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## International Conference

### Programme

*(\*participants to be confirmed)*

# REALITY CHECK SERIES

## SOURCES, TOOLS AND IMPACT OF EXTERNAL NON-EU-ENGAGEMENT IN SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE

### PART II – TURKEY

Berlin, 5/6 June 2019 at the Park Inn Hotel

**Conference Venue:** Park Inn Hotel, Alexanderplatz 7, 10178 Berlin

**Conference committee:**

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

Christian **Hagemann**, Deputy Director, Southeast Europe Association, Munich

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

**Conference Language:** English

The past decade has witnessed a rather active foreign policy by Turkey in Southeast Europe. On the basis of historical legacies, Turkish cultural initiatives have built new links to the region and increased the countries' attractiveness for students and tourists. Turkish businesses are investing into infrastructure projects and seize business opportunities, also with an eye on the region's importance for transit towards the EU. At the same time, many of the region's leaders have good relations to the Turkish government, while Turkish politicians have held rallies in the region during election campaigns and stressed the bond between Turkish diaspora and local minorities to their homeland. What does this interest and engagement in the region mean for the different countries, what is its extent in comparison to other actors, and how has it evolved over time?

The conference in the realm of the SOG's series on 'External Non-EU Engagement in Southeast Europe' aims to create an open space for debate on the most recent developments in Turkish foreign policy towards the region and especially the Western Balkans. By focusing on the issue areas of Turkish soft

power, economic engagement and political influence, the panels will shed light on Turkey's engagement in the region and discuss converging and potentially diverging interests with the EU.

*ATTENTION: The conference will take place under **Chatham House Rule** in order to facilitate an unrestricted and open exchange of views and ideas. At a meeting held under the Chatham House Rule, anyone who comes to the meeting is free to use information from the discussion but is not allowed to reveal who made any comment. It aims to increase openness of discussion.*

**WEDNESDAY, 5 JUNE 2019**

**09:00 REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS AND COFFEE**

**09:30 WELCOME/INTRODUCTION**

Gernot **Erl**er, former Minister of State, President Southeast Europe Association, Berlin

Ambassador Christian **Hellbach**, Director for South-Eastern Europe, Turkey and EFTA States, German Federal Foreign Office, Berlin

**10:00 KEY NOTE: THE EUROPEAN UNION, TURKEY AND SOUTHEAST EUROPE**

Dimitar **Bechev**, Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council, Washington D.C.

**10:30 PANEL I: SOUTHEAST EUROPE IN CURRENT TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY**

Chair: Dušan **Reljić**, Head of Brussels Office of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Brussels

Panelists: **Soft Power:** Ahmet Erdi **Öztürk**, Postdoctoral scholar in residence at the University of Notre Dame's Kroc Institute and Swedish Institute Fellow, Institute for Research on Migration, Ethnicity and Society (REMESO), Linköping University

**Economic Influence:** Mariya **Hake**, Senior Economist Western Balkans and Turkey, Austrian National Bank, Vienna

**Political Influence:** Srecko **Latal**, Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN), Sarajevo and Hamdi Firat **Buyuk**, Journalist and Political Analyst with Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN), PhD Candidate, Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Sarajevo

Guiding Questions:

- What are goals, tools, and achievements of Turkey's policy towards the region in the different areas?

- How does Turkey's engagement compare to that of other external actors?
- How has Turkey's approach to and role in the region in the different areas evolved and what will it look like in the future?

12:00 Lunch

## 13:00 PANEL II: TURKEY'S SOFT POWER IN SPECIFIC COUNTRIES – CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS LINKS

Chair: Thomas **Schad**, Research Fellow, Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies, Free University Berlin

Panelists: **Turkey:** Uğur **Tanyeli**, Head of Foreign Relations Unit, TIKA, Ankara\*

**Bosnia and Herzegovina/Kosovo:** Hamdi Firat **Buyuk**, Journalist and Political Analyst with Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN), PhD Candidate, Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Sarajevo

**Albania:** Cecilie **Endresen**, Associate Professor at the Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages, University of Oslo

**Sandžak/Serbia:** Senad **Ganić**, Assistant Professor of International Law, State University of Novi Pazar

### Guiding Questions:

- What is the role of Diyanet, TIKA, the Yunus Emre Institutes and similar actors in the respective countries? What are their tasks and the goals and extent of their deployment?
- What are Turkey's interests and initiatives in the field of education?
- What is the current state of Gülen-sponsored educational institutions in the different countries?
- Does Turkish soft power appeal mainly to fellow Muslim communities, or does it have a broader attractiveness also for other parts of the population? What are chances and limits of its appeal?
- What are Turkey's interests and initiatives in the field of religious issues? What is its influence on religious actors in the region?

