

**Displacement and (Post)secular Memory:  
Contemporary Crises and Historical Legacies  
in Southeastern and East-Central Europe  
(MEMCRIS)**

Displacement remains one of the defining challenges of our time, and the way we construct its public memory shapes the moral foundation of both present and future societies. Historically, Eastern and Southeastern Europe have been regions of outward migration due to centuries of wars, poverty, and instability. However, recent years have witnessed a shift in this pattern. The refugee crisis of 2015, the economic and political instability in the Global East and Global South, and Russia's violent war of aggression against Ukraine, alongside improving economic conditions in some of East-Central European countries following EU accession, have positioned these regions as new destinations for migration.

The MEMCRIS project investigates how societies in Poland, Serbia and Greece engage with their own histories of displacement while addressing the challenges posed by recent migratory crises. By focusing on museums, memorial sites and religious institutions, the project examines how narratives of displacement are constructed and mobilized. It explores whether these narratives foster cosmopolitan empathy, antagonistic exclusion, dialogue or agonism, or remain introspective, neglecting contemporary challenges. By incorporating both secular and religious institutions—often overlooked in memory studies—the project develops a novel post-secular perspective in relation to displacement. Through this lens, MEMCRIS contributes to broader debates on memory, cultural heritage and migration. MEMCRIS findings will inform academic scholarship and enrich public understanding of cultural heritage of displacement in Southeastern and East-Central Europe.