *online*

Svitlana Odynets (Northumbria University, University of Gothenburg)

Handling Uncertainty of Present and Future: Ukrainian Transnational Families in Sweden and Romania Strategizing Their Lives

Viktoryia Kulyk (Yuri Kondratyuk Poltava Polytechnic)

Levelling the Gender Imbalance in IT Enterprises in Ukraine: Managerial Aspects

Antonina Stebur (European Humanities University)

When Attitudes Becomes Infrastructure

**16:15 - 18:00**

**Presentation and Round Table**

**Creating Spaces of Solidarity: Gender Perspectives on Migration and Community Engagement**

**Moderator: Antonina Stebur**

In this round table, we bring together experts working at the intersection of activism and art, with both practices deeply rooted in the issues of migration and displacement. Through firsthand accounts from those on the ground, we will explore migration from a gender perspective and discuss how art can serve as a vital tool in highlighting the challenges faced by refugees, promoting the inclusion of marginalized groups, and aiding in their adaptation.

**Marina Naprushkina (Neue Nachbarschaft/Moabit, Berlin)**

**What does it feel like to build a community?**

The artist Marina Naprushkina will introduce the initiative Neue Nachbarschaft/Moabit. It is a migrant-based association that was born out of a need for self-organisation in 2013, long before the so-called 'refugee crisis' began to dominate public discourse. Here, the focus is on reciprocity, not the subordination of one side to the other. Getting to know one another, exchanging knowledge, experiences, and ideas in personal encounters, working together and using artistic methods and skills, meeting in the neighbourhood on a regular basis—all this is the way to empower oneself, resist discrimination and marginalisation, and formulate an agenda with the help of artistic knowledge.

**Raund Table participants:** Maria (Maro) Beburia (Ocalenie Foundatio), Marina Naprushkina (Neue Nachbarschaft/Moabit), Volha Aniska (The Zbigniew Raszewski Theatre Institute)

**18 September 2024**

**10:00 - 11:30**

**Keynote**

**Danielle Drozdowski (Stockholm University)**

**On the move: (Re)inventing, (re)making, (re)working**

What does it mean to be (a woman) on the move? What does it look and feel like to have moved – either for family, love, work, or a combination of these, or, to have been forced to move because of conflict, violence, persecution? How are the discussions that surround answering these questions gendered, generational and expectant of change?

These questions, and like much scholarship on identities and migration, the responses are partial, in-process and contingent on context and positionality. However, they do converge toward the theme of promise; the promise of what migration may bring and how such expectation is sometimes juxtaposed with the pragmatic outcomes post-migration too. These outcomes necessitate reinvention, remaking and reworking, processes that are never final and always felt.

In following this trajectory, I draw from feminist geopolitics that I situate within my own migration and migrant heritage. As a woman who has moved, I follow my great-grandmothers' and grandmothers' migrant trajectories to explore the experiential, the embodied, and the sometimes (un)happy luggage we carry with promise as we move.

**11:45 - 13:30**

**Panel “‘I am a refugee’. Researching on yourself”**

**Moderator: Andrei Vazianau**

Valeriia Vershynina (Stabilization Support Services, Ukraine)

Empowering Displaced Women: The Role of IDP Councils in Local Democracy and Community Support in Ukraine

Margarita Korzoun (independent research, Belarus) *online*

No hope: Single mothers migrants as a new precariat.

Autoethnography case – Batumi, Georgia.

Aml Samer (Better Future, Tbilisi)

Challenges and Invisible Aspects of Women's Migration in Wars and Humanitarian Crises

Olena Solodovnikova (journalist, documentary filmmaker / Ukraine)

Challenges of women's migration in the conditions of wars, humanitarian crises and political turbulences

**14:45 - 16:30**

**Panel “Immaterial Labour: Displaced Female Scholars' Experience”**

**Moderator: Olga Sasunkevich**

Olena Ostapchuk (NGO Parity, Zhytomyr)

Forced Migration Through the Lens of Ukrainian Women's Experience

Almira Ousmanova (European Humanities University)

Dis/placement, dis/location, dis/engagement? Feminist reflections on the production of knowledge in exile

Nadiya Kiss (Justus Liebig University)

Ukrainian Academics in Germany: Displaced People's Agency and Diaspora Knowledge Networks

Tania Arcimovich (Erfurt University)

Notes on Unsuccess and Failure as the Critical Discourse. Stories of Female Migrant Scholars from Belarus

*Closing the conference*