



Leibniz Institute for  
**EAST AND SOUTHEAST  
EUROPEAN STUDIES**

7th Annual Conference of the  
Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies (IOS), Regensburg

## ***Firms and Social Change in Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Historical, Political and Economic Perspectives***

May 23-25, 2019  
IOS, Regensburg (Germany)

### **CALL FOR PAPERS**

Eastern and Southeastern Europe was and is often a difficult terrain for firms. Political, social and economic discontinuity repeatedly cut short business plans. Social environments of low trust, weak rule of law, and state intervention make running a business a delicate balancing act. At the same time, firms play, historically and today, an important role not only in creating wealth, but also in organizing social relations and affecting political change. Some firms even withstood war and revolution, showing surprising resilience. Firms are also an important link between global forces and local conditions. They are a crucial space of social organization, facilitating distinctive group identities (of managers and workers, for example).

The 7th Annual IOS Conference will discuss the specificity of firms and their behavior in Eastern and Southeastern Europe. We will address both historical trajectories since the 19th century and current processes. As a region where empires dissolved a century ago, where two world wars led to incredible human and material losses, where communists thought to replace markets with plans, and where market economies rapidly evolved after the end of communist rule, the region poses distinct questions as for the functioning of firms. Our goal is to find out whether there is a distinctive model of the “Eastern and Southeastern European” firm, determined by the specific political and social make-up of the region. The region also provides interesting case studies for exploring government strategies towards entrepreneurship and ownership. A peculiar focus of the conference will, therefore, be on the relationship between private and state-owned firms.

The conference intends to facilitate an interdisciplinary dialogue. We invite scholars from a range of disciplines who study firms – from their external connections, and economic performance to their inner governance and social life, on an aggregate level or by case-studies, in past or in present. From these different perspectives, a number of major questions shall be addressed:

- How can we explain long-term survival of firms, why do some survive political ruptures and others not?
- How do firms transform and adapt to external shocks and opportunities, how do managers respond to them?
- How does the institutional environment affect firm economic performance, and vice versa?
- What are the long-term consequences of privatization of state-owned enterprises, and of the nationalization of privately-owned enterprises?
- How did the communitarian functions of firms change over time, what role for the emergence of group identities have they been playing?
- What has been the relation between firms and political, social and ethnic conflict, but also cooperation across such cleavages?
- What coalitions do owners, managers and employees build, how do labor relations inside firms evolve?
- What has been the impact of international business and of the inflow of foreign capital on local business cultures and its political embeddedness?

The **deadline** for paper proposals is **December 21, 2018** (see below).

#### **Keynote speakers:**

Andrei Yakovlev (Higher School of Economics, Moscow).

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#### **Important dates:**

December 21, 2018	Deadline for paper proposal submissions
mid-January, 2019	Notification of acceptance
May 12, 2019	Deadline for full paper submissions

**Applications** should be send to [AnnualConference@ios-regensburg.de](mailto:AnnualConference@ios-regensburg.de) in one PDF document. The file name should include the name of the author. The application must include:

- an abstract (max. 300 words)
- a short CV including your institutional affiliation and contact details.

The conference language is English. IOS Regensburg will cover accommodation costs and support travel costs of presenters.

**Conveners:** Ulf Brunnbauer, Oleg Sidorkin