

CfP

## **(Pro)Creating a Socialist Future**

### **Knowledge, Politics, and Practices of Reproduction in Eastern Europe and the (post)-Soviet Space**

International Workshop

Helsinki (Finland)

October 1<sup>st</sup>- 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026

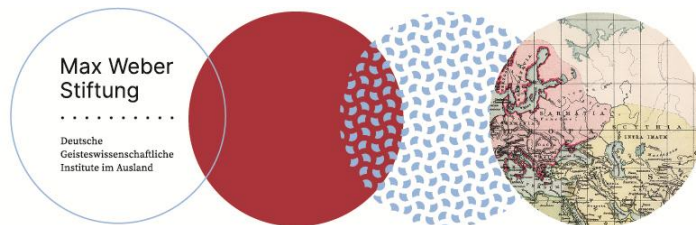
**Deadline: May 30th, 2026**

In the 19th and 20th centuries, reproduction moved into the focus of both political and scientific concern. Newly emerging subdisciplines of biology and medicine reshaped knowledge on human procreation. Reproduction became a projection screen for societal visions and fears, as well as a field of governmental activity and political controversy.

Being a main target of the twentieth century's biopolitical efforts to manage the future of state and society, at the same time, reproduction sits at the intersection of many aspects of human life, from the intimate to the political. This workshop therefore assumes that reproduction, to cite the editors of the seminal volume of the very topic, "should be central in the writing of history" [Hopwood, Fleming and Kassell, 2018].

The editors of this in many respects staggeringly comprehensive volume argue that the history of reproduction should be written as one of expanding and shifting networks of approaches to do justice to the "different ways the world has and has not been joined up". At the same time, they acknowledge that "accounts of the United States and western Europe remain dominant." In fact, the socialist world is largely omitted from narratives on global reproduction, despite a lively field of ongoing research on reproduction and reproductive politics within multiple socialist modernities.

However, the specific approaches in socialist societies to reproductive health care, to family planning and legislation on abortion as well as the attitude of socialist governments towards



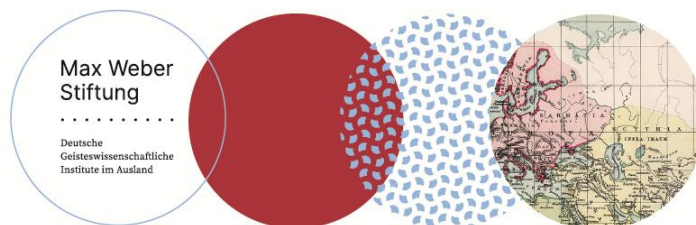
pronatalist and population growth control policies make the integration of the socialist experience into a global history of reproduction as indispensable as the consideration of the socialist experience in the history of global health [Iacob 2022, Vargha 2023]. The workshop seeks to bring together scholars working on reproduction in Eastern Europe, the (post)Soviet space, and (former) socialist countries across the Global South to explore how (post)socialist societies negotiated their identities and futures through reproductive politics and practices. The aim is to analyze knowledge production, connections between government policies and individual reproductive choices as well as differences, entanglements and conflicting positions among the countries of the socialist bloc.

A non-exhaustive list of topics to be discussed might include:

- Reproduction and health care: Expansion and management of prenatal and maternal health care
- Demographic concerns and reproductive politics: Pronatalism, mortality rates, populational health concerns, eugenic tendencies
- Pregnancy and birth from a perspective of micro history, everyday history or history of the body
- Cultural (re)production: representations of sexual relations, childbearing and birth in literature and film
- Family planning and abortion
- Gender as an aspect of reproduction and reproductive politics,
- (Technical) materialities of reproduction and maternal health care
- Medical sciences and reproduction: perinatal medicine, prenatal diagnostics and reproductive medicine
- Protection of reproductive health and pregnancy: environmental and occupational health concerns

Max Weber Netzwerk

# Osteuropa



Papers that focus on so-called peripheral regions and/or that address a transnational or global dimension of reproduction and/or its politics are especially welcome. In terms of time, the workshop is planned to span the long 20th century, with a focus on the era of socialism, but also the decades before and after.

The workshop is organized by the Max Weber Network Eastern Europe and will take place in Helsinki on **October 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026**. The organizers will cover the accommodation and travel costs (up to a maximum sum) for the invited participants.

Please submit your paper proposals (ca. 300 words) and a short CV to [birte.kohtz@mws-osteuropa.org](mailto:birte.kohtz@mws-osteuropa.org) by **May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026**. Applicants will be informed about participation in late June 2026.