

Brief report: URIS Workshop Russia's War in Ukraine: Migration, Identity, and Belonging

25 May 2023, University of Basel

On 25 May URIS held a workshop "Russia's War in Ukraine: Migration, Identity, and Belonging" devoted to various dimensions of the migration process caused by Russian aggression against Ukraine. Our current URIS Fellow [Dr. Marta Havryshko](#) organized this workshop and invited outstanding scholars to Basel.

During the introductory section, Prof. Benjamin Schenk welcomed all participants of the event and presented the conception, goals, and activities of the URIS Program.

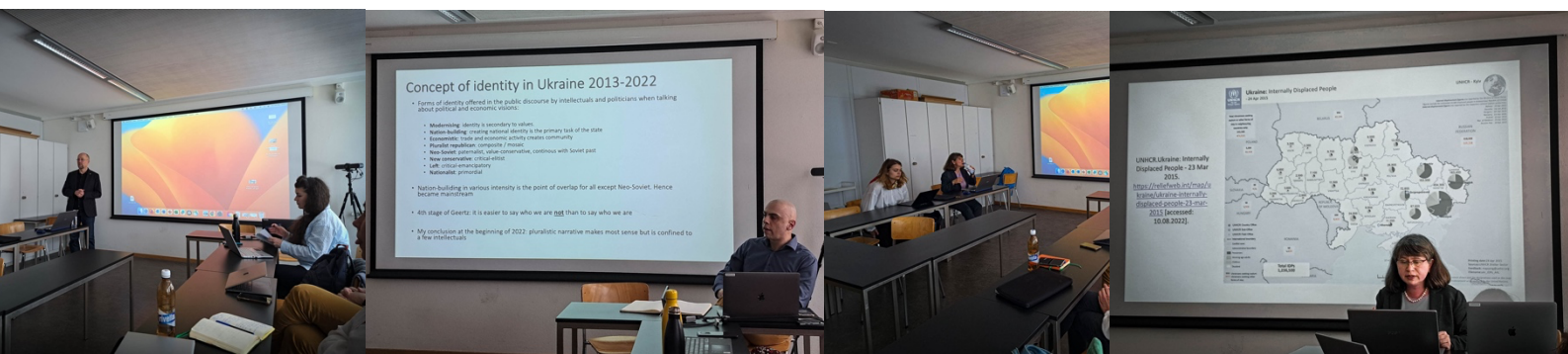
The workshop's first panel was devoted to the experiences of the people who, due to the warfare, were forced to leave their homes and seek shelter within or outside Ukraine. During this panel, [Dr. Oksana Mikheeva](#), a



professor at the Ukrainian Catholic University and visiting professor at the European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder), presented her research on activities, life trajectories, and self-perception of internally displaced persons in Ukraine during 2014-2022. [Dr. Oleksandra Tarkhanova](#), a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute of Sociology at the University of Neuchâtel and a postdoctoral researcher at the Center for Governance and Culture in Europe at the University of St. Gallen, examined the role of security issues, family members, social ties, career opportunities, and other factors in decision-making processes of forced migrants during Russia's war in Ukraine. [Nataliya Borys](#), a Ph.D.

candidate from the University of Geneva, concentrated her analyses on psychological challenges faced by the specific group of Ukrainian refugees who ended up in Geneva after the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022. She described her experience assisting refugees in different facilities, including hospitals, where she served as a translator.

The second part of the workshop dealt with the question of identity in times of Russia's war in Ukraine. Dr. Bohdan Kolesnyk from Basel focused on the concept of identity in Ukrainian political discourse in 2013-2023. The author described different forms of identity offered by intellectuals and politicians in Ukraine, such as: statist, national conservative, ethnic, civic, elitist, libertarian, primordial, and emancipatory. The next speaker, [Hanna Perekhoda](#), a Ph.D. candidate from the University of Lausanne, presented a paper about the role of Russian national identity in Russia's war against Ukraine. She analyzed the discourses of Russian elites in the XIX-XXI centuries that devoted a special role to Ukraine in terms of Russia's history and policy.



Workshop program

Welcome / Introduction by F. Benjamin Schenk and Marta Havryshko

Panel 1: Fleeing the War. Experiences of Refugees and IDP

Oksana Mikheeva (Frankfurt (Oder)): Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine: “Victims” or “Agents of Change”?

Oleksandra Tarkhanova (St. Gallen): Understanding Decision-Making Processes in Forced Displacement Following the Russian Invasion

Nataliya Borys (Geneva): Ukrainian Refugees in Switzerland. Dealing with War Trauma: Psychological Support for Ukrainian Refugees in Geneva

Chair: **Marta Havryshko**

Panel 2: Identities in War

Bohdan Kolesnyk (Basel): Concept of Identity in Ukrainian Political Discourse during the War

Hanna Perekhoda (Lausanne): An Identity War? Reflecting on the Rise of Russian Irre-

dentism

Chair: **Olena Palko**

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