



SouthEast European Studies

Politics, History, Economics

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens / Master's degree

The Impact of the Russia - Ukraine War on Southeastern Europe:

A Roundtable

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Dr Sinem Adar

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Dr. Sinem Adar is an Associate at the Centre for Applied Turkey Studies (CATS) at Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) in Berlin. Her research focuses on Turkish domestic politics as well as foreign and security policy, with a focus on EU-Turkey relations. Dr. Adar holds a Ph.D. in Sociology from Brown University and an MSc in Development Studies from the London School of Economics.

ABSTRACT

At the onset of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, many pundits argued that the war would bring Turkey closer to its Western allies. In the last two decades under AKP rule, Turkey has steadily turned into an autocracy, while it has also increasingly adopted a "Turkey First" approach in its foreign and security policy.

Exploring the assumptions and motivations that drive Ankara's foreign and security policy, this talk will unpack Turkey's so-called "balancing act" between its Western allies and Russia one-and-a-half years into the Ukraine war and the implications of such positioning on societal perceptions concerning Turkey's place in the world vis-a-vis the "West" and the "Rest".



Professor Luciana Alexandra Ghica

University of Bucharest

Dr Luciana Alexandra GHICA is an Associate Professor and Director of the Centre for International Cooperation and Development Studies (IDC) at the University of Bucharest. She specialises in the analysis of international cooperation processes, with a focus on the institutional and discursive impact of democratisation on policymaking and on scientific production. Her publications include several studies on international cooperation and foreign policy in democratizing contexts, as well as on the study of political science as a discipline. She is the editor of the first Romanian encyclopedia of the European Union (2005, three editions) and co-editor of the first Romanian handbook of security studies (2007; Book of the month distinction by the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

ABSTRACT

In Romania, the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine generated an initially high (and largely unexpected) public support for Ukrainian refugees. However, with war fatigue more present in the news cycle, Russian propaganda started to creep more vigorously into the public sphere, finding fertile ground through anti-science / conspiracy channels, which became increasingly visible in mainstream discourses and state institutions.



Within this context, while Romanian authorities were present on the ground for the management of refugee fluxes, provided aid for Ukraine and aligned to international sanctions against Russia, they have been often represented / perceived publicly as having ambiguous, insufficient and / or hesitant actions. This intervention briefly presents the evolution of the Romanian government's attitudes and actions on the matter, identifying the main foreign affairs implications and challenges, as well as the domestic consequences for the country.



Professor Nenad Markovikj

**Ss. Cyril and Methodius
University, Skopje**

Dr Nenad Markovikj is a tenured professor at the political science department of the Law Faculty "Iustinianus Primus" in Skopje. He is a co-founder of one of the biggest think-tanks in North Macedonia - the Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis" - Skopje (IDSCS) and an associate researcher of the Prespa Institute. He is a member of the editorial board of the biannual political journal "Political Thought" published by IDSCS and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Skopje. Prof. Markovikj is a former president of the Macedonian political science association (MPSA) and one of the founders of the Balkan political science association (BPSA). He is currently a member of the Security Council of the Republic of North Macedonia.

ABSTRACT

Russia's aggression in Ukraine caused a global upset, with no European country immune to taking an official position. At the level of state policy, North Macedonia, in coordination with its NATO partners, condemned the aggression and even sent modest military aid to Ukraine. Although the official position remains clear, the global geopolitical shifts have caused an internal rupture in the country's societal tissue. With Russian influence and activity rising in Southeast Europe, North Macedonia has not built internal resilience towards hostile propaganda and misinformation. Moreover, society is heavily divided on many issues, including the war in Ukraine. Although a majority of the population supports the Ukrainians' efforts to defend their country, a significant proportion shows signs of either direct support to Russia or visible anti-Westernism caused by the frequent political deadlocks in the country.



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Professor Jovan Teokarevic

University of Belgrade

Dr. Jovan Teokarević is Professor of Comparative Politics at the University of Belgrade (since 2002) and visiting professor at the College of Europe, Natolin Campus, Warsaw (since 2016). Previously he taught for many years about the Balkans at the NATO Defence College in Rome and at the Master's Programme of the University of Vienna. His research, published in 7 authored and 12 edited books, has focused on: post-communist transition, politics in the Balkans, EU and NATO enlargement and EU-Western Balkans relations. Before joining the University of Belgrade, he worked for 20 years as a research fellow at the Belgrade-based Institute for European Studies. He was also founder and Director of the think tank Belgrade Centre for European Integration, Serbia's academic coordinator of the international Master's Programme in Southeast European Studies (with the University of Graz), and Chairman of the Governing Board of the Open Society Foundation Serbia.

ABSTRACT

My first goal is to explain Serbia's reluctance to introduce sanctions on Russia because of its aggression on Ukraine. This has been supported so far by a majority of Serbia's citizens and criticised by the EU and its member states. Although without formal announcements, this has effectively put the country's accession negotiations on hold. The ramifications of this decision are even greater in the context of a renewed interest for the acceleration of EU integration of six Western Balkan and three East European states. The second goal is to explain the effects of the war on Serbia's relations with other countries in the Western Balkan region, particularly on the escalation of crisis in relations with Kosovo. Finally, the war has also had an impact on Serbia's internal political and economic situation. The destiny of the authoritarian system is at stake, with growing citizens' protests and upcoming elections.



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