

# ERSTE Foundation Fellowship for Social Research

Vienna, June 25, 2014

## CALL FOR PAPERS 2014/2016

Demographic and socio-economic changes affecting the development of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe are among the most significant challenges for the future of social cohesion and solidarity building in our societies.

ERSTE Foundation invites researchers, scientists and practitioners from Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe to research on topics related to economic and social demographic change. The fellowships are awarded based on a proposal for a research paper approaching the research topic listed below, in a theoretical, empirical or practical way.

### Research topic

#### **Diasporas, nation states and mainstream societies in Central and Eastern Europe**

The term *Diaspora* refers to geographically dispersed populations who relate themselves collectively to a (former) homeland outside their country of residence. This dispersion can either be traced back to earlier settlements, displacement, dissolution of Empires and multi-ethnic states; or it can be the result of more recent labour migration and refugee flows.

Diasporas are characterized by their ability to connect or at least identify with a (former) homeland; they can play an eminent role in preserving and upholding language, culture, and religion. Diasporas can be instrumental in fostering ties between their country of residence and the former homeland they relate to. And they make substantial economic contributions by sending remittances or investing in their country of origin.

Diasporas are often involved in politics both in the country they live in and in the country they relate to. This partly depends on issues like citizenship, voting rights and political mobilisation. For this reason diasporas can become an obstacle or a challenge for the relations of two countries. In the past diasporas have also played a crucial role in cases of regime change as they harboured alternative elites and made them ready to return.

Most CEE countries have diasporas related to neighbouring countries living on their territories. And most CEE countries have a considerable number of co-ethnics or citizens living abroad. Therefore this region offers an ideal case for studying diasporas, their impact and the ways in which modern European nation states are dealing with the issue.

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social-research

## **Research questions**

We would like to initiate a discussion and analyse the relation between diasporas, their country of residence and their former homeland, the engagement of diasporas in economic development, political life, the link to governments and to civil society in general:

- How are CEE countries dealing with diasporas established on their territories?
- How do CEE countries relate to co-ethnic diasporas in neighbouring countries as well as to citizens who have immigrated to other countries?
- How do diasporas/does a particular diaspora relate to governments?
- What positive or negative roles are diasporas playing in the relations between their country of residence and the country they relate to?
- To which extent can diasporas be seen as agents of change
- Can the existing diaspora engagement strategies in CEE serve as “good practices” for others?
- What is the interaction between diasporas and mainstream society?
- Which role have diasporas played in the process of nation building in CEE?
- What is the contribution of international migration and diasporas to economic and social transformation in CEE?
- How can the private sector (including non-profit organizations) support the contributions diasporas make to their countries of origin?
- What role does/can the EU play in harnessing the developmental potential of CEE diasporas?
- What norms, beliefs and practices do CEE diasporas transport or transform?

## **Target group**

Researchers, scientists and practitioners from Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe studying or dealing with economic, political and cultural relations, engagement of diaspora and international migration and/or diaspora politics in this region in a theoretical, empirical or practical way. The research proposals should not only consider opportunities, but also

tackle possible challenges created by diasporas and international migration. Wherever possible, research results should lead to policy recommendations.

### **The Fellowship includes**

- Financial support for up to one year for researching on the proposed paper;
- Invitation to scientific conferences;
- Affiliation with a network of researchers and practitioners interested in socio-economic and demographic change, employment and unemployment, aging, migration and intergenerational transfers;
- Participation in several internal workshops: kick-off meeting, Summer School, closing event and selected public events;
- Publication and promotion of results.

### **Timeline and milestones**

The selection of the fellows is made on a competitive basis. A jury consisting of academics and professionals from different universities and institutions will review all applications and interview the shortlisted applicants for the fellowship programme 2014-2016:

- **25 June – 24 August:** Open call for papers
- **24 August – 19 October:** Pre-selection of potential papers
- **End of October:** Interviews the shortlisted applicants in Vienna, location tba
- **16 November:** Announcement of the selected fellows
- **20 November – 15 December:** Establishing the contractual agreements with the selected fellows
- **January 2015:** Beginning of the 12 month-cycle social research fellowship
- **Spring 2015:** Discussion of the research concept and first results among fellows, 3-days kick-off meeting location tba.
- **28 June 2015:** Deadline for delivering a first draft version of the research paper for the summer school
- **August 2015:** Summer School for one week, location tba.
- **15 November 2015:** Deadline for delivering a final draft version of the research paper for peer reviewing
- **December 2015 – March 2016:** peer reviewing and revision by the fellows of the final versions of the research paper
- **15 March 2016:** Deadline for delivering the final paper

- **Spring 2016** – presentation of research results and closing event
- Publication of results in 2016.

**Working and publication language: English**

**Financial support**

Subsidies for research activities, meetings, data purchase, expert-interviews, translation and travel expenses will be granted as a quarterly stipend in total of € 12.000.

The results will provide a timely, well-founded and practical basis for the planning and decision-making of policy-makers, civil society and business, but also for ERSTE Foundation's work in the CEE region. The researchers' specific recommendations will be promoted in the region by ERSTE Foundation and its partners to the relevant organisations and institutions active in the political sphere, civil society and the economic sphere.

Please apply by **24 August 2014** using our online system: <https://apply.erstestiftung.org/fellowship>. For further questions, do not hesitate to contact us at: [socialresearch@erstestiftung.org](mailto:socialresearch@erstestiftung.org)

Best regards,

Rainer Münz / Research Advisor  
Alina Şerban / Project Manager