

Eastern Partnership Reflection Forum

The Politics of the Eastern Partnership Looking Ahead to a New Decade of Challenges

An event organised in the framework of the
Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Date and Venue

30 October 2018, Vienna

Organised by, in cooperation with and with the support of

Austro-French Centre for Rapprochement in Europe (CFA), Vienna
French Institute for International Relations (Ifri), Paris
Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy (AIIES), Vienna
Competence Center for Black Sea Region Studies (CCBR), University of Applied Sciences
BFI Vienna
International Institute for Peace (IIP), Vienna
Karl-Renner-Institut (RI), Vienna
Austrian National Defence Academy (LVAK), Vienna
Diplomatische Akademie Wien (DAK), Vienna
Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union
Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (BMEIA), Vienna
Central European Initiative, Trieste (CEI)
Centre international de formation européenne (CIFE), Berlin/Nice
Minsk Dialogue Track-2 Initiative (MD), Minsk
Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), Rome
German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Berlin
Austrian Institute for International Politics (OIIP), Vienna
University of Vienna – Research Center for Eurasian Studies (EURAS), Vienna
Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation, Regional Office for Cooperation and Peace in Europe, Vienna

Context and objectives

The **Eastern Partnership** (EaP) was founded in 2009 by the European Union (EU) to strengthen its relations with interested partner countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine) and promote regional stability through trade agreements and democratic institution-building. But almost ten years of EaP have only produced mixed results, regardless of the growing interest shown by some partners for this policy framework. Human security, all in all, has hardly improved in most parts of the EU's Eastern neighbourhood. And dividing lines running across a region targeted by competing regional integration projects have not helped to strengthen European security.

In cooperation and with the support of

These limitations, which have been tentatively addressed by a growing emphasis put on resilience, differentiation and joint ownership, have questioned the adequacy of the EaP in times of geopolitical turmoil. But the challenge faced by the EU in advancing a more effective EaP is not only external, to be derived from specific political contexts in the Eastern neighbourhood. It is also internal to the EU.

Almost ten years after the inception of the EaP, the member states of the EU still share relatively different views as for *raison d'être*, *importance* and/or *finalité* of the EaP. This plurality of views undermining the strategic character of the EaP is embedded in the politics of the EU's external action in its Eastern neighbourhood. In the near future, the EU's reform agenda, upcoming negotiations on the multiannual financial framework, Brexit, European elections and other internal affairs will continue to capture the attention and mobilise the energy of the member states and EU institutions. They will possibly limit the advancement of a more integrated and strategic EaP approach to European security.

Organised in the framework of the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, this interactive event will discuss the politics of the Eastern partnership in the current wider European context, beyond the sheer agenda of the next EaP Summit:

- How successful has the EaP been in promoting regional stability and human security over the last decade?
- How to ensure a greater consistency between the advancement of the EaP as policy framework at the service of European security and the interwoven variety of political interests underpinning the EaP?
- What should be changed in the EaP to increase joint-ownership at the political -rather than institutional- level?
- How much linked are the EU's internal reform agenda and the advancement of the EaP?
- What can we expect from the next EaP Summit?

This event builds on the **Eastern Partnership Reflection Forum**, an initiative launched in Minsk in 2017 by a pan-European network of think-tanks. Its aim is to advance an inclusive, pan-European reflection at the strategic level and with a policy-oriented focus on the Eastern Partnership and encourage synergies across research institutions and national and European administrations. This Vienna Reflection Forum will pave the way for the third Eastern Partnership Reflection Forum, planned for autumn 2019 in Chisinau.

Format, participation and output

The main event will gather international researchers as well as a policy advisors and representatives from key regional institutions and national administrations around a large hollow-square table (no panel-style configuration). The format of discussion will foster interactive exchanges among all the participants rather than *ex cathedra* presentations. The Chatham Rules will apply, and participation will only be possible upon invitation. The public event will feature a panel of experts/officials in a more traditional conference setting.

