

Secessions in Europe: Between Statehood Claims and Conflict Resolution

International workshop

Viadrina Institute for European Studies, European University Viadrina Frankfurt Oder

December 6, 2018

In spite of development of international and global power institutions, the modern state remains a powerful construct as the legitimate means of political organization and the exclusive location of political authority. Contemporary state went through a long process of institutionalization marked by the milestones like the Westphalian peace, age of the world imperial system, The Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, decolonization, Helsinki treaty, and globalization. In spite of these four centuries, the modern state system does not fully deliver on its promise of order and security, and often leads to contestation of territorial integrity and alternative claims to sovereignty. Such claims occur within existing recognized states from groups which feel themselves excluded and prefer to aspire to their own statehood and international status. By implication, competing claims to statehood often turn to 'frozen conflicts', as local authorities embark upon their state-building projects despite the absence of international recognition, while still participating in peace talks. Our workshop aims to examine contemporary secession movements, statehood claims and possibilities of conflict settlement in Europe from a comparative perspective, more specifically:

- 1) Causes and consequences of contemporary secession movements in Europe;
- 2) Impact of unrecognized state-building on parent states and peace in Europe;
- 3) The role of external involvement into secession movements and unrecognized state-building;
- 4) Effects of unrecognized state-building projects on peace and security in Europe;
- 5) Best practices in sub-national conflict resolution in Europe.

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Workshop organizers: Prof. Dr. Mykhailo Minakov (DAAD Gastprofessor, European University Viadrina/University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy) and Dr. Daria Isachenko (Viadrina Institute for European Studies).

Attendance by registration only. Please register by November 20 at ifes@europa-uni.de.



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Workshop Schedule

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| 09:00 – 9:15 | Registration |
| 9:15 – 9:30 | Greetings: Prof. Dr. Timm Beichelt, Institute for European Studies, Europe University Viadrina |
| 09:30 – 10:15 | From conflict management to conflict settlement? Three scenarios, their alternatives, and the prospects for sustainable conflict settlement on eastern Ukraine
Stefan Wolff, University of Birmingham |
| 10:15 – 11:00 | Evolving dynamics and conflict potential in Eastern Ukraine
Tatyana Malyarenko, National University Odessa |
| 11:00 – 11:30 | Coffee break |
| 11:30 – 12:15 | State-making through war: The case of Ukraine
Gwendolyn Sasse, Center for East European and International Studies, Berlin |
| 12:15 – 13:00 | Trapped in Kosovo: between citizenship and statelessness
Argyro Kartsonaki, University of Birmingham |
| 13:00 – 14:30 | Lunch |
| 14:30 – 15:15 | Democracy and the transformation of conflicts: the cases of Northern Cyprus, Transnistria, South Ossetia and Abkhazia
Bruno Coppieters, Vrije Universiteit Brussel |
| 15:15 – 16:00 | Development assistance in secessionist conflicts: the case study of Abkhazia
Daria Isachenko, Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder) |
| 16:00 – 16:30 | Coffee break |
| 16:30 – 17:15 | De-recognition of states
Gezim Visoka, Dublin City University |
| 17:15 – 18:00 | Radical Periphery. Status of Post-Soviet Non-Recognized States (1989-2018)
Mikhail Minakov, Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder) |

Abstracts:

From conflict management to conflict settlement? Three scenarios, their alternatives, and the prospects for sustainable conflict settlement on eastern Ukraine

Stefan Wolff, University of Birmingham

Bearing in mind the particular local, regional and global dynamics of the conflict in and over Donbas, and the links between them, we begin our discussion of scenarios for conflict management and settlement with a number of general observations on how such territory-centred intra-state conflicts can be managed. In doing so, we focus primarily on recent European experiences, including in the post-Soviet space, in order to offer context-relevant experiences. Against this background, we then examine the policy debate on the different options for managing and/or settling the conflict in Donbas, focusing on three specific scenarios: the so-called Croatian, Transnistrian, and German scenarios. Examining their feasibility and viability, we also briefly investigate two alternatives—the Crimean and Georgian scenarios. We conclude with some general observations on the prospects, and likely conditions, of conflict settlement in eastern Ukraine.

*Stefan Wolff is Professor of International Security at the University of Birmingham, England, UK. An expert on international crisis management and post-conflict state-building, he has published over 80 journal articles and book chapters, as well as 17 books, including *Ethnic Conflict: A Global Perspective* (Oxford University Press 2007), *The European Union as a Conflict Manager* (Routledge, 2012, with Richard G. Whitman), and *Conflict Management in Divided Societies: Theories and Practice* (Routledge, 2011, with Christalla Yakinthou). Bridging the gap between academia and policy-making, he frequently advises governments and international organisations and has been involved in various stages of peace negotiations, including in Africa, the Middle East, and the post-Soviet space. Dr Wolff graduated from the University of Leipzig, and holds an M.Phil. from the University of Cambridge and a Ph.D. from the London School of Economics and Political Science*

Evolving dynamics and conflict potential in Eastern Ukraine

Tatyana Malyarenko, National University Odessa

The war in Donbas is an example of conflict artificially designed and escalated by the involvement of external state and non-state actors, between parties which have not had disputes (neither ethnic nor religious) serious enough to drive any separatist project. But would the conflict come to its end if Russia withdraws its support to Donetsk and Luhansk and/or the West withdraws its support to Kyiv? This paper discusses the structural elements of conflict potential in eastern Ukraine, which raised with the conflict escalation in 2014. I argue that conflict factors have been strengthening with the entrenchment of DPR-LPR and isolation of self-declared republics by Kyiv. While it is too early to make any conclusion about sustainability of endogenous conflict potential in Donbas, any scenario of reintegration of Donetsk and Luhansk with Ukraine has to consider their changing political and socio-economic landscape.

