

Workshop in a Nutshell as part of the Teaching Assistantship Programme 2017

Language Policy, Minority Rights, and Democratization: Case Studies of Contemporary Estonia, Latvia, and Ukraine

Organizational details

Instructor: Ksenia Maksimovstova

Date: May 17, 2017 from 16.00 to 20.00 h

Location: Campus Wirtschaftswissenschaften, Licher Strasse 68, D-35390 Giessen, room 024 (HS 024)

Content

The disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the fall of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe have profoundly changed the political outlook of the world. The ambiguous national policy of the Soviet authorities and the turbulent political transformations caused several ethnic- and language-related conflicts (Nagorny Karabakh, the status of Russian speakers in the Baltics etc.) and highlighted the issue of language management and ethnic minorities' protection that are closely intertwined. In the first part of the workshop, the current tendencies in language policy development will be discussed. The questions that will be addressed encompass the interplay between language policy, nation-building, and minority protection and are formulated as follows: What are the characteristics of the language situation in former post-Soviet republics? How are minority rights and language policy connected with nation-building and democratization in Eastern Europe?

The second part of the workshop deals with the case study of contemporary Estonia, Latvia, and Ukraine where language policy has radically shifted from the previous domination of the Russian language that had been „the language of intercultural communication" in the Soviet times to the promotion of the state languages that caused an ambiguous public reaction of some Russians and Russian speakers who lost their politically advantageous position and were transformed into a minority group. The controversial language policy and the strict citizenship rules in the Baltics attracted some criticism from many international organizations and the European Union in general and raised the problem of Estonia, Latvia and Ukraine's democratic development that are the focus of the following workshop.

During the seminar, I try to explain where the main obstacles in post-Soviet democratic development are and how it relates to language and minority issues in Ukraine and the Baltics. My conclusions will be based on the discourse analysis of the publications in the Russian-language blogs and news websites.

Target group

Students, Doctoral Candidates and Postdocs of all Faculties

Course language

English

Registration

Please register **by May 10, 2017** via e-mail at info@ggs.uni-giessen.de.