Coordination and Registration

Florent Marciacq (CFA) florent.marciacq@oefz.at; Magda Stumvoll (CFA) magda.stumvoll@oefz.at
Velina Tchakarova (AIES) velina.tchakarova@aies.at
Hannes Meissner (CCBR) hannes.meissner@fh-vie.ac.at

30 October 2018, 9h00-16h10 – Expert discussion

The Politics of the Eastern Partnership: Looking Ahead at a New Decade of Challenges

Venue: Austrian National Defence Academy, Stiftgasse 2a, Vienna

Participation upon invitation only. The Chatham House Rules apply.

Taking pictures is strictly forbidden (except in the conference room)

An ID will be necessary to enter the premises.

8h45: *Registration*

9h00: **Opening**

- Erich Csitkovits, Commandant of the Austrian National Defence Academy, Vienna
- Florent Marciacq, Deputy Secretary General and Research Fellow, Austro-French Centre for Rapprochement in Europe, Vienna; Senior Fellow, Centre international de formation européenne, Nice/Berlin

9h15: **Keynote Speech**

- Thomas Buchsbaum, Special Envoy on Eastern Partnership, Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, Vienna

9h25: **Shaping a more strategic policy: the EaP from the point of view of EU capitals**

France, Austria, Germany, the V4, Sweden, the Baltics and the other member states of the European Union have non-identical views of the EaP, its *raison d'être*, its *importance* relative to other EU policies and / or its *finalité*. With the re-nationalisation of common approaches, which has intensified over the past few years against the backdrop of a series of internal crisis, national politics is likely to play an increasing role in shaping EU external policies. How convergent/ divergent are the approaches of the Member States in EaP matters? How significant are EU internal challenges to the development of the EaP? And how to strengthen the internal cohesion of the EaP approach with respect to its *raison d'être*, *importance* relative to other EU policies and / or its *finalité*?

Facilitators: Sandra Fernandes, Assistant Professor, University of Minho, Braga
Florent Marciacq, Deputy Secretary General and Research Fellow, Austro-French Centre for Rapprochement in Europe, Vienna; Senior Fellow, Centre international de formation européenne, Nice/Berlin

11h00: *Coffee break*

11h15: **Keynote**

- Alexandra Dienes, Research Associate, Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation, Regional Office for Cooperation and Peace in Europe, Vienna

11h25: **Getting out from the in-between: the EaP in its geopolitical context**

The EaP faces a number of important challenges in its wider context. Russia's relations with the West are in deep turmoil. Negative-sum games set the scene of a new regional order benefiting none of the parties, while EaP countries remain to varying degrees unstable, unreformed, and rife with conflict. Also, trade liberalisation and neo-regionalism could lead to more political competition, while infrastructure connectivity seeks to reshuffle patterns of trade. Interactions between the Eurasian Economic Union and the EU will be of great interest here. Meanwhile, international terrorism and criminality will remain a collective challenge, but ways to address it may be harder to be found. How much room for cooperation is there between the EaP and other regional integration/ cooperation projects following the Ukrainian crisis (EAEU, OSCE, etc...), and what can be done to increase the contribution of the EaP to European (rather than solely EU) security? What are "islands of cooperation" the EU and other actors in the region should seek to advance?

Facilitators: Hannes Meissner, Senior Researcher, Competence Center for Black Sea Region Studies, University of Applied Sciences BFI Vienna
Simon Weiss, Research Associate, Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation, Regional Office for Cooperation and Peace in Europe, Vienna

13h00: *Networking and lunch break*

Kindly offered by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs

14h15: **Keynote**

- Rebecca Harms, Member of the European Parliament, Chair of the EuroNest Parliamentary Assembly

14h25: **The challenge of joint ownership: the EaP from the point of view of EaP countries**

Belarus, Azerbaijan, Moldova and the other Eastern partners similarly hold very different expectations from the EaP at the political, economic and security levels. While some partners consider the EaP as a first tacit step towards pre-accession, others worry about the compatibility of the framework with their multi-vector foreign policy or relationship with Russia. How "regional" or conducive to regional cooperation can the EaP approach be in this highly differentiated context? What is the unused potential, if any, of the multilateral track? How much differentiated can the EaP become to actually achieve joint-ownership (EaP2+1, EaP3, EaP6, etc...)? How can it respond to individual needs, when those needs exceed the EU's ambitions or ability (accession perspectives, conflict resolution, etc...)?

