



# SÜDOSTEUROPA- GESELLSCHAFT

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Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik  
German Institute for International and Security Affairs

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Stabilitätspakt für Südosteuropa  
Gefördert durch Deutschland  
Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe  
Sponsored by Germany

## International Workshop

# The Western Balkans: Interests and Policies of the EU, Russia and Turkey

Berlin, 16 – 17 October, 2014

## Program

### Conference venue

Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP)  
German Institute for International and Security Affairs  
Ludwigkirchplatz 3-4  
10719 Berlin

### Conference Committee

Franz-Lothar **Altmann**, Assoc. Professor, Member of the Board, Southeast Europe Association, Munich  
Hansjörg **Brey**, Executive Director, Southeast Europe Association, Munich  
Johanna **Deimel**, Deputy Director, Southeast Europe Association, Munich  
Dušan **Reljić**, Head of Office, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Office Brussels  
Günter **Seufert**, Senior Associate, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Berlin  
Wim **van Meurs**, Assoc. Professor, Radboud University Nijmegen, Member of the Board, Southeast Europe Association

### Conference language    English

The workshop will take place under **Chatham House Rule** in order to facilitate an open exchange of views.

## **Purpose of the Workshop**

A decade ago, the process of EU integration constituted the dominant framework for the Western Balkans and adjacent regions. The Stability Pact for Southeast Europe and the EU Stabilisation and Association Process opened a perspective of future EU membership for all post-conflict states of the region. Despite its deficiencies as a development agency and a conflict manager, the EU became the focal point of Balkan politics and a key normative factor in politics and society. In a parallel process, the European Neighbourhood Policy framed relations between Europe and its Mediterranean and Eastern neighbours. Tentatively, the EU even developed a regional strategic vision for the Black Sea region and its heterogeneous riparian states. With Turkey, despite setbacks, negotiations on membership enhanced relations since the Helsinki 1999 decision to grant full candidate status to Ankara.

For many observers, the economic power and political leverage implied by gas and oil pipelines through the region appeared to be the only remaining echo of geopolitics and Cold War strategies. Apart from South Stream and Nabucco, European integration became the dominant paradigm, unperturbed by overdue reform progress in the Western Balkans and adjacent regions as well as a handful of frozen conflicts. In sum, all progress (or lack thereof) was measured in terms of the objective of full EU membership and the benchmarks or intermediate steps defined by Brussels. Violent conflict on a geopolitical scale seemed to be a thing of the past, even though most sources of tension still await a permanent settlement. EU integration is implemented as the mechanism to solve outstanding issues.

In the meanwhile, tables have turned. Under Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Ankara seems to have lost most of its interest in the strenuous EU accession process. Brussels perceives Turkey's foreign policy as wayward and in domestic affairs numerous government measures are perceived as running counter to European principles of democracy and good governance. However, both Russia and Turkey are important regional and geopolitical players pursuing their own strategic goals that look to be more and more in competition with EU policies in the Western Balkans. Last, but not least, the Russian involvement in the secession of the Crimea and the weakening of Ukraine after the Euromaidan by the ongoing conflicts in Slavyansk, Donetsk and Lugansk have caused a dramatic deterioration of Moscow's relationship with the EU. Russia's quest for the establishment of the Eurasian Union may not be an equal alternative to the European Union, but the geopolitical ambitions are unmistakable.

Furthermore, the financial and economic crisis in the EU since 2009 severely affects the Western Balkans and has diminished the renowned EU's "magnetism" on potential candidates. There has been a significant negative influence on trade, investments, financing and remittances. All countries in the region are looking for new international partners to increase exports and attract more investments. Consequently, the economic influence of Russia, China, Turkey and the Gulf states has gone up in the Western Balkans. More importantly, the European normative agenda of democracy, civil society and rule of law is increasingly perceived as inadequate for the issues at hand.

The track record of most South-East European countries in terms of democratisation is chequered at best. The personalisation of politics, the weak institutionalisation and societal consolidation of parties remain evident. Often voters seem to place their trust in political newcomers or opt for populist or even authoritarian solutions. Frozen conflicts and fuzzy unrecognised statehood have become enduring phenomena in several locations in and around the Balkans – from Transnistria to Kosovo and its northern part, from Republika Srpska to South Ossetia and, more recently, from the Crimea to Lugansk. Some analysts consider peacekeeping missions and multiparty negotiations as having perpetuated these anomalies rather than outlining a permanent settlement.

