Reports

The 35th East European Summer School of the University of Warsaw

Since 1992, the East European Summer School has been annually held by the East European Studies Institute of the University of Warsaw (*Studium Europy Wschodniej Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, SEW UW*). This programme therefore emerged immediately after democratic transformations in Central Europe and still represents an important international platform for young scholars, mainly postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellows. Subsequently, for more than three decades, young scholars up to 35 years of age from the post-Soviet bloc republics, but also from Western Europe and the USA, can meet in the East European Summer School at the beginning of the summer. In the two or three weeks spent in the Polish capital and its surroundings, they can attend lectures and seminars given by leading Polish and foreign researchers on the history, culture, politics or literature of Central Europe, Eastern Europe and the Baltic States. The past-time experts were personalities such as Bronisław Geremek (1932–2008), Csaba Gy. Kiss (1945–2025), John Micgiel (*1953), Bohdan Osadchuk (1920–2011) or Richard Pipes (1923–2018), whereas Czech science was represented by Jaroslav Valenta (1930–2004).

Besides numerous lectures and seminars, the Summer School programme usually offers visits to public institutions such as archives, museums or libraries and meetings with interesting people of the cultural and public life. Over the past years, the summer school attendees had an opportunity to meet the film directors Andrzej Wajda (1926–2016) and Krzysztof Zanussi (*1939) and converse with them. Each year, the programme also includes sightseeing trips outside the capital city and a chance to exchange opinions and knowledge on important research areas that the young, emerging researchers study at their domestic universities or other institutions. Throughout its existence, more than 700 persons from almost 30 countries (most of them neighbouring Ukraine) including the Czech Republic have already attended the Summer School. Its establishment was initiated and long-time organized by Jan Malicki, director of the East European Studies Institute of the University of Warsaw.

The 35th East European Summer School of the University of Warsaw took place from 30 June to 14 July 2025. It gathered twelve young scholars from Azerbaijan, Belarus, the Czech Republic, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine. The school started with participation in the 21st Warsaw East European Conference "*Time of Global Turbulence: Challenges for Central and Eastern Europe*" (30 June – 2 July 2025). The opening ceremony consisted of an introduction by Prof. Helena Krasowska, the current Summer School director, followed by a lecture by Jan Malicki, the East European Studies Institute director, on the *Most Significant East European School Lecturers*

(*I–XXXV)* and a guided tour of the university campus (3 July 2025). The morning programme on the following days provided lectures by foreign researchers (historians, philologists and political scientists), which were intended for all the participants. In the afternoons, seminars divided into three groups were organized in parallel: 1. History and Culture (headed by Dr. David Kolbaia from the University of Warsaw); 2 Literature and Art (headed by Professor Kalina Bahneva from the University of Sofia); 3. History and International Relations (headed by Professor Dušan Segeš from the Slovak Academy of Sciences). The individual seminars consisted of the participants' lectures, which were followed by discussions hosted by heads of the three sections.

An accompanying section of the Summer School offered a rich cultural and educational programme, most importantly a visit to selected Warsaw museums and libraries (e.g. the University of Warsaw Library, the Polish History Museum in Warsaw, Museum of Modern Art or the National Museum). The two-week stay was concluded by a joint day trip to Żyrardów, a town famous for a long tradition of industrial linen production, which is a candidate for the UNESCO World Heritage List inclusion.

The closing ceremony took place on representative premises of the Tyszkiewicz–Potocki Palace, which serves as the seat of the East European Studies Institute of the University of Warsaw. The final speech was given by Prof. Ihor Tsependa, Rector of Vasyl Stefanyk Carpathian National University, who focused on scientific diplomacy in the contemporary world. The subsequent panel discussion entitled *Thirty-Five Years in the Region: The Course, Events and Consequences* was hosted by former Summer School attendees who are currently holding high academic positions in their countries. One of these participants, Doc. Břetislav Dančák, is Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Poland, previously Vice-Rector of Masaryk University in Brno. In the end, the attendees received a diploma on successful attendance of the 35th East European Summer School of the University of Warsaw, which authorises them to join the Graduates and Lecturers Club. The club leaders composing of former chairpersons hold regular reunions for their members connected with organization of international scientific conferences, which have already taken place in Brno, Yaremche, Kaunas, Kiev, Lviv, Odessa, Prague, Sofia, Warsaw and Vilnius. The next conference is scheduled for autumn 2026, most likely in Belgrade. The participation in the East European Summer School in Warsaw can therefore contribute to the scientific growth of young researchers in the humanities and help them establish important international contacts.

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