



Neuankommende Visiting Fellows des IWM im Jänner 2026

Zum Start des neuen Jahres begrüßt das Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen sechs neue Fellows. Während ihres Aufenthalts verfolgen sie untenstehende Forschungsprojekte. Für Presseanfragen kontaktieren Sie bitte iwm-pr@iwm.at.



Maria Baramova

Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

January – June 2026

Staging the Border: The Symbolic Creation of the Danube Monarchy in Southeastern Europe before 1791

Borders and border regions have attracted intensified scholarly interest, shaped by historiographical developments and 20th-century conflicts. This project examines how the European–Ottoman frontier in the early modern Balkans was perceived, visualized, and staged. Concentrating on the Habsburg–Ottoman

border that reconfigured Southeastern Europe, Maria Baramova examines how cartography, print media, and public reception signaled dominance, obscured defeats, or projected dynastic and expansionist ambitions.



Katia Denysova

University of Basel and University of Tübingen

January – April 2026

Universal and Vernacular, Abstract and Decorative: Non-Figurative Art from Kyiv

In March 1918, the artist Alexandra Exter opened a private art studio in Kyiv. Her teaching methodology combined extremely radical formal experiments with folk art, especially Ukrainian decorative traditions. In the volatile environment of social disruption, Exter’s studio attracted aspiring artists from Kyiv’s Jewish,

Ukrainian, and Russian communities, who wanted to learn about the latest trends in European art while synthesizing them with elements of their cultural heritage. Exter’s practice problematizes the relationship between the promise of modernist art—especially

abstract art—to transcend ethnic or national confines, and its historical debts to vernacular material and folk cultures.



Nils Gilman

Berggruen Institute, Los Angeles

January – February 2026

The Architecture of Planetary Realism

The nation-state is an existential liability. Clinging to 17th-century borders while facing 21st-century biological collapse is a necro-political suicide pact. To survive, we must transition from Westphalian diplomacy to Planetary Realism. Building on his 2024 book *Children of a Modest Star*, Nils Gilman's project at the IWM aims to describe a world order based on the principle of 'planetary subsidiarity' that treats the

biosphere as a non-negotiable security domain. This framework proposes functionally specific governance authorities with mandatory, coercive jurisdiction over border-defying issues like carbon emissions, pandemic risk remediation, and space junk.



Edward Knudsen

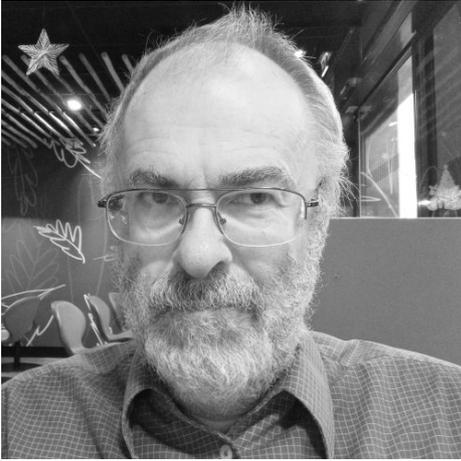
University of Oxford and Hertie School, Berlin

January – March 2026

Tariffs, Technology, and Transfer Unions: The Historical Origins of European Economic (Dis)Unity

Despite the European Union's best efforts at forging greater economic, cultural, and political unity among member states, Europe's "usable past" in economic history remains a patchwork of national stories, rather than a unified narrative. This fragmentation limits the cohesiveness of Europe's economic policies,

trapping it amid a variety of competing goals, philosophies, and visions of the continent's place in the future geoeconomic order. Given rising international tensions and external challenges ranging from sanctions and tariffs to aggressive industrial policies, this poses a significant risk to Europe's stability and prosperity.



Martin Malek

Federal Ministry of Defence, Vienna

January – February 2026

State Failure in the Post-Soviet Space

Historically, states were wiped off the map by military conquest, by splitting into several new states, or, conversely, by merging with other states. But in the second half of the 20th century, a distinctive phenomenon emerged: the extensive destruction of state institutions (as well as that of society in general) resulting from incessant internal disruption (e.g., secession movements), commonly referred to as “state

failure.” Malek Martin has developed 13 categories for analyzing this extremely significant phenomenon. At the core, as the basis for all the others, is the state monopoly on the use of physical force, as outlined by the German sociologist Max Weber.



Maksym Snihyr

National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy

January – April 2026

Unwanted yet Documented: The Legal Status of Refugees from Soviet Ukraine in 1930s Romania

The focus of this project is to investigate the fates of migrants forced to leave the USSR for Romania in the early 1930s, as well as the decision-making process followed by the Romanian authorities. By analyzing the frameworks for immigrant protection and the implementation of the legislation in practice, this research highlights the differentiated approach taken

by the Romanian authorities toward refugees when determining whom to repatriate to the USSR and whom to allow to stay and provide with the necessary documents.

Rückfragehinweis:

Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen

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