The workshop's objectives are twofold: a rethinking of the wider trans-regional perspective and identifying fields of common action and cooperation by the EU, member states and prospective member-states in order to enhance political and socio-economic stability within the polities and in the wider region as a whole.

<b>Thursday, 16 October 2014</b>
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- 16:30 hrs Registration
- 16:45 hrs **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**
- Gernot **Erl**er, MP, Coordinator for Intersocietal Cooperation with Russia, Central Asia and the Eastern Partnership Countries / President Southeast Europe Association, Berlin
- Volker **Perthes**, Executive Chair of the Board and Director, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Berlin
- 17:15 hrs **PANEL I: COLD WAR 2.0? REVIVAL OF A SYSTEM CONFRONTATION AND EMERGENCE OF A NEW WORLD ORDER?**
- Chair:** Dušan **Reljić**, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Berlin/Brussels
- Rapporteur:** Johanna **Deimel**, Deputy Director, Southeast Europe Association, Munich
- Gernot **Erl**er, MP, Coordinator for Intersocietal Cooperation with Russia, Central Asia and the Eastern Partnership Countries / President Southeast Europe Association, Berlin
  - Veton **Surroi**, Berghof Foundation Senior Associate, Pristina
  - Nur **Batur**, Journalist-Commentator, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Communications, Gazi University, Ankara
- 18:45 hrs **PANEL II: ASSESSING EU POLICIES TOWARDS THE WESTERN BALKANS**
- After the end of the post-Yugoslav conflicts, the EU has quickly lost its optimism concerning genuine democratization of politics and society in the region, focusing on functional statehood or rule of law instead. Today, the problems of democratization and democracy in the region are exacerbated by the discontent with representative politics throughout Europe and the particularities of party politics in all East European post-communist states. In some parts of Southeastern Europe, veto powers, religious or nationalist ideologies contrary to democracy add to these problems. It remains to be seen whether models of authoritarian rule or the destabilization of democratic rule will gain a new virulence in the present circumstances.*
- Chair:** Manuel **Sarrazin**, MP, Vice-President Southeast Europe Association, Berlin
- Rapporteur:** Dušan **Reljić**, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Berlin/Brussels
- Remzi **Lani**, Director, Albanian Media Institute, Tirana
  - Alida **Vračić**, Executive Director, Think Tank Populari, Sarajevo
  - Alina **Mungiu-Pippidi**, Professor, Hertie School of Governance, Berlin
  - Ešref Kenan **Rašidagić**, Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Sarajevo
  - André **De Munter**, Policy Analyst - Western Balkans & Turkey, European Parliament, Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union, European Parliament, Brussels

20:15 hrs

Reception

Friday, 17 October 2014

09:30 hrs

**PANEL III: STRATEGIC FOREIGN POLICY CONCEPTS OF THE EXTERNAL ACTORS IN THE WESTERN BALKAN REGION**

*For more than a decade since the Kosovo war, the European Union appeared to be the singular most important international player in Southeastern Europa. Recently, Turkey and Russia have suggested agendas of their own for the wider region Black Sea – Southeastern Europa – Mediterranean. Firstly, these developments have changed the options in the negotiations of the region and individual countries with the EU. Conversely, these developments raise new strategic challenges for the EU beyond reform criteria and incremental integration.*

*What are the long-term interests and agendas of Turkey and Russia for the wider region of the Black Sea, Southeastern Europa and the Mediterranean and how should the EU and the Balkan states react? Have the spheres of interest and of political gravities undergone substantial changes? What are the long term interests vis-à-vis the Western Balkans by the EU, Russia and Turkey? Which roles do other external actors, like the USA and China, play and what are their special interests in the Western Balkan region?*

**Chair:**Ernst **Reichel**, Ambassador, German Federal Foreign Office, Special Envoy for South-Eastern Europe, Turkey and the EFTA States, Berlin**Rapporteur:**Franz-Lothar **Altmann**, Assoc. Professor, Bucharest University, Member of the Board of Southeast Europe Association, Munich

