

BEYOND EMPIRES

Eastern Europe in Focus

We are a group of students from different European countries who work on various aspects within Eastern European Studies – and now we decided to found an online magazine for students, scholars and broader public, titled “Beyond Empires: Eastern Europe in Focus.”

We believe that students in Area Studies produce exciting and insightful pieces about Eastern Europe that deserve to be read by more people than the students’ supervisors. This magazine aims to create a platform where voices from Eastern Europe and Area Studies can be heard and become a part of a dialogue, where students can get published and reach a wider audience.

To this end, we are looking for you as contributors and authors. The first edition will be published in September, with a broad scope of topics regarding Eastern Europe. You’ll find more details about our publication below. If you want to contribute, please get back to us until July 10th – either with a first draft of a text you want to contribute, or with a pitch on a topic (please also include writing samples). If you don’t have an idea yet, don’t worry. We’ll have a call for contributions every quarter.

THE MAGAZINE

In October 2025, a student conference on Eastern Europe took place at the Free University of Berlin. The conference brought together postcolonial and anti-imperialist perspectives from various disciplines – from history, political science, and cultural studies to art, sociology, and journalism studies. But we did not want the discussions to end with the conference itself. We wanted to create a space where these academic, activist, and journalistic debates could continue and develop over time. That is how the idea for this online magazine emerged.

At the same time, we did not simply want to create yet another academic journal. We want to make scholarship accessible: through creative and experimental writing, field research presented in the form of reportage, through pop culture, theoretical essays, and informed commentary that can sometimes be provocative, sharp, or humorous. And of course, there should always be room for more “classical” academic work.

The magazine is expected to launch in September and will be published quarterly. Each online issue will revolve around an overarching theme, accompanied by a specific call for texts.

The sections we are currently envisioning include:

- The Interview: Conversations with researchers, activists, or community members
- Research and Reportage: A space for students to present their research, expand on aspects of seminar papers or academic articles, or publish reportages from fieldwork and debates connected to scholarly discussions
- Essay and Opinion: Theoretical essays, critiques of dominant discourses, or short commentaries on current events and developments
- Culture: Have you read an excellent book – or a terrible one you want to write a scathing review of? Want to discuss your favorite Eastern European pop group? Interested in camp, film, artists, exhibitions, photography, or fashion?
- Recipe: Because food is great, every issue will also feature an Eastern European recipe

- Forum: A space for responses to texts published in previous issues – where authors and readers can react, critique, praise, and debate

The magazine will be published in English. However, if you would also like to publish your texts alongside it in your native language, we are currently working on a technical solution to make that possible as well.

Of course, none of this is set in stone. We are open to new ideas, conceptual contributions, as well as to criticism.

WHO WE ARE

When we write "we," we mean our current editorial team: Julia, Luca, Olga, Ella and Dominik

Julia Steenpaß (she/her) is currently pursuing a master's degree in Eastern European Studies with a bachelor's degree in geography and comes from a Russia German family. Her research focuses on international relations and post-imperial dynamics.

Luca Lang (he/she/they) is currently pursuing a master's degree in Eastern European at Freie Universität Berlin studies focusing on sociology, queer studies and digital authoritarianism. They've been working as a journalist for over four years and reported from Ukraine and Gagauzia.

Olga Kiseleva-Kuvshinskaia (she/her) is an MA graduate of the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies, FU Berlin, with major in Political Science and minors in Economics and History. Her main interests however lie in International Relations and Conflict Studies with the focus on Eastern Europe, since she benefits from a vast background of studies in Humanities, holding BA in Russian and European Philology. Her research touches on a variety of topics from resources in International Relations, role of culture in politics, to security guarantees studies.

Ella Sadigh (she/her) is doing a master in Eastern European studies focusing on historical Poland. Her research focuses on popular culture, literature and power relations.

Dominik Danelski (he/him) is currently pursuing an master's degree at the university of Łódź and focusing on the relations of Eastern Europe and countries of the African continent.

FINANCING

At the moment, we cannot pay our contributors and authors. We are working on this magazine in our free time and currently have no funding. The website we are developing is initially being financed by ourselves. However, after the first issues are published, there will be opportunities to attract funds.

If you are interested in becoming a contributor for "Beyond Empires: Focus Eastern Europe," simply reply to this email.

And if you would like to become more actively involved in the editorial team, feel free to mention that as well. We are very much looking forward to the exchange and collaboration.

We're looking forward to hearing from you!

Julia, Luca, Ella, Olga and Dominik