Facilitators: Iulian Groza, Executive Director, Institute for European Policies and Reforms, Chisinau
Velina Tchakarova, Head of the Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy, Vienna

16h00: **Concluding words: a fresh perspective from the region**

- Adrian Balutel, Young European of the Year 2016, Associated expert, Institute for European Policies and Reforms, Chisinau

16h10: *End of the event and refreshments*

List of confirmed experts

1. Anisimov Oleg, Counsellor, Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Belarus to the OSCE in Austria
2. Alekseenkova Elena, Program Manager, Russian International Affairs Council; Fellow, Center for Global Issues, Institute for International Studies, MGIMO University, Russia
3. Audibert Nicola, Young European Ambassador (Eastern Partnership), France/Austria
4. Balutel Adrian, Young European of the Year 2016, Associated expert, Institute for European Policies and Reforms, Chisinau
5. Banica Ilie, Minister/ Political Section, Romanian Embassy in Austria
6. Benkova Livia, Research Associate, Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy, Austria
7. Berg Sharon, EU-Expert, US Embassy in Austria
8. Bialasiewicz Luiza, Professor, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands
9. Borhersa Elīna, First Secretary, Embassy of Latvia in Austria
10. Borius Yves, former Financial Director, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, France
11. Brugner Philipp, Project Leader, Centre for Social Innovation; Young European Ambassador (Eastern Partnership), Austria
12. Buchsbaum Thomas, Special Envoy on Eastern Partnership, Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, Austria
13. Cenușă Denis, Energy Security Program Director, Think Tank “Expert-Grup”, Moldova
14. Csitkovits Erich, Commandant, Austrian National Defence Academy, Austria
15. Cvijić Srđan, Senior Policy Analyst, Open Society European Policy Institute, Belgium
16. Danne Sarmīte, Head of Eastern Europe and Central Asia Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia
17. Delcour Laure, Senior Research Fellow, French Institute for International and Strategic Affairs, France
18. Dermendzhiev Dimitar, Governance and Programme Officer, European Institute of Peace, Belgium
19. Didukh Volodymyr, First Secretary, Embassy of Ukraine in Austria, Ukraine
20. Dienes Alexandra, Research Associate, Friedrich-Ebert Foundation, Regional Office for Cooperation and Peace in Europe, Austria
21. Dubowy Alexander, Scientific Coordinator, Research Center for Eurasian Studies, University of Vienna, Austria; Scientific Director, Institute for Security Policy, Austria
22. Dzihic Vedran, Senior Researcher, Austrian Institute for International Politics, Austria
23. Fasslabend Werner, President, Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy, Austria
24. Feith Pieter, Senior Diplomatic Advisor, European Institute of Peace, Belgium
25. Fenkart Stephanie, Director, International Institute for Peace, Austria
26. Fernandes Sandra, Assistant Professor, University of Minho, Portugal
27. Fortuna Carlo, Transport Expert, Central European Initiative
28. Greminger Thomas, Secretary General, Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe
29. Goda Samuel, Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on Youth and Security, OSCE
30. Groza Iulian, Executive Director, Institute for European Policies and Reforms, Moldova