- Mehmet Uğur **Ekinci**, Researcher, SETA Foundation, Ankara
- Filip **Ejdus**, Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade
- Eva **Gross**, Senior Analyst, European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris
- Vladimir **Baranovsky**, Director of the Centre for Situation Analysis; Member of the Board of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations; Professor at Moscow State Institute of International Relations; Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow

11:00 hrs

Coffee Break

11:30 hrs

**PANEL IV: LONG-TERM CONFLICT LINES**

*Recent developments in Ukraine have given a new urgency to the persistence of frozen conflicts, secessionist movements and unresolved issues of territorial minorities in the wider region including the Balkans. At the same*

*time, the integration of the states of the region in Western international organizations, be it EU or NATO, have become politically controversial rather than consensual long-term objectives, both for the candidates and for the organizations. Similarly, the rise of radical Islam in the Middle East has given additional weight to religious issues, too. Humanitarian interventions, precedents of independent statehood, peacekeeping missions all acquired new overtones in the light of various political events in Europe since 2014.*

**Chair:** Wim **van Meurs**, Assoc. Professor, Radboud University Nijmegen, Member of the Board, Southeast Europe Association

**Rapporteur:** Hansjörg **Brey**, Executive Director, Southeast Europe Association, Munich

- Dejan **Jović**, Professor, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb
- Aleksandra **Joksimović**, President, Center for Foreign Policy, Belgrade
- Stevo **Pendarovski**, Professor, University American College, Skopje
- Vessela **Tcherneva**, Senior Policy Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations, Sofia Office

13:00 hrs Lunch

14:30 hrs **PANEL V: THE BALKANS, ENERGY RESOURCES AND ECONOMIC DEPENDENCIES**

*The EU's offer of access to the common market and the four freedoms to the countries of the Western Balkans (and the associated ENP countries) is to some extent "exclusive". In principle, however, with due respect for the conditionalities and protectionism of the common market, the EU champions an open system of trade and mobility which allows (candidate) countries to cooperate with Turkey, Russia and other regional partners. The governments of the SEE states face impossible choices: they depend on the economic relations with Europe and Western FDI, but at the same time they cannot afford to alienate Russia and risk higher energy prices, revoked investments or import boycotts. Conversely, the EU has to reconsider its conditionalities and economic assistance for the region in view of these constraints.*

**Chair:** Franz-Lothar **Altmann**, Assoc. Professor, Bucharest University, Member of the Board of Southeast Europe Association, Munich

**Rapporteur:** Tannas **Michel**, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin

- Dirk **Buschle**, Deputy Director, Energy Community Secretariat, Vienna
- Birgül **Demirtaş**, Assoc. Professor, TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Ankara
- András **Deak**, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of World Economics, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest

16:00 hrs	Coffee Break
16:30 hrs	<p><b><u>PANEL VI: CONTINUED CONFLICT OR BRIDGING THE DIVIDE? – COMMON INTERESTS AND POSSIBLE FIELDS OF COOPERATION</u></b></p> <p><i>New strategies by Russia and to a lesser degree Turkey and the precedents of Crimea, eastern Ukraine and Georgia are changing the parameters of the choices of national governments and the strategies of the International Community. The on-going Eurocrisis and the envisaged enlargement moratorium for the Juncker Commission add to the challenges the states of the Western Balkans face. What are - in the present climate of distrust and confrontation - plausible scenarios for regional, pan-European and international cooperation and shared interests?</i></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Günter <b>Seufert</b>, Senior Associate, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Berlin</p> <p><b>Rapporteur:</b> Johanna <b>Deimel</b>, Deputy Director, Southeast Europe Association, Munich</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Gazmend <b>Turdiu</b>, Deputy Secretary General, Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat, Sarajevo</li> <li>➤ Nikolay <b>Petrov</b>, Professor, Political Science Department, Higher School of Economics Research Institute, Moscow</li> <li>➤ Dimitar <b>Bechev</b>, Senior Visiting Fellow, European Institute of the London School of Economics</li> </ul>
18:00 hrs	END OF THE CONFERENCE
20:00 hrs	Informal Dinner

**Conference Secretariate:**

**Rettig** Petra, German Institute for International and Security Affairs of the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), Berlin

**Somogyi** Viktoria, Southeast Europe Association, Munich