



University of
Zurich^{UZH}

CEES
Center for Eastern European Studies



Conference Program

«Where is Russia Heading? 20 Years of Russian Analytical Digest»

International Conference, University of Zurich, 3-4 November 2026

Organised to mark the 20th anniversary of the *Russian Analytical Digest* ([RAD](#)), this conference brings together leading experts to discuss where Russia is heading. It examines key developments in Russian foreign and domestic policy, the economy, and society, with particular attention to the impact of the war against Ukraine and the forces shaping Russia's future. The conference is organised by the Centre for Eastern European Studies ([CEES](#)) at the University of Zurich, in cooperation with the Centre for Security Studies ([CSS](#)) at ETH Zurich.

Please register in advance at: <https://ema.uzh.ch/RUMRK>

Day 1, Tuesday, 3 November 2026

Venue: University of Zurich, room KOL-F-104

16:15-16:30

Welcome & Introduction

Andreas Wenger (CSS ETH Zurich) & Jeronim Perović (CEES University of Zurich)

16:30-16:45

On the history of RAD

Robert Ortung (Washington, DC)

16:45-17:15

Keynote "Where is Russia Heading?"

Gudrun Persson (Stockholm)

17:15-18:45

Panel discussion and Q & A

Gudrun Persson (Stockholm), Mikhail Troitskiy (Boston) & Heiko Pleines (Bremen)
Moderated by Jeronim Perović (Zurich)

19:15 Conference Dinner



Day 2, Wednesday, 4 November 2026

9:00-10:00

Panel 1: Foreign Policy & Ideology

Venue: University of Zurich, room RAA-G-01

Chair: Jeronim Perović

- Lisa Gauffmann (Groningen), “State Ideology and the Politics of Gender in Russia’s Full-Scale Invasion of Ukraine”
- Mikhail Suslov (Copenhagen), “Russia’s Strategic Outreach: A Comparative Analysis of Messaging to the Global South and to Western Ideological Migrants”

10:00-11:00

Panel 2: Domestic Politics & Elites

Venue: University of Zurich, room RAA-G-01

Chair: Fabian Burkhardt (Regensburg)

- Andrei Yakovlev (Berlin), “Between Mobilization Model and Mafia State - Main Elite Drivers of Transformation of Putin’s System”
- Vladimir Gel’man (Helsinki), “The Great Involution: Reflections on Russia’s Responses to Post-2022 Shock and Beyond”

11:00-11:30 Coffee Break

11:30-12:30

Panel 3: Economy & Economic Policy

Venue: University of Zurich, room RAA-G-01

Chair: Heiko Pleines (Bremen)

- Michael Rochlitz (Oxford), “Building a Fortress: Does Russia have a Long-Term Economic Strategy?”
- Alexandra Prokopenko (Berlin), “Putin’s Broken Trilemma: The Russia-Ukraine War has Taken its Toll on the Russian Economy”

12:30-14:00 Lunch Break

14:00-15:00

Panel 4: War & Society

Venue: University of Zurich, room RAA-G-15

Chair: Robert Orttung (Washington, DC)

- Jan Matti Dollbaum (Fribourg), “Repression and Legitimacy in Times of War – Do Russian Citizens Like a Repressive State?”
- Svetlana Erpylova (Bremen), “Life During Wartime: How Russians Adapt to Russia’s War Against Ukraine”

15:00-16:00 Panel 5: The War and Russia’s Future

Venue: University of Zurich, room RAA-G-15

Chair: Vassily Klimentov (Zurich)

- Margarete Klein (Berlin) “When War Comes Home: Russia’s Veterans as a Challenge to Society, Regime Stability, and the Military”
- Aleksandr Baunov (Berlin), “Geopolitical Anxiety as a Factor of Cohesion for the Russian Regime”



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In cooperation with

