



LSE

LSEE

# Research on South Eastern Europe

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## Editorial

### Going Backwards?

Recent events, in the SEE region and more widely, have reminded us how precarious the situation remains for our part of the world and for the political, economic and institutional achievements that we tend to take for granted. The recent developments in Greece, whether reflecting a victory of democracy or of national sovereignty as Prof Rodrik put it recently ("Greece's Vote for Sovereignty", Project Syndicate, 7/7/15), have slumped the country back into recession and threaten to destabilise again the wider region, at least financially if not also politically ("ECB Said to Extend Backstop to Bulgaria Amid Greek Fallout, Bloomberg, 3/7/15"). In the region of our immediate focus, the transition Balkans, this past year has also seen the re-emergence of old risks and grievances – from the 'footballing' incident between Serbia and Albania in October 2014, to the re-vitalisation of ethnic politics in Macedonia recently, and to wider concerns about democracy and the rule of law almost everywhere in the region (European Parliament Press Release, 11/3/15).

In this turbulent and uncertain environment, LSEE continued its active presence in, and contribution to, academic research and public policy debates for, as the motto of our home institution has it, the betterment of society. Like in previous years, our activities this year have ranged from a vibrant series of seminars (see our Visiting Speaker Programme), various high profile public lectures by key political figures from the region (see pp. 10-12); to various publications, in-house and in academic journals (see pp. 3-6), on aspects ranging from 'Pre-accession Europeanisation in Serbia' and Turkish

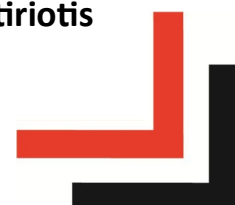
foreign policy, to labour market informality and the sustainability of current account imbalances; and various research activities, including our leadership of a research consortium for a large-scale project on Integration Challenges in the Balkans.

For us too, however, the coming year is one of increasing challenges and risks – and, we like to think, opportunities. The coming year brings a closure to our first cycle of development, as we move to a relative downsizing in terms of resources. Our aim is to concentrate on, perhaps, fewer but more targeted activities, raising further our research profile and dedicating more resources to our research activities. Our programme of public events will continue, both in London and in the region. On the latter, we are already planning our next Research Network conference (in Miločer, Montenegro on 21-22 September 2015). A number of new research projects are in the pipeline and we hope that, through these, we will continue making a positive and tangible contribution to the multilateral and multi-nodal efforts to overcome the challenges facing our region and to promote democracy, stability and prosperity for all.

We hope that as many of you as possible will be able to follow us and to join us actively in this continuing endeavour of ours.

**Dr Vassilis Monastiriotis**

LSEE Director





## Who's Who

**Professor Kevin Featherstone**

LSEE Chair; Hellenic Observatory Director; Eleftherios Venizelos Professor of Contemporary Greek Studies & Professor of European Politics

**Dr Vassilis Monastiriotis**

LSEE Director; Associate Professor in the Political Economy of South Eastern Europe

**Dr Spyros Economides**

LSEE Co-ordinator; Hellenic Observatory Deputy Director; Associate Professor in International Relations and European Politics

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LSEE Public Events UK Co-ordinator; Eurobank EFG Senior Fellow in the Politics of South Eastern Europe

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Senior Research Fellow, Department of International Development, LSE

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**Mr Jakub Krupa**

Blog Assistant Editor

## Research Associates

**Professor Adam Fagan (MAXCAP Partner)**

Professor of Politics, Queen Mary, University of London

**Professor Slobodan Markovich MBE**

Associate Professor, Faculty of Political Science, University of Belgrade

**Professor Umut Özkirimli**

Professor of Politics & Director of Turkish-Greek Studies, Istanbul Bilgi University

## Visiting Fellows 2014-15

**Professor Mihail Arandarenko**

Professor of Economics, University of Belgrade

**Dr Dimitar Bechev**

Director, European Policy Institute, Sofia

**Dr Didem Buhari-Gulmez**

TUBITAK Post-doc Fellow

**Dr Henri Çili**

Director General, European University of Tirana

**Dr Joanna Hanson**

Former Research Analyst, Foreign Commonwealth Office

**Dr Burhan Can Karhasan**

Assistant Professor in Economics, Piri Reis University; TUBITAK Post-doc Fellow

**Dr Jelena Lausev**

Assistant Professor of Economics, University of Belgrade

**Dr Sherrill Stroschein**

Senior Lecturer (Associate Professor) in Politics Department of Political Science, UCL