## 14:45 PANEL III: TURKISH BUSINESS AND INVESTMENTS IN SPECIFIC COUNTRIES

Chair: Helge **Tolksdorf**, Head of Unit EU Enlargement, Southeast Europe, and Turkey, Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, Berlin

Panelists: **Turkey:** Rifat **Hisarcıklıoğlu**, President of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), Ankara\*

**Kosovo:** Safet **Gërxhaliu**, Secretary General of the Chamber Investment Forum, Trieste

**Serbia:** Nenad **Djurdjević**, Serbia's Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Belgrade

**Albania:** Odeta **Barbullushi**, Advisor to the Albanian Prime Minister and National Coordinator for the Regional Economic Area, Tirana

Guiding questions:

- How have Turkish investments to and trade with the countries evolved over time? How are they spread across sectors?
- What is the relative importance of the Turkish engagement in the different countries?
- How are Turkish and EU interests intertwined when it comes to establishing secure investment environments in the region?

16:30 – 17:00 Coffee Break

**17:00 PANEL IV: TURKEY'S POLITICAL INFLUENCE – SELECTED COUNTRIES AND ISSUE AREAS**

**17.00 – 18.30 Countries:**

Chair: Manuel **Sarrazin** MP, Member of the Bundestag's European Union Committee, Vice President Southeast Europe Association, Berlin

Panelists: **Serbia:** Sabina **Pačarić**, Political Scientist, Queen Mary University, London

**Bosnia and Herzegovina:** Adnan **Huskić**, President of the Centre for Election Studies, Programme Manager of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Sarajevo

**Bulgaria:** Emilia **Zankina**, Associate Professor in Political Science and Provost at the American University in Bulgaria, Sofia

Guiding questions:

- Who are Turkey's most important partners in the respective countries and what are the goals of Turkish foreign policy aiming at the level of domestic politics? What benefits do the partners in the countries expect from the partnership with Turkey?
- Does the AKP offer a role model for specific parties or political actors in the region? Does the Turkish course of greater independence from the EU enlargement process offer insights for governments in the region who are still outside of the EU? Is there a certain Turkish model (of domestic or foreign policy) to be exported to or already adopted in the region?
- How does Turkish influence affect inter-ethnic relations in different countries?

**18.30 – 20.00 Issues:**

Chair: Sabine **Stöhr**, Head of Western Balkan Division, German Federal Foreign Office, Berlin

Panelists: **Interstate relations in the region:** Birgül **Demirtaş**, Expert on Turkish politics towards the Balkans, TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Ankara

**Role of Diaspora and Turkish Minorities:** Kerem **Öktem**, Professor for Southeast Europe and Modern Turkey, University of Graz

**Role of Balkan Politics for Turkish Domestic Politics:** Günter **Seufert**, Senior Fellow at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin

Guiding questions:

- How do Turkey's initiatives affect relations between the countries of the region? Can Turkey offer support for solving some of the region's bilateral disputes? What does, for example, the Turkish-Croatian initiative for Bosnia regarding the Dayton agreement entail?
- What is the role of ethnic Turks and Turkish citizens in the region? Are they really able to foster Turkey's interests in the region, and do they even see themselves in the position to do so? What role do organizations like the 'Union of European Balkan Democrats' play in this regard? Are there other initiatives to support or influence diaspora or minority members?
- How relevant are Turkey's initiatives in Southeast Europe and especially the Western Balkans to win public support and elections in Turkey? Which initiatives and actions should be understood as rather symbolic and mainly directed at a domestic audience?

20:00 Cocktail Reception

**THURSDAY, 6 JUNE 2019**

**09:15 ARRIVAL OF PARTICIPANTS/REGISTRATION**

**09:30 PANEL V: MIGRATION POLICY AND THE BALKAN ROUTE**

Chair: Heinz-Jürgen **Axt**, Professor for European Integration and Politics, University of Duisburg-Essen

Panelists: Kristof **Bender**, European Stability Initiative, Berlin / Vienna

**Turkey:** Metin **Çorabatir**, President of the Research Centre on Asylum and Migration IGAM

**Greece:** Panagiotis **Nikas**, NGO Zeuxis, Athens

Guiding questions:

- Is the EU-Turkey deal (still) the right instrument to govern migration issues regarding the 'Balkan Route'?
- What issues need the immediate attention of the forthcoming new EU Commission regarding the EU's external borders?
- How can the EU, Turkey, and the countries of the region cooperate more effectively to manage migration?

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee Break

**11:30 PANEL VI: OUTLOOK ON FUTURE AVENUES FOR TURKISH-EU COOPERATION IN THE REGION**

Chair: Jens **Bastian**, Independent Economic Analyst, Athens

Panelists: Beken **Saatçioğlu**, Associate Professor of International Relations, MEF University, Istanbul

Calin **Ungur**, EEAS Deputy Head of Division for Turkey, Brussels

Aslı **Aydıntaşbaş**, Senior Policy Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations, Berlin

Guiding questions:

- In which areas have we seen a successful cooperation between the EU and Turkey in Southeast Europe in the past? What lessons can be learned from these areas?
- How can a future collaboration of the EU and Turkey in Southeast Europe look like?
- What are the major so far unexplored fields of potential cooperation?
- Where are current or potential areas of conflict?

13:00 Concluding remarks

13.30 End of the Conference / Lunch  
Departure of Participants