31. Harms Rebecca, Member of the European Parliament, Chair of the EuroNest Parliamentary Assembly
32. Havlik Peter, Senior Economist, Vienna Institute for International Economics, Austria
33. Hillion Christophe, Professor, Universities of Oslo and Leiden; Senior Researcher, Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies, Norway/ Netherlands/ Sweden
34. Hinkelbein Oliver, Lecturer, University of Bremen, Germany
35. Jankowitsch Peter, former Foreign Minister, Austria
36. Jarabik Balazs, Nonresident Scholar, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Russia and Eurasia Programme, Hungary
37. Karnaukhova Oxana, Associate Professor, Southern Federal University, Rostov-on-Don, Russia
38. Kresáč Matej, Permanent Mission of Slovakia to the OSCE in Austria
39. Kudzko Alena, Deputy Research Director, Globsec Policy Institute, Slovakia
40. Łatkiewicz-Pawlak Małgorzata, Head of the Eastern Partnership Unit, Eastern Department, Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Poland
41. Leitner Johannes, Head of the Competence Center for Black Sea Region Studies, University of Applied Sciences BFI Vienna, Austria
42. Maksak Hennadiy, Chairman of the Board, Head of the Eastern Partnership Studies, Ukrainian Prism Foreign Policy Institute, Ukraine
43. Marchl Gerhard, Head of Department of European Politics, Karl-Renner-Institute, Austria
44. Marciacq Florent, Deputy Secretary General and Research Fellow, Austro-French Centre for Approximation in Europe, Vienna; Senior Fellow, Centre international de formation européenne, Nice/Berlin
45. Marin Anaïs, Assistant Professor, Collegium Civitas, Poland
46. Meissner Hannes, Senior Researcher and Lecturer, Competence Center for Black Sea Region Studies, University of Applied Sciences BFI Vienna, Austria
47. Mikhelidze Nona, Head of the Eastern Europe and Eurasia Program, Istituto Affari Internazionali, Italy
48. Morari Daniela, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova
49. Moshes Arkady, Director, EU's Eastern Neighbourhood and Russia Research Programme, Finnish Institute of International Affairs, Finland
50. Neljas Aap, Senior Research Fellow, Estonian Center of Eastern Partnership, Estonia
51. Nelli Feroci Ferdinando, President, Istituto Affari Internazionali, Italy
52. Nuriyev Elkhan, Expert Advisory Board Member, Reconnecting Eurasia, Azerbaijan/ Switzerland
53. Palige Aline, Senior Programme Manager, Centre International de Formation Européenne, France/Germany
54. Paznyak Vyachaslau, Professor, European Humanities University, Lithuania/Belarus
55. Pieber Lena, Department for Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, Austria
56. Pietsch Simon, Project Assistance, Competence Center for Black Sea Region Studies, University of Applied Sciences BFI Vienna, Austria
57. Polláková Ľubica, Senior Programme Manager, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House, United Kingdom
58. Rimoux Frédéric, First Secretary, Embassy of the French Republic in Austria
59. Rzayev Samir, Second Secretary, Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Austria

60. Saarikoski Outi, Minister-Counsellor, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Finland in Austria
61. Schernbeck Nico, Advisor, Permanent Mission of Slovakia to the OSCE in Austria
62. Schumacher Tobias, Chairholder of the European Neighbourhood Policy Chair, College of Europe, Natolin Campus, Poland
63. Segert Dieter, Professor, University of Vienna, Austria
64. Shen Olga, Young European Ambassador (Eastern Partnership), Ukraine/Austria
65. Simonet Loïc, Acting Head/External Co-operation Section, Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe
66. Spassov Svetoslav, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Bulgaria to the UN, the OSCE and other International Organisations in Austria
67. Šrámek Ivo, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the United Nations, OSCE and other International Organizations in Austria
68. Starkeviciute Margarita, former Member of the European Parliament and the EuroNest Parliamentary Assembly, Lithuania
69. Stewart Susan, Senior Associate, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Germany
70. Stumvoll Magda, Programme Coordinator and Research Fellow, Austro-French Centre for Rapprochement in Europe, Austria
71. Swoboda Hannes, President, International Institute for Peace, Austria
72. Tanchev Alexander, Research Associate, Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy, Austria
73. Tchakarova Velina, Head of Institute, Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy, Austria
74. Tkeshelashvili Eka, Director, Georgian Institute for Strategic Studies, Georgia
75. Tompea Roxana-Claudia, Young European Ambassador (Eastern Partnership), Romania/Austria
76. Vulic Alexandre, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Representation of France to the OSCE in Austria
77. Weiss Simon, Research Associate, Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation, Regional Office for Cooperation and Peace in Europe, Austria