**Dr Cigdem Borke Tunali**

Assistant Professor at Faculty of Economics, Istanbul University

## Donors

We would like to record our gratitude to:

**Eurobank EFG / Hellenic Petroleum S.A  
National Bank of Greece / Viohalco S.A.**

LSEE is part of the LSE's European Institute,  
a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence

# LSEE Research Network on Social Cohesion in South East Europe

The LSEE Research Network has continued another vibrant year of activities focusing mainly on carrying out two research projects funded by the Council of Europe and the European Commission, mainly in collaboration with members of the Research Network's "Education Working Group". The first project concerns the issue of how to promote inclusive education, and investigates the extent and obstacles to inclusion in 49 primary and secondary schools in the Western Balkans. The second project investigates higher education systems through a combined graduate and employer survey covering several thousand graduates from the higher education systems in the region. The project identifies sources of skill mismatch and will provide evidence for policy makers to develop new approaches to the reform of higher education systems in the region.

LSEE has hosted **Professor Mihail Arandarenko** from the Faculty of Economics in Belgrade as the first official visitor from the Research Network as a Visiting Research Fellow for 6 months from September 2014. During his time at LSEE Professor Arandarenko developed a new model of labour market activity in the region based on the theme of "Exit, Voice and Loyalty" which he presented at a LSEE research seminar. Professor Arandarenko is the lead coordinator of the "Labour Markets Working Group" of the Research Network and is organising a session of the forthcoming Workshop of the Research Network in September.

The next Workshop of the LSEE Research Network will be held at Miločer, Montenegro from 21-22 September 2015. The theme of the Workshop will be "Barriers to Inclusive

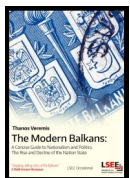
Growth in the Western Balkans". Each of the Working Groups will present papers resulting from their research on education, labour markets and social protection. There will also be a session dedicated to the theme of decentralisation and local economic development, connecting with earlier [LSEE research on the theme of decentralisation](#) in South East Europe ●

**Will Bartlett** - LSEE Research Network Coordinator

Scan below to visit the [Network's Page](#)



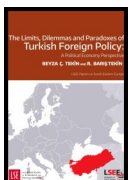
## LSEE Publications



### The Modern Balkans: A Concise Guide to Nationalism, Politics, the Rise and Decline of the Nation State

**Thanos Veremis**

In this book, Thanos Veremis synthesises much of the contemporary historiography of the Balkans and provides a clear, accessible narrative. The book has a broad historical reach, from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries. It has three main sections: the first covers the emergence of the new nation states and the stateless nations; the second makes thematic connections between this Balkan history and that of the wider world, with respect to issues of nationalism and identity; and the third explores the 'unfinished business' of the present – the issues that linger and challenge the region and its allies. This work will be of much value to students and scholars, new and old, who seek a ready companion and reference to their inquiries. It will illuminate the grand themes of Balkan history, but also answer more specific queries ●



### The Limits, Dilemmas, and Paradoxes of Turkish Foreign Policy: A Political Economy Perspective

**Beyza Ç. Tekin and R. Barış Tekin**

This study examines the transformation in Turkish foreign policy under the Justice and Development Party (AKP) rule from a political economy perspective, in an attempt to better understand the limit, dilemmas and paradoxes of Turkish foreign policy which have become discernible following the swift political transition in the Middle East. Against the current global and regional backdrop, the authors claim that the strength and continuity of neoliberal policy views in Turkey is one of the major factors behind the recent transformation in its foreign policy behaviour. The neoliberal policy paradigm, which happen to fit well with the AKP's 'conservative globalism' have locked Turkey in a particular trajectory which constrained its foreign policy alternatives. The constraints on economic policy, and the AKP government's preference to prioritise simplistic, temporary solutions to the economy's structural problems have translated into foreign policy dilemmas ●

