

## Online Discussion

### Competing for power in Southeast Europe: What makes oppositions in competitive authoritarian regimes fail *or* prevail?



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8 July 2024, 17:00-18:30

Online via Zoom

Speakers:

**Bojan Baća**, Research Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies, University of Montenegro, and International Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities, University Alliance Ruhr

**Salim Çevik**, Fellow at the Center for Applied Turkey Studies (CATS), German Institute for International and Security Studies (SWP)

**Gian Marco Moisé**, Independent Researcher, Dublin City University

**Bernard Nikaj**, Visiting Fellow at the Center for Southeast European Studies (CSEES) at the University of Graz and Adjunct Professor, RIT Kosovo

**Magdalena Solska**, Assistant Professor and Principal Researcher in the SNSF-Project “Political Opposition in post-communist Democracies and Authoritarianisms,” University of Fribourg

**Dušan Spasojević**, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade, and Researcher at the Centre for the Study of Democracy

Moderation:

**Claudia Laštro**, Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft (SOG) and Centre for Southeast European Studies, University of Graz (CSEES)

## Topic

Despite earlier hopes for a swift consolidation of democracy in Southeast Europe, the region continues to grapple with the return or the persistence of competitive authoritarian regimes. These regimes share one decisive commonality: They allow for competitive elections, independent media, opposition parties, and civil society organisations. However, the conditions of competition are fundamentally skewed in favour of the incumbent. Examples include dominant parties' vast resource advantage, which they employ to trap voters in clientelistic dependency cycles. Also, the incumbent's control over the public media, the state administration, the judiciary, or the exploitation of voters' fears greatly acts to the opposition's detriment. In response, opposition actors across the region have opted for a variety of strategies – with varying degrees of success. This prompts the question, what makes oppositions in competitive authoritarian regimes prevail or fail?

Seven authors tackled this question in the Main Focus of *Südosteuropa Mitteilungen* (issue 02-03, 2024) based on five different country cases in Southeast Europe. The articles are the outcome of a workshop co-organised by *Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft* and the *Centre for Southeast European Studies* in November 2023 in Graz. This online discussion shall bring together insights from countries in which the opposition either successfully ousted the dominant party (Kosovo, Moldova, and Montenegro) or where this challenge is ongoing (Serbia and Turkey).

Are there general lessons that we can draw from the cross-country comparison? What challenges does the opposition face beyond the constraints imposed by the incumbent? Is there a blueprint for the opposition's success? And if so, what hinders opposition actors from replicating strategies that proved successful elsewhere?



### Registration

The event will take place via Zoom. Please register under the following link to get the access data: [Registration Form](#)

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