

A joint project by the Center for Eastern European Studies (CEES) at the University of Zurich and the Center for Security Studies (CSS) at ETH Zurich

Call for Papers for the international conference “Eurasia in Transition: Geopolitics, Connections and Challenges”

Conference organized in cooperation between the Center for Eastern European Studies (CEES) at the University of Zurich and the Center for Security Studies (CSS) at ETH Zurich

Venue and date: University of Zurich, May 13–15, 2020

Conference website: <https://www.cees.uzh.ch/de/Veranstaltungen/Conferences.html>

Description

Eurasia is transforming. Since the emergence of fifteen new national states on the territory of the former Soviet Union, this vast region saw major political and socioeconomic transformations, and repeated reconfigurations of its geopolitical and geo-economic landscape. The transformations in the central Eurasian space will have far-reaching repercussions on the international order and present challenges, but also opportunities, for the West and Europe. The trajectories are still little understood and have not received the attention that they deserve by the academic community. The key aim of this international conference is therefore to get a better understanding of the changes in this key part of the central Eurasian landmass, by exploring three major issues.

Geopolitics: In a region as vast as Eurasia, geographical factors play a crucial role for politics and international relations. This is especially true for the landlocked post-Soviet states of the Central Asia and Caspian regions, which face significant obstacles to participation in the global economy. The ways these countries engage with one another and with outside powers, including Russia, the West and China, impacts the larger political and economic contours of the central Eurasian region in important ways. Analyzing the interests and motives of the key actors, and understanding the various interactions taking place between regional and outside actors, is a key aim of this conference.

Connections: Since the break-up of the Soviet Union, post-Soviet Eurasia has evolved into several regional groupings. These new regions have formed as societies become linked through multilateral organizations, trade, culture, shared memories and identities, or infrastructure. A second aim of this conference is to understand how these connections have changed and evolved over time and space. Of all the connections, infrastructure, namely transportation routes and energy transportation networks, are especially important, as it is believed that these structural relations among states are important for the emerging regional contours of Eurasia.

Challenges: Another goal of this conference is in seeking to identify and understand key challenges affecting both regional and international dynamics: The trajectories in central Eurasia do not only depend on outside influence, but also on transformations taking place within individual countries, resulting from internal political dynamics or societal responses. A key task of this conference is therefore to analyze internal social dynamics, assess the likelihood of political changes within individual countries, and consider possible consequences for existing patterns of international relations and interactions. At the same time, the members of this conference will also aim to understand the broader global impact of these trajectories, assess current Western policies, and discuss ways in which Europe and the larger West— including Switzerland – should react.

We invite papers from various disciplines that examine aspects of these changes in an innovative way. While we welcome submissions on a broad range of possible topics and from all disciplinary approaches, we welcome proposals that make a contribution to the specific topics as outlined in the conference program: <https://www.cees.uzh.ch/de/Veranstaltungen/Conferences.html>

We welcome proposals from senior as well as younger researchers from all over the world, but especially encourage PhD students and Postdocs from the larger Eurasian region, and especially from Central Asia, to apply. We expect paper proposals to be about 600-800 words long, and to include a detailed discussion of how the paper fulfills the outlined requirements and whether and how it builds upon previous work by the author. Please submit your application in English and as a single PDF-file via Email (including an outline of your proposed paper, a CV and list of publications) by **November 30, 2019** to: cees@hist.uzh.ch

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