

CFP: Transnational Approaches to the Long 19th Century History in East-Central Europe

Vilnius, 16.04.2026–17.04.2026

Application deadline: 30.11.2025

Organizers:

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The long 19th century in East-Central Europe was marked by the rise and fall of empires, the struggle for national self-determination, as well as by constitutional movements, the development of civil societies, and the emergence of modern capitalist systems. They also made their impact during the First World War, that also falls within the scope of the conference. These developments had a significant regional impact, yet at the same time, they were transnational phenomena, transcending the borders of one national group, states and empires.

This conference invites scholars to engage with the region's history from a transnational perspective, emphasizing the interconnectedness, transfer and exchange but also the boundaries between different societies, cultures, and political systems. We seek papers that explore the various dimensions of transnationalism in the long 19th century in East-Central Europe. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Imperial expansion, imperial deflation:** The expansion of the Austrian, Prussian, and Russian Empires led to the incorporation of various ethnic and linguistic groups, sparking nationalist movements and resistance. The different types of politics, including administrative centralization and cultural homogenization, within empires are a transnational topic in itself. The imperial practices of governance may also be highlighted in a comparative perspective.
- 2. Economic integration and trade:** Scholars of economic history have maintained that the degree of economic globalization reached its peak in the late 19th century. The explosion of the volume of international capital caused new relations between regional and global trade networks. Therefore, the emergence of industrial capitalism and the impact of economic policies on local communities is a crucial topic when examining East-Central Europe as a transnational space.
- 3. Nationalism as a transnational phenomenon:** recent research has shown that the transnational approach is much better able than methodological nationalism to explain the speed of dissemination of national ideas, their appeal to the masses, the successes and failures of national movements, and the phenomenon of national indifference.
- 4. Cultural exchange and transfer:** The transmission of ideas, artistic expression, and technological innovations across national borders is a central topic of a transnational approach to history. Intensifying research on global subjects is a way of accessing the shared history of nations and cultures, which is the primary focus of cultural transfer studies. It stresses eclecticism rather than a master script of globalization

or nationalization and features a pastiche of global, local, and hybrid cultures; modernist narratives intersect with local history to create new configurations.

5. Migration and diaspora: The long 19th century was a time when the movement of people, ideas, and cultures across national borders advanced significantly. Scholars have spoken of a pastiche between global, local, and hybrid cultures, where modernist narratives and local history created a new mode. Immigration was also a topic where the regulating state attempted to exercise control and surveillance and enforce its concepts of citizenship.

6. Gender, race, and class: In the same vein, categories of self- and external description developed in a local as well as a global space. The conference aims to explore how transnational processes have affected the lives of various social groups, including women, minorities, and workers, and how they have responded to these changes.

7. Environmental history: Environmental history, as a research topic on the long 19th century in East-Central Europe, can reveal the interconnectedness of human and natural systems across national borders. The expansion of empires and the rise of industrial capitalism had profound impacts on the region's ecosystems, climate, and natural resources, leading to deforestation, pollution, and resource exploitation.

8. Political cultures and the rise of civil societies: The long 19th century was the era of increasing civic engagement, the rise of liberal movements, of women's rights movements, of societal claims to strengthen the rule of law, etc. On the one hand, we have states that increasingly try to control their citizens, and on the other, we have an emerging civil society that often counters these very efforts. The conference aims to explore political cultures and civic engagement from a comparative perspective.

9. Border Studies: The fluidity and contested nature of borders can also offer critical insights into transnational processes. East Central Europe is typically seen as the periphery of Europe. Still, to take a perspective from this region can help us to understand the continent as a whole.

10. Technological and Infrastructure Networks: The development of railways, telegraph lines, ports and other technological innovations interconnected different regions and facilitated economic, cultural, and social exchanges.

The conference welcomes contributions from a diverse range of disciplines, including history, sociology, cultural studies, economics, and political science. We encourage papers that engage with theoretical debates and methodological innovations, such as network analysis, transnational historiography, and discourse analysis.

Accommodation and travel costs will be borne by the organizer.

To submit your paper proposal, please provide a title, **an abstract of 250–300 words, and a brief biographical statement**. The deadline for submissions is **30 November 2025**. We are planning to publish selected papers. We look forward to receiving your proposals and engaging in a stimulating discussion about the long 19th-century history in East-Central Europe from a transnational perspective.

For more information, and to hand in your proposal, please contact **Povilas Dikavičius** (povilas.dikavicius@dhi.lt) as representative of the organizing committee.