

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Association for the Study of Nationalities (ASN) European Conference

Reconfiguring National Identities amid Multiple Crises

18–20 September 2026
Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory
University of Belgrade

Organizer:

Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade,
in cooperation with the Association for the Study of Nationalities (ASN)



ASSOCIATION FOR THE
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Edited by:

Adriana Zaharijević, Gazela Pudar Draško, Maja Pupovac, Vujo Ilić

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CONFERENCE PROGRAM

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

Session 1

Panel 01 Minority Recognition in Southeast Europe

Panel 02 Theorizing Nationalism and Knowledge Production

Panel 03 Crisis, Security, and National Identity in Serbia

Session 2

Panel 04 Minorities in the Baltics and Eastern Europe

Panel 05 National Identity in North Macedonia

Panel 06 National Identities and Protests in Serbia

Session 3

Panel 07 Minorities in Central Europe

Panel 08 Identity, Language, and Education

Book Panel 1 The Croatian Diaspora in Argentina: From Martyrs to Memory Guardians

Session 4

Panel 09 War, Law, and Memory

Panel 10 Nationality and Literature

Book Panel 2 Realigning Humanitarianism in the Balkans: From Cold War Politics to Neoliberal Ethics

Session 5

Keynote Lecture

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

Session 1

Panel 11 National Identities in the Age of Empires

Panel 12 Russian and Belarusian Identity in Exile

Roundtable 01 Rethinking Migration and “Home” in Southeast Europe

Session 2

Panel 13 National Identities in the Era of World Wars

Panel 14 Ethnic Identification and Mobilization

Panel 15 The Impact of Russia’s War on Kin Politics in the Region

Session 3

Panel 16 Croatia's National Narratives on War, Communism, and Nationalism

Panel 17 Responses to the War in Ukraine

Panel 18 Deliberative Communication without Democracy

Session 4

Panel 19 Nationalism and the Far-Right

Roundtable 02 Legacies and Meanings of Antifascism in Yugoslavia and Beyond

Book Panel 3 "Русский мир" and "Srpski svet": Ideas, Projects, Wars

Session 5

Keynote Lecture

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

Session 1

Panel 20 Turkish Identity in Turkey and Beyond

Panel 21 Labor Migration and Conditional Inclusion in Southeast Europe

Panel 22 Populism, Backsliding, and Contested Identities

Session 2

Panel 23 National Identity from Socialism to Post-Socialism

Panel 24 New Labor Migration in Croatia

Roundtable 03 The Balkans in the World Turmoil

Session 3

Panel 25 Migration, Racialization, and Belonging

Panel 26 Ukrainian Identity, Language, and Culture

Roundtable 04 The Balkans in Crisis. Populism, Post-Democracy, and the Geopolitical Impact

Session 4

Panel 27 Everyday Life and Political Economy in the Yugoslav Space

Panel 28 Ukrainian Identity, Memory, and War

Panel 29 National Identity and European Union Enlargement

Session 5

Panel 30 Narrating the Nation in the Yugoslav Space

**PANEL 21 LABOR MIGRATION AND CONDITIONAL INCLUSION IN
SOUTHEAST EUROPE**

Sunday 20 September, 08.45–10.15, Floor IV

**Do I Belong Here? Investigating the Influences of Skill
Development, Mismatch, and Workplace Justice among
Migrant Workers**

Filip Peovski*

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, North Macedonia
peovski@eccf.ukim.edu.mk

Bojan Kitanovikj

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, North Macedonia

Violeta Cvetkoska

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, North Macedonia

Ljupcho Eftimov

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, North Macedonia

**presenting/corresponding author*

Confronted with intensifying labor shortages and demographic decline, post-socialist European countries, which have long been defined by outward mobility, are now rapidly becoming destinations for labor migrants (Radu et al., 2026). In these new migration destination contexts, recruitment networks and employer demand often expand faster than migration governance, integration policies, and institutional coordination (Predojević Despić & Lukić, 2024). As a result, we believe this produces ambiguity and uneven regulation that shape labor relations and boundaries of belonging (Barnickel & Beichelt, 2013). Additionally, little is known about how this shift reshapes everyday boundaries of belonging on the ground. Existing labor migration research has largely focused on Western Europe and North America, overlooking how skill (mis)match and justice at work interact in these newer destinations to shape migrants' experiences and longer-term attachment. Addressing this gap, the study's research question examines how opportunities for skill development, perceived skill (mis)match, justice at work, social participation, and discrimination jointly influence migrant workers' sense of belonging in North Macedonia's labor-shortage sectors, as determinants of social participation and integration of migrants at work. This comes at a time when the country is increasingly opening its doors to migrant workers to fill pressing labor market

gaps. Drawing on boundary-making and belonging scholarship and theories of migrant skill formation and (mis)match, we develop and test a model linking migrants' opportunities for skill development (measured with items adapted from Pejtersen et al. (2010)), perceived skill (mis)match (measured with items adapted from Maynard et al. (2006)), justice at work (Pejtersen et al., 2010), social participation (Mars et al., 2009), and experiences of discrimination (Harnois et al., 2019) to their sense of belonging in the host society. Thus, we conceptualize them as outcomes of potential institutional lag, rather than just organizational practices. Using a cross-sectional survey of migrant workers employed in labor-shortage sectors across North Macedonia and structural equation modeling, we examine how fair access to skill development opportunities and adequate skill utilization influence perceived justice, and how these in turn foster migrants' participation in workplace and community life. We expect that higher skill mismatch and perceived discrimination will be associated with lower justice and reduced social participation, thereby undermining feelings of belonging, while meaningful opportunities for skill development will partially offset these negative effects. The findings will inform debates on how new migrant-receiving contexts in post-socialist Europe redraw boundaries between labor market insiders and newcomers and will signal how workplace practices can either reinforce or challenge racialized and hierarchical constructions of migrant labor. By linking micro-level experiences to macro-institutional conditions, the study's originality lies in bringing together skill (mis)match, justice at work, social participation, and discrimination in a single explanatory framework focused on a new destination context, offering conceptual refinement of sustainable labor migration. Additionally, the findings are relevant for migration policymakers and labor authorities, who seek to design fairer, more inclusive labor-migration structures focused on inter-institutional coordination, enforcement capacity, skills recognition, equitable access to training, and mechanisms for safeguarding migrants' voice and protection.