

## SUUN Lecture Series 2026

### Relations, Resilience, Resistance: Challenges for Higher Education in Ukraine and Beyond

The SUUN Hybrid Lecture Series 2026 is an interdisciplinary, jointly developed teaching format that brings together lecturers and students from Saarland University and Ukrainian universities. Conceived as a hybrid platform for dialogue and exchange, the series responds to the evolving challenges faced by Higher Education Institutions in Ukraine and in international academic contexts shaped by war, crisis, displacement, and rapid digital transformation. Bringing together scholars from the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Law, (with a special focus on Border Studies, Digital and Cultural Studies, and related fields), the lecture series examines how universities navigate disrupted infrastructures, shifting knowledge ecologies, and the pressures of geopolitical conflict, migration, and societal change. Particular attention will be given to questions of academic freedom, institutional resilience, intercultural dialogue, and the role of higher education in sustaining democratic values under conditions of uncertainty.

Each lecture focuses on a specific contemporary challenge – ranging from secondary education under wartime conditions to universities in exile, European integration reforms, generative AI in research and teaching, and ethical methodologies in fragile contexts. These themes are situated within broader cultural, political, and structural contexts, encouraging participants to critically reflect on the transformation of knowledge production and institutional governance in times of crisis. Open to students of all disciplines, the series contributes to Saarland University's internationalization and multilingualism strategy. By enabling online participation, it ensures broader accessibility and sustained engagement across borders. Beyond knowledge transfer, the series aims to strengthen long-term academic relations within the SUUN network, foster collaborative curriculum development, and create a shared intellectual space for collective reflection on the future of higher education.

With funding from the:

## Thematic block 1. Ukrainian Education and Academia in Times of War: Resilience, Transformation, and European Integration

**June 11-July 16, 2026, Thursdays, 16.00-18.00 CSET / 17.00 – 19.00 EEST**

### **Zoom Meeting:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89662760990?pwd=Gbn1XCkoYk3RrUM7hCuuq3KxOGpMzbU.1>

**Meeting ID: 896 6276 0990**

**Passcode: 0fAdD0**

### **Opening Lecture 1: Academic freedom and Resilience: Scholars in Times of War**

**Thursday, June 11, 16.00-18.00 CSET**

**Welcoming words:** Astrid M. Fellner, SUUN academic director, Saarland University

**Presenter:** Viktoria Sereda, Kyiv School of Economics, VUIAS Head Coordinator

#### **Focus:**

- Pressures on autonomy and academic freedom
- EU – Ukraine emergency support and cooperation
- Protecting scholars, students, and campus environments

### **Lecture 2. Challenges and Transformations of Secondary education under wartime conditions**

**Thursday, June 18, 16.00-18.00 CSET**

**Speaker:** Inna Volosevych, Deputy Director, Info Sapiens Ukraine

#### **Focus:**

- Impact of war on educational infrastructure
- Learning inequalities and access
- Policy adaptation strategies

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## **SUUN round table. Borders in Flux and Academic Communities: Ukrainian Higher Education in a Wartime Context**

**Thursday, June 25, 16.00-18.00 CSET**

**Moderator:** Astrid M. Fellner (Saarland University)

**Speakers:**

Alla Tsapiv (Kherson University), **Leading a Displaced University: Crises Management, Academic Resilience, and Internationalization in Wartime Ukraine**

Natalia Marakhovska (Mariupol University), **The Civic University in Exile: Weaving Academia, Community, and Diaspora for Resilience and Mariupol Memory**

Natalia Tsybuliak (Berdyansk State Pedagogical University) **The Invisible cost of resilience: mental health in Ukrainian academic communities during wartime**

**Focus:**

- The impact of the Russo-Ukrainian War on higher education and academic communities
- Challenges of teaching, research, and student support under conditions of war
- Cross-border relations, and transnational academic cooperation during wartime

## **Lecture 3. Impact of the full scale war on science and higher education in Ukraine: insights from Ukrainian science diaspora**

**Thursday, July 2, 16.00-18.00 CSET**

**Presenter:** Tetiana Kostiuhenko, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy

**Focus:**

- Institutional resilience among universities
- Emergency measures for teaching and research
- Effects of war on academic communities

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## **Lecture 4. Ukrainian students abroad: wartime challenges and strategies of adaptation**

**Thursday, July 9, 16.00-18.00 CSET**

**Presenter:** Helen Pidgorna, sociologist and head of Ukraine Global program

**Focus:**

- Educational access in displacement
- Transnational schooling networks
- Challenges of reintegration

## **Lecture 5. Path to European Integration and Internationalization of Ukrainian Education**

**Thursday, July 16, 16.00-18.00 CSET**

**Presenter:** Iryna Sykorska, Director of the Center of International Education, Mariupol State University

**Focus:**

- European integration processes
- Internationalization and reforms in wartime
- Governance, funding, and policy alignment

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