

Turmoil on the post-Soviet Rimlands Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Nagorno-Karabakh and beyond

Brown bag public online panel discussion via Zoom, 24 November 2020, 12:00 am

The second half of 2020 has seen a series of political conflicts and electoral protests in several countries of the former Soviet Union. Landmark elections in Belarus and Kyrgyzstan sparked a wave of protests. Moreover, Azerbaijan and Armenia went to war in and around the internationally non-recognized de facto state Nagorno-Karabakh. Each speaker of the panel will discuss one of these issues while also providing a comparative perspective. Are there common trends among recent political developments and turmoil? What are the major differences from similar events in other countries in the region? What conclusions can we draw for the region as a whole? The panel discussion is organized by the Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies (IOS) in Regensburg on the occasion of the *Russland-Analysen* issue »Völkerrechtlich nicht anerkannte De-facto-Staaten im postsowjetischen Raum« (“Non-Recognized de facto States in the post-Soviet Space”) edited by IOS Regensburg. The issue will be published shortly before the panel discussion and will be available open access online (<https://www.laender-analysen.de/russland-analysen/394/>).

When: 24 November 2020, 12:00 – 13:00 via Zoom

Link to join the discussion (**no registration needed**):

<https://ios-regensburg-de.zoom.us/j/83292264436?pwd=WE1wcUU4WjJ0V1hTMnZNZkRMeHZyQT09>

Meeting-ID: 832 9226 4436

Password: 095484

Elia Bescotti (IOS Regensburg, Université libre de Bruxelles): Nagorno-Karabakh, and other protracted conflicts and de facto states

Despite the relatively peaceful collapse of the Soviet Union, secessionist conflicts between and within the former republics flared up along the contradictory administrative boundaries established by Soviet elites. Some of these conflicts remain unresolved. Unrecognised de facto states have emerged from these protracted conflicts. In a limbo between war and peace, de facto existence and international non-recognition, these entities took efforts of state- and institution-building. Yet, their internal and external status remains disputed politically and militarily. As the recently re-ignited war demonstrates, Nagorno-Karabakh is perhaps the most intractable among these conflicts.

Olga Dryndova (Belarus-Analysen, Research Center for East European Studies at the University of Bremen): **Protests in Belarus**

The wide and rapid pre-election politicisation of Belarusians, followed by the largest political protests in the history of independent Belarus after the presidential election on August 9th, came as a surprise for many experts and politicians. What are the main reasons of the protests that have been lasting for over three months already? What is the nature of these protests, their claims? What are the main tendencies of protests? And what do current protests tell us about the Belarusian society?

Nargiza Kilichova (IOS Regensburg, University of Regensburg): **Post-Parliamentary Election Crisis in Kyrgyzstan**

In large numbers, citizens took to the streets in Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan, to protest the results of the parliamentary election held on October 4th. The protesters accused the current government of electoral fraud and demanded to cancel the election results. Are these protests a form of political routine in the country? The October post-parliamentary election demonstrations have parallels with the last two periods of political unrest in the country in 2005 and 2010. But there are also crucial differences between the past and the current political tensions. The panel will discuss these differences and will seek to shed light on the complex political events in Kyrgyzstan.

Chair: Fabian Burkhardt (IOS Regensburg, Russland-Analysen)