



New Europe College, Bucharest
International Workshop
July 5–6, 2018

IN-BETWEEN, ACROSS, WITHIN: THINKING BORDERS IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

A century after the end of World War One and almost three decades since the collapse of communism and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, borders remain a key topic for countries in Eastern Europe and the larger Black Sea region. In recent years, increasing security concerns and global economic mobility have forced the border issue back on political agendas and in public discourses across Europe. But for countries on the Eastern fringes of the European Union and in its immediate neighborhood, the importance of borders has rarely dwindled throughout their short independent history, given their many conflicting historical legacies and multi-layered geopolitical divisions. While some borders seem to have almost vanished, others have gained acute visibility; they have become frontlines backed by violence, loaded with high security risks, and protected by military power.

But borders are not just realities in geographical space, neither are they purely symbolic. They mark differences in cultures, customs, languages, eating habits. They delineate mentalities, circumscribe empires of thought, define national canons and arouse emotions. How do they come into existence, how are they organized to become effective, how do they persist, how do they change? How and when are they ‘softened’ to peaceful and productive contact zones? And what about their future: Will they not dissolve and disappear, eventually, given the technologies and forces of globalization?

New Europe College, an Institute for Advanced Study in Bucharest, aims to convene scholars working on such questions, in particular with a geographic focus on the larger Black Sea region, for an international workshop in the summer of 2018. With this event, organized within the framework of its ‘Pontica Magna’ Fellowship Program (<http://nec.ro/fellowships/pontica-magna/>), NEC hopes to stimulate original contributions to the scholarly debate related to the role, the essence and effects of borders.

The organizers invite researchers working on relevant topics to submit their proposals for a presentation (20 minutes) during the intensive two-day workshop in Bucharest. Contributions can relate both to more theoretical questions and to case studies relevant for the wider Black Sea area.

Proposals for papers (maximum 300 words) and a short (one-page) CV of the applicant should be submitted to the address cardoleanu@nec.ro no later than 11 March 2018. Applicants will be notified about the result of the selection process by the end of March 2018. The organizers will cover all expenses (international and domestic transport, accommodation, subsistence) and will provide necessary support to participants from the Black Sea countries in getting visas to enter Romania.

The Workshop is funded by VolkswagenStiftung and organized with the assistance of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin.