

CEEISA

Conference of the
Central and East European International Studies Association (CEEISA)

International Burch University and University of Sarajevo

Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

17-19 June 2026

Call for panel proposals and papers

“Contesting Imperialism(s)”

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The 2026 conference of the Central and East European International Studies Association (CEEISA) will be held in **Sarajevo**, a city whose twentieth- and twenty-first-century histories have laid bare key tensions of the international order: empire and nationalism, coexistence and genocide, dissent and occupation, memory and denial.

The conference theme, **Contesting Imperialism(s)**, invites participants to confront imperialism(s) not as a settled historical or analytical category, but as a contested, overlapping, yet often publicly disavowed set of power relations that continue to structure and be structured by international politics. In Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the Balkans, imperial legacies are neither external nor distant: they are (re)lived through shifting borders, layered institutions, plural identities, heightened dependencies, and extreme forms of political imagination. These regions have long been shaped by competing imperial projects, while also generating distinctive traditions of dissent, non-conformism, alternative internationalisms, and sharp political critique. Today, they are also marked by profound demographic shifts, as sustained outmigration and depopulation reshape the local landscape and exacerbate existing vulnerabilities.

The tensions crystallize in a set of questions the conference takes up directly.

From the vantage point of Sarajevo, the **first theme** haunting our political terrain asks: *Is nationalism an answer to imperialism, or its handmaiden? How do projects of emancipation become entangled with new forms of domination? What kinds of dissent and resistance open alternative political spaces without reproducing the binary of empire versus nation-state?*

And how are such possibilities transformed under conditions of war, occupation, authoritarianism, racialized governance of migration, and mass violence?

A **second axis** of the conference addresses the international in the shadow of genocide. From the Holocaust and Srebrenica to the atrocities and silences that surround Gaza, genocide has repeatedly exposed the limits of international law, institutions, and moral vocabularies. In CEE, memories of genocide are unevenly institutionalized, selectively mobilized, or actively denied. They are often entangled with nationalist projects, geopolitical alignments, imperial anxieties, and transnational flows that both undermine and exceed them. *What does it mean to theorize the “international” when its foundational promises are repeatedly shattered by genocidal violence? How do hierarchies of victimhood, recognition, and mourning shape contemporary international politics? How should we engage with knowledge production amidst these epistemological tensions?*

Thirdly and finally, the conference turns to the ambivalences of empire. In CEE and the Balkans, empires are remembered not only as regimes of domination, but sometimes with nostalgia—for perceived stability, cosmopolitanism, or protection from smaller-scale national violence. Such ambivalence complicates linear narratives of decolonization and invites closer attention to imperial afterlives, their enduring legacies in everyday life and political culture, semi-peripherality, dependency, and internal colonialisms. Contesting imperialism, in this sense, also requires grappling with its discontents and its unresolved attractions. *How might critically engaging with these ambivalences allow for and inform more nuanced articulations of dissent, solidarity, resilience, democracy, social cohesion, and (political) belonging?*

We welcome paper and panel proposals that engage these questions from across International Relations and allied disciplines, including but not limited to *political economy, security studies, political theory, sociology, anthropology, history, law, gender studies, postcolonial and decolonial studies*. Contributions may be *theoretical, empirical, methodological, or reflective*, and may focus on *Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans* or place the region(s) in comparative and global perspective.

While proposals that directly address the conference theme are especially encouraged, **we also welcome submissions that engage cognate or adjacent topics, including work that departs from the overarching theme but still resonates with this call**. Further, given ongoing and rapidly unfolding real-world developments, space will be reserved for *ad hoc panels* convened during the conference to respond to and critically discuss breaking news and current events.

Possible themes include (but are not limited to):

- Imperialism, nationalism, and internationalism in historical and contemporary perspective
- Traditions of dissent, resistance, and non-alignment in CEE and the Balkans

- Genocide, mass violence, and the limits of international law and institutions
- Memory politics, denial, and hierarchies of suffering
- Empire, dependency, semi-peripherality, and border regimes in the global political economy
- Imperial nostalgia, postsocialist transformations, and authoritarian revival
- Gendered, racialized, and colonial dimensions of migration, violence, and resistance
- The ethics and politics of solidarity in times of war, catastrophe, and polycrisis

By convening in Sarajevo, the conference seeks not only to analyze imperialism(s), dissent, and the aftermath of genocide, but also to reflect on the conditions under which critical scholarship itself is produced amid crises of the international order, growing repression of dissent, and renewed struggles over the meaning of justice, solidarity, and emancipation.

REGISTRATION FEES

The CEEISA encourages all participants who are not yet members to join the association and take advantage of a **two-year membership**, which includes a **free subscription to the Journal of International Relations and Development** and a **reduced registration fee** for the CEEISA Conference 2026.

Registration fee for non-CEEISA member: 190 EUR

Registration fee for CEEISA member (non-CEE affiliation): 100 EUR

Registration fee for CEEISA members (CEE affiliation): 90 EUR

Reduced registration fee for PhD students, CEEISA members (non-CEE affiliation): 60 EUR

Reduced registration fee for PhD students, CEISA members (CEE affiliation): 50 EUR

PAPER/PANEL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

To submit your paper, panel, or roundtable proposal, please go to the [CEEISA 2026 Conference website](https://ceeisa2026.com) (link: ceeisa2026.com) and fill out the form. You will get confirmation of your submission.

Deadline for submissions: 20th March 2026

Notification of acceptance will follow before 3rd April 2026

Should you have any questions regarding the paper or panel proposals, please contact us at ceeisa2026.programme@gmail.com.

Should you have any other questions regarding the upcoming conference, please get in touch with us at secretariat@ceeisa.org.

For more information about the CEEISA conference, please visit ceeisa.net or ceeisa2026.com.