Tetyana Malyarenko is a Professor of International Security and Jean Monnet Professor of European Security at the National University Odesa Law Academy, Ukraine. She is the founder and director of the Ukrainian Institute for Crisis Management and Conflict Resolution, a Ukrainian think tank aiming to promote interdisciplinary research, research-led teaching, and evidence-based advice for policy-makers on crisis management and conflict resolution in Ukraine and beyond. Dr Malyarenko's main research areas include the societal and economic aspects of security in states in transition, human security and good governance, and social conflicts and civil wars.

State-making through war: The case of Ukraine

Gwendolyn Sasse, Center for East European and International Studies, Berlin

War and state-building are closely interlinked processes: wars shape the territorial configuration of a state and the definition of the polity within these state boundaries. The impact of war on state-making has long been recognized, but this effect may not be as clear-cut as the general hypothesis implies. Based on new survey data – a country-wide survey excluding the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics and a two-part survey of the Donbas population covering the government-controlled and non-government-controlled areas -, this paper traces the parallel existence and evolution of different conceptions of the Ukrainian state. It thus puts forward a dynamic understanding of statehood during war. The analysis focuses on the strength of ethnic vs. civic identities as well as the preferences regarding the territorial and political make-up of the state.

*Gwendolyn Sasse is the Director of Centre for East European Research and International Studies in Berlin (ZOiS - Zentrum für Osteuropa- und internationale Studien; www.zois-berlin.de). She is Professor of Comparative Politics in the Department of Politics and International Relations and the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies at the University of Oxford, a Professorial Fellow at Nuffield College, and a non-resident Senior Fellow at Carnegie Europe. Her research interests include post-communist transitions (with a particular focus on Ukraine), the comparative study of democracy and authoritarianism, ethnic conflict, and migration. Dr Sasse's current research projects at ZOiS concentrate on original survey data related to the war in Eastern Ukraine and youth attitudes in Russia. Her monograph *The Crimea Question: Identity, Transition, and Conflict* (Harvard University Press 2007; paperback 2014) won the Alexander Nove Prize of the British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies.*

Trapped in Kosovo: between citizenship and statelessness

Argyro Kartsonaki, University of Birmingham

This report presents everyday problems Kosovo Serbs face in Kosovo. It focuses in particular on limitations in their freedom of movement and the bureaucratic barriers they face when trying to obtain official state documents from both Belgrade and Prishtina. It sheds light on everyday problems trapped minorities face in secessionist attempts, exacerbated in cases where secession has yet to result in uncontested statehood. Data for this research were acquired through interviews with Kosovo Serbs in Gračanica and North Mitrovica and civil society reports.

Argyro Kartsonaki is a research fellow at the University of Birmingham, UK, working on the ESRC-funded project 'Understanding and managing intra-state territorial contestation: Iraq's disputed territories in comparative perspective'. Dr Kartsonaki's previous research examined Kosovo's secession from Serbia, while her current research examines the causes of intra-state conflicts and explores strategies for their settlement. She holds a PhD in International Relations from the University of Birmingham, an MA in European Public Policy from the University of Crete, Greece, and a BA in International Economic and Political Studies from the University of Macedonia, Greece.

Democracy and the transformation of conflicts: the cases of Northern Cyprus, Transnistria, South Ossetia and Abkhazia

Bruno Coppieters, Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Democracy is a crucial factor in interstate conflicts and the conditions under which it may alleviate or exacerbate international disputes is a vast field of study. However, the contradictory effects of

democracy on the transformation of secessionist conflicts involving states that have seceded unilaterally (and are, therefore, contested) have not been systematically addressed in the literature. This paper aims to identify the ways in which the question of the right to secession and the principle of non-recognition affect the discourses of the conflict parties regarding democracy. The conflicts on the international status of Northern Cyprus, Transnistria, South Ossetia and Abkhazia have been chosen as case studies.

Bruno Coppieters is Head of the Department of Political Science at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Free University of Brussels). His published works deal mainly with federalism, the ethics of war and secession, and conflicts on sovereignty in the Caucasus and the Balkans. He participated as an expert to the International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia (IFFMCG) in 2009 and coordinated an EU financed teaching project for the Abkhaz State University in 2012-15. Dr Coppieters has co-edited the following books: Contextualizing Secession: Normative Studies in Comparative Perspective, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003; Statehood and Security: Georgia After the Rose Revolution, Cambridge/Mass., MIT Press, 2005; Moral Constraints on War: Principles and Cases, Lanham/Md., Lexington Books, 2008 (2d edition). More recent publications (2018) are to be found in Europe-Asia Studies, Ethnopolitics and the Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies.