## Research by LSEE staff

### Will Bartlett



My research on links and dependencies between the core, periphery and super-periphery of the European economy situates the Balkans within the wider European economic space - rather than as a region that is somehow separate and "other". The key paper on this theme has been presented at several international conferences and is about to be published in the LSE LEQS working paper series. Over the last year I have also continued my research on public sector reforms in education, health and social protection systems in the region. Two projects in particular encompass the whole spectrum of education systems in the Western Balkans. The first, funded by the Council of Europe, investigates the barriers to inclusive education in primary and secondary schools, while the second, funded by the European Commission, investigates the effectiveness of higher education systems in providing graduates with appropriate skills to support improved competitiveness and growth. Other research on the wider impact of investment in the cultural heritage has led to a co-authored book on the "Ljubljana Process" investments in historic sites in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia, while a new project just beginning, funded by the European Parliament, will evaluate the European Commission's Framework for Roma Integration Strategies covering Bulgaria and Romania.

### Vesna Bojičić-Dželilović



My recent research on the Western Balkans focuses on how post-conflict, post-communist transition has impacted on the everyday security of individuals and groups, which I conduct as part of a broader comparative project on Security in Transition by the

Civil Society and Human Security Research Unit. One strand of research looks at the broad processes of political, economic and social change in Sandzak, Southern Serbia and the ensuing security challenges in this region; and the other, focuses on the role of corporate actors as security providers in Bosnia- Herzegovina by exploring local political economy in several regions. One of the outputs of this work is the article 'The Politics, Practice and Paradox of 'Ethnic Security' in Bosnia- Herzegovina', recently published in *Stability: Journal of Security and Development*.

### Spyros Economides



Over the last year, I have continued my research into the relationship between the European Union and the region of the Western Balkans. My main focus centres on question of security, enlargement, conditionality and Europeanisation. In the past months I have focused more narrowly on the issue of Europeanisation. As a result I have published, with Dr James Ker-Lindsay, an article titled 'Pre-accession Europeanization: the case of Serbia and Kosovo', in the prestigious *Journal of Common Market Studies* (JCMS). With Dr Ker-Lindsay, I am currently preparing another article on the EU-Western Balkan enlargement process and the impact of 'third-party conditionality'. Lastly, I am finalising an article which examines the role of the EU as a State-Builder in the Balkans.

### Adam Fagan



I have continued my research on Europeanization in the Western Balkans on the MAXCAP project and have co-hosted events on EU efforts in the region on: minority protection (with MAXCAP

partners BCSDN); and the fight against corruption (with DG NEAR). I have published the book *Europeanization of the Western Balkans* (co-authored with Indraneel Sircar), and a special issue of *Environment and Planning C* (co-edited with Tanja Börzel) on the Europeanization of environmental governance in the Western Balkans is forthcoming.

### Kevin Featherstone



I have pursued a new research project on the 'quality of governance' in SE Europe and have given a public lecture on this topic at the University of Sheffield (21 November 2014). The lecture commemorated the 10th anniversary of the University's South East Europe Research Centre. The title of the talk was: 'The Balkan "State tradition" and the Challenges for Europe'. This was followed by a similar lecture in Athens (LSE-Megaron Plus series) on 23 March 2015, entitled: 'Different "Worlds of Governance"? Building Europe on the foundations of weak and diverse national institutions'.

### Claire Gordon

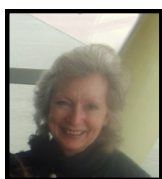


Over the past academic year I have continued my research on the challenges of Roma inclusion in the EU and in the Western Balkans. Together with Will Bartlett, I am currently working on a new European Parliament project evaluating the EU Framework on Strategies for Roma Inclusion. I have recently completed a project for the Committee of the Regions on the place of local and regional self-government in Eastern Partnership policy-making and delivery. I am currently co-editing a special issue of the European Journal of Education on Social Inclusion and Secondary Education in the European Periphery: The Case of VET in the

## ... more research by LSEE staff

Western Balkans. I continue to be a member of the Steering Board of the Regional Research Promotion Programmes for the Western Balkans and have acted as discussant on the panel on Decