

## 62<sup>nd</sup> International Academic Week

### Smallness in International Politics: The Agency of Small States in Southeast Europe



*Political Map - First World War. Raemaekers, Loius - Brosse, J. G. (Utrecht).  
Het gekkenhuis [=The Asylum] (oud liedje, nieuwe wijs). Amsterdam, Senefelder, 1914.*

Date: September 30 – October 4, 2024

Venue: Akademie für Politische Bildung in Tutzing, Germany

Conference Committee:

**PD Dr. Dietmar Müller**, Senior Researcher, University of Leipzig

**Prof. Dr. Florian Bieber**, Professor for Southeast European History and Politics at the University of Graz and Director of the Centre for Southeast European Studies

The International Academic Week (HSW) is the Southeast Europe Association's (Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft – SOG) annual key event to bring together early-career researchers (MA/ PhD/ Post-Doc levels) and experienced scholars from all over Europe and beyond to present and discuss their research on the region. This year's conference is hosted by **PD Dr. Dietmar Müller** (University of Leipzig) and **Prof. Dr. Florian Bieber** (University of Graz) and will focus on the topic of "Smallness in International Politics: The Agency of Small States in Southeast Europe"

This International Academic Week approaches the "smallness problem" in international politics from a constructivist angle and with methods from international relations and security studies, the cultural history of politics, transnational feminism, and European studies. On different levels of agency, from local, to regional and national, from bi- and trilateral to international and in different fields of policy and society we analyse discourses and policies that tried to mitigate and compensate the smallness of nations and states.

We will analyse the role of agency and position of countries from Southeast Europe in the larger European and international state system, with a particular focus on four historical periods: a) the emergence of modern nation states in Southeast Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, b) the state-system in interwar Europe, c) Cold-War Southeast Europe, and d) the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## MONDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

**From 16:30**

**Registration / Welcome Coffee**

**17:15**

**Welcome Addresses**

**Manuel Sarrazin**, President, Southeast Europe Association

**Beate Winterer**, Akademie für Politische Bildung, Tutzing

**17:30**

**Award Ceremony: Best Master Thesis in Southeast European Studies**

Awardee: **Olga Bostan**, PhD Candidate, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle (Saale), Title of Thesis: *"One drop at a time: Waterways in rural Moldova"*

Laudation: **Claudia Weber**, Professor, European Contemporary History, Viadrina University of Frankfurt/Oder

**17:45**

**Introduction by the Conference Committee**

**PD Dr. Dietmar Müller**, Senior Researcher, University of Leipzig

**Prof. Dr. Florian Bieber**, Professor, Southeast European History and Politics, University of Graz / Director, Centre for Southeast European Studies

**18:15**

**Keynote and Q&A**

**Dr. Dimitar Bechev**, Departmental Lecturer, Russian and East European Studies, Oxford School of Global and Area Studies, University of Oxford

**19:00**

**Reception**

## TUESDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2024

**08:00 - 09:00**

**Breakfast**

**09:00 - 10:30**

**Welcome / Meet & Greet**

including a short introduction of the Young SOG, an association of young members of the Southeast Europe Association

10:30

Coffee Break

10:45 - 12:15

### Panel 1: Misery and Splendour: Discourses on Smallness

Chair: **Dietmar Müller**, University of Leipzig

Panelists:

**Diana Mishkova**, Centre for Advanced Study, Sofia: *In Search of Remedy for the 'Miseries of East European Small States'*

**Filip Ejodus**, University of Belgrade: *Unraveling Epistemological vs. Ontological Security: Insights from the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue*

**Ethem Mandić**, Faculty for Montenegrin Language and Literature, Cetinje: *The Greatness of the Small: Miroslav Krleža's Banners as a Political History of the Smallness of the States in the Western Balkan Region*

12:30

Lunch

14:00 - 15:30

### Panel 2: The Agency of Small States in the European Integration Process

Chair: **Sabina Ferhadbegović**, University of Vienna

Panelists:

**Nikolaos Tzifakis**, University of the Peloponnese, Corinth: *The Neglected Agency of Western Balkan Countries in EU Enlargement Studies*

**Sabina Islamzade**, Bucharest: *Do Small States Impact the Eastern Partnership? The Forms and Sources of State Agency of the Republic of Moldova*

**Amer Kurtović**, International Burch University, Ilidža: *Exploring Structure and Agency in Bosnia and Herzegovina's Alignment with the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy*

15:30

Coffee Break

16:00 - 17:30

### Panel 3: Small States in International Organizations

Chair: **Filip Ejodus**, University of Belgrade

Panelists:

**Nikola Zečević**, University of Montenegro, Podgorica: *A Small Nation's Fight: Montenegro's Diplomatic Struggle and the League of Nations*

**Sabina Ferhadbegović**, University of Vienna: *Developing International Criminal Law: Small States at the United Nations War Crimes Commission*

**Marko Kovačević**, University of Belgrade: *Understanding the UN Security Council Candidacies and Small State Strategies in Eastern/Southeastern Europe*

18:00

Dinner

**19:30**

## **Movie Evening and Discussion with Director**

*“Non-Aligned: Scenes from the Labudović Reels” (2023) by Mila Turajlić (100 minutes)’*

Chair:

**Florian Bieber**, University of Graz

Discussants:

**Mila Turajlić**, Movie Director and Producer, Belgrade (*Online*)

**Tvrtko Jakovina**, University of Zagreb

**WEDNESDAY, 2 OCTOBER 2024**

**08:00 - 09:00**

**Breakfast**

**09:00 - 10:45**

## **Panel 4: Small States in Cold War**

Chair: **Adrian Brisku**, Charles University Prague

Panelists:

**Tvrtko Jakovina**, University of Zagreb: *Beware of Small States! Yugoslavia and its Global Role during the Cold War*

**Filip Mitričević**, Indiana University Bloomington, Chicago: *The World Champion of Antifascism: Socialist Yugoslavia’s Multidirectional Legitimacy Discourse during the Early Cold War*

**Iuliana Alexandra Jureschi**, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca: *A Rebel and An Ally: Romania and East Germany in the Cold War*

**Anjeza Xhaferaj**, European University of Tirana: *The Last Bastion of Communism: Albania’s Foreign Policy and Ideological Posturing Under Enver Hoxha*

**10:45**

**Coffee Break**

**11:00 – 12:25**

## **Panel 5: Political Economies and Trade of Small States**

Chair: **Tvrtko Jakovina**, University of Zagreb

Panelists:

**Adrian Brisku**, Charles University Prague: *Varieties of Economic Nationalism in Small (Nation-) States*

**Rigels Lenja**, Munich: *Supporting Revolution: Balkan Communist’s Weapons in Africa and Asia between 1955-1989*

**Mimoza Agolli**, European University of Tirana: *Impact of European Integration in the Competitiveness of Small Candidate Countries*

12:30

Lunch

14:00 – 18:00

### Simulation Game: 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Berlin Process

*The simulation is a condensed version of the 10th anniversary summit of the Berlin Process, to be held in Berlin on 14 October. It involves the countries of the Western Balkans (WB6), plus the chair (Germany), partner countries and the EU. The summit is not just the 10th anniversary of the process but comes at a crucial time. EU enlargement is in crisis and relations in the regions have worsened. A new EU Commission is about to start working, giving the opportunity to change key aspects of EU enlargement, and new ideas have circulated in recent years (such as staged accession or integration into the internal market).*

Participants will be randomly assigned different actor roles. The goal of the simulation is to formulate the conclusion of the summit, traditionally formulated as the “Chair’s Conclusion”.

Previous examples of Chair’s Conclusions can be found here:

[https://www.berlinprocess.de/uploads/documents/chairs-conclusions-2023\\_1714043445.pdf](https://www.berlinprocess.de/uploads/documents/chairs-conclusions-2023_1714043445.pdf)

For preparation we recommend the following literature:

Branimir Jovanovic, Mario Holzer (2022): The Berlin Process for the Western Balkans: Four Recommendations to Achieve Progress

[https://www.baks.bund.de/sites/baks010/files/working\\_paper\\_2022\\_10.pdf](https://www.baks.bund.de/sites/baks010/files/working_paper_2022_10.pdf)

Marika Djolai (2022): The Berlin Process Multiverse – Ideas for a More Successful Delivery, Southeast Europe in Focus 4/2022

[https://www.sogde.org/site/assets/files/26107/see\\_in\\_focus\\_04-22\\_djolai\\_berlin\\_process\\_multiverse.pdf](https://www.sogde.org/site/assets/files/26107/see_in_focus_04-22_djolai_berlin_process_multiverse.pdf)

Coffee Break (in between the Simulation Game)

18:30

Dinner and Free Evening

THURSDAY, 3 OCTOBER 2024

08:00 - 09:00

Breakfast

09:00 - 10:15

### Panel 6: New Opportunities, Old Problems: Southeast Europe in the 1990’s

Chair: **Adrian-Daniel Stan**, Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj

Panelists:

**Rebecca Grossi**, Leipzig University: *Discursive Self-Positioning of Romania’s Foreign Policy: Europe and the Black Sea*

**Christian Costamagna**, University of Leipzig / University of Rijeka: *No Strategy and no Allies: The Security Dilemmas of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) during the Kosovo War (1998-1999)*

10:15

Coffee Break

10:45 - 12:15

### Panel 7: Small Balkan States in Regional Initiatives

Chair: **Vladimir Vučković**, Masaryk University Brno

Panelists:

**Adrian-Daniel Stan**, Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj: *The Black Sea Region's Strategic Alignment. Can Rhetoric Exercises Gain Traction on the Limes? A View from the Western Bank*

**Aleksandar Spasov**, University "Ss. Cyril and Methodius" in Skopje: *Western Balkan States and Their Role in the European Political and Security Architecture – Regional Cooperation, NATO Membership and European Integration*

**Elsa Krasniqi**, University of Prishtina: *Open Balkan, the Initiative That Was Closed Before It Was Opened*

12:30

Lunch

14:00 – 15:45

### Panel 8: Balkan States and Europe in a Global Context

Chair: **Christian Costamagna**, University of Leipzig / University of Rijeka

Panelist:

**Alban Reli**, European University of Tirana: *Navigating the International Stage: Albania's Foreign Policy Under Edi Rama Through Discourse Analysis*

**Vladimir Vučković**, Masaryk University Brno: *Serbia's Struggle as a Small State: Balancing Between Domestic Goals and External Pressures*

15:45

Coffee Break

16:00-17:30

### Speed Presentations and Discussions of Research Projects

*Discussion of research projects/papers in smaller working groups*

Presenters:

**Alejandro Esteso Pérez**, University of Graz: *God Save the Mayor: Local Illiberal Structures and Practices in Serbia*

**Bekim Lahi**, University of Belgrade: *Deterioration of Queer Rights Under the Auspices of the European Non-discrimination Regime in Serbia*

**Vladimir Lame**, ATC Institute Tirana: *Enlargement Fatigue in the Western Balkans, Missing Democratisation*

**Paula Seidel**, Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder): *Connection by Reflection: Jugoslav and British Constructions of Belonging during World War I*

**Mehdi Sejdiu**, Heidelberg University: *Behaving Like an Ally: Understanding the United States in the Kosovar Parliamentary Discourse*

18:00

Dinner

19:30

### Book Presentation and Discussion “Pulverfass Balkan” by Florian Bieber

Moderation: **Christian Hagemann**, Director of the Southeast Europe Association, Munich

Speaker: **Florian Bieber**, University of Graz

Language: German

FRIDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2024

08:00 - 09:00

Breakfast

*Check-out until 09:00*

09:00 – 10:30

### Concluding Discussion, Feedback & Next Steps

Moderation: **Florian Bieber** and **Dietmar Müller**

10:30

Farewell Coffee

12:00

Lunch

13:00

### Departure of Participants

#### Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft e.V.

Widenmayerstr. 49  
80538 München  
Tel. +49 89 2121 540

Fax +49 89 2121 5499  
E-Mail: [info@sogde.org](mailto:info@sogde.org)  
[www.sodge.org](http://www.sodge.org)



Auswärtiges Amt

Institutionell gefördert  
vom Auswärtigen Amt.  
*Institutionally supported  
by the German Federal  
Foreign Office.*