

Conference “Authoritarian Threats and Academic Solidarities in Contemporary Eastern European Exile”

Organized by: Alexandre Bikbov (associated researcher at CERCEC/EHESS), Françoise Daucé (CERCEC/EHESS), Catherine Gousseff (CERCEC/CNRS/IC Migrations), Anne Le Huérou (U. Nanterre, ISP), Boris Melnichenko (PhD-candidate at CERCEC/EHESS, associated PhD-candidate at CIS CNRS, Svobodny University, Exil solidaire), Kathy Rousselet (CERI/SciencesPo/GDR EST)

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Campus Condorcet – Centre de colloques

Hall 100

Since the large-scale Russian aggression against Ukraine in February 2022, a new wave of exile has taken place, notably affecting teachers and researchers from Ukraine, as well as from the Russian Federation and Belarus. In response to this massive academic exodus, the PAUSE program has provided crucial support to these threatened scholars. Several initiatives and meetings have been held in Paris to support them, such as those organized at EHESS in 2022 and at Sciences Po in 2023. These gatherings fostered collective reflection on solidarity initiatives to support scholars in exile.

The conference "Authoritarian Threats and Academic Solidarities in Contemporary Exile in Eastern Europe" aims to continue this momentum. The event on 9 of April 2025 aims to facilitate dialogue between academic institutions, research laboratories, mutual aid associations and structures working with exiled scholars, such as PAUSE, Scholars at Risk, and UXIL. The objective is to explore ways to ensure the medium- and long-term sustainability of initiatives supporting academic exiles in France and in Europe.

Currently, most support programs are focused on individual cases and scholarships. However, as emphasized by several colleagues during the conference "Academic and Artistic Refugees: Rethinking Reception" in November 2024, reception practices are inherently collective. There is a growing need to rethink support systems, including through collaborations within the framework of the social and solidarity economy. This involves improving reception networks by strengthening and stabilizing mutual aid networks among alumni of support programs and diasporas.

The format will allow the participation of universities in exile: European Humanities University, Off University, Svobodny University, as well as academic projects in exile (Independent Institute of Philosophy) and art and design schools and art projects in Exile (The Echoes of Lioubimovka, Free School of Arts and Design), and international partners (Science at Risk, Nemtsov Foundation). Several of them maintain ties with partner institutions of Uxil (Uxil members, PAUSE program laureates, and doctoral students from EHESS).

During the event, colleagues behind these initiatives will have the opportunity to present their current work and projects in the fields of action-research, the dissemination of academic research results, and the development of solidarity networks between the academic community, NGOs, and diasporas.

Particular attention will be given to issues of self-management for independent projects in exile, as well as partnerships in the digital sphere, considering the high risks faced by educators and researchers working online with audiences living under authoritarian regimes.

Welcome coffee 8:45-9:00

Introduction (9:00-9:30)

Welcome and overview: Liora Israël, UXIL (15 minutes)

Contextualization and presentation of panels, *Alexander Bikbov* and *Boris Melnichenko* (15 min)

Panel 1: Universities in exile (9:30-12:30)

Moderator : *Catherine Gousseff*

Mohamad Moustafa Alabsi, OffUniversity (Germany) (20 min)

Anastasia Ushakova, Dean of the Social Sciences and Gender Studies Department at the Svobodny University (Latvia) (20 min)

Coffee break 10 min

Vilius Šadauskas, rector of the European Humanities University (Lithuania) (20 min)

Ivan Fomin, Nemtsov Foundation (Czech Republic) (20 min)

General discussion 30 min

Discussant: *Pascale Laborier*

Lunch 12:30-14:00

Panel 2: Resources and Hosting Programs (14:00-16:00)

Moderator : *Anne Le Huérou*

Laura Lobéac, PAUSE and SAFE (20 min)

Christina Riek, Project manager at Science at Risk (20 min)

Denis Yagodin, Director of Innovations at Teplitsa of Social Technologies (20 min)

Discussant: **Alexander Bikbov**

General discussion 30 min

Coffee break 15h30-16h

Panel 3: Independent Research Associations (16:00-18:00)

Moderator: **Boris Melnichenko**

Yulia Sineokaya, Institut de Philosophie Indépendant (France) (20 min)

Elena Gordienko, Lioubimovka (France) (20 min)

Violetta Postnova & I.Y., École libre d'art et de design (France/Czech Republic)

Discussant: **Academics for Peace – France (Turkey)**

General discussion 30 min