Development assistance in secessionist conflicts: the case study of Abkhazia

Daria Isachenko, Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder)

Post-conflict environments are usually marked by an extensive presence of international actors that assist societies to recover after armed hostilities. However, the international engagement looks radically different in contested territories that declare independence and strive for universal recognition. Whereas actions of the international community are limited by the discourse of non-recognition, local authorities tend to heavily rely on support of patron states in their statebuilding projects. This article examines the politics and practices of Russia's development aid to Abkhazia and discusses its effects on Abkhazia's statehood.

Daria Isachenko is Lecturer and Researcher at the European University Viadrina in Frankfurt Oder, Institute for European Studies (IFES). She holds a doctorate degree from the Humboldt University of Berlin, where she was also a member of the Young Scholar Group 'Micropolitics of Armed Groups', funded by the Volkswagen Foundation. Her research areas include unrecognised states, foreign policy and political sociology of international relations. The regional focus is on post-Soviet Eurasia and Southeast Europe. She is author of The Making of Informal States: Statebuilding in Northern Cyprus and Transnistria (Palgrave Macmillan Series: Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies, 2012).

De-recognition of states

Gezim Visoka, Dublin City University

The creation of new states and their subsequent recognition by other states plays an enormous role in world politics. Although there is extensive research on the politics, legality and ethics of state recognition, there is no specific work exclusively dedicated to the revocability and withdrawal of state recognition. This chapter examines the theory and practice of state de-recognition in world politics. It offers a comprehensive assessment of legal, normative, and political theories as well as surveys practices of state de-recognition. The paper argues that derecognition of states is not entirely about asserting that a contested state does not fulfil the core criteria of statehood, nor is an instrument to uphold international institutions and norms on sovereignty and territorial integrity; rather it is about advancing domestic and international self-interest of derecognising states. First, it

examines how the possibility for reversing the recognition of states is explored in a wide range of disciplinary bodies, including international law, political theory, and International Relations debates. Second, it explores the process and micro-politics of derecognition, including the actors, narratives, and diplomatic tools used in reversing state recognition. In understanding de-recognition of states in practice, Taiwan, Western Sahara, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and Kosovo are used as crucial cases. The paper concludes with a critical discussion on the effects of de-recognition and the need for developing new perspectives on statehood and state recognition.

Gëzim Visoka is Assistant Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies at Dublin City University (DCU). He holds a PhD in Politics and International Relations from DCU. His research focuses on post-conflict peacebuilding and statebuilding, transitional justice, global governance, foreign policy, and diplomatic recognition. Dr Visoka is the co-editor of two forthcoming handbooks: 'The Oxford Handbook of Peacebuilding, Statebuilding, and Peace Formation' (with Oliver P. Richmond), and lead co-editor of the forthcoming 'The Routledge Handbook of State Recognition' (with John Doyle and Edward Newman). His most recent books include: 'Acting Like a State: Kosovo and the Everyday Making of Statehood' (Routledge, 2018); 'Shaping Peace in Kosovo: The Politics of Peacebuilding and Statehood' (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); and 'Peace Figuration after International Intervention: Intentions, Events and Consequences of Liberal Peacebuilding' (Routledge, 2016). Parallel to his academic activity, Dr Visoka has over ten years of experience working with civil society groups and policy consultancy in Kosovo.

Radical Periphery. Status of Post-Soviet Non-Recognized States (1989-2018)

Mikhail Minakov, Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder)

The report focuses on the evolution of the post-Soviet non-recognized states through the lens of periphery building. I interpret the model of non-recognized states as a radical alternative to 'the center' of international law and global order. I argue that even though these non-recognized states emerge as a part of national movements in collapsing USSR aiming to legitimately build new nation-states, with time they turned into something that opposes the international law and global order. The Donbas secessionism and establishment of DNR-LNR were done in cooperation not only with Moscow (and its political and economic interests), but also with the use of Transnistrian and Abkhaz experiences of a specific state-building. The specificity of this state-building is connected with opposition to 'the center' and all political, legal and economic procedures sanctioned by this center.

Mikhail Minakov is principal Investigator on Ukraine at Kennan Institute and DAAD Guest Professor to Viadrina University (2017-19), studies post-communist and post-Soviet societies. Author of five books and over 100 articles in philosophy, political theory, history and culture, he also runs an analytical blog Kennan Focus Ukraine and a peer-reviewed Ideology and Politics Journal as Editor-in-chief. He also worked as Professor at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy: 2001 – 2018; Krupp-Wissenschaftskolleg Fellow: 2013-2014; Fulbright Kennan Fellow: Wilson Center and Harvard University: 2012-13; Shklar Fellow: Harvard University: 2010. Dr. Minakov's major academic interests lie in the areas of political philosophy, political theory and history of modernity in the Eastern Europe and Western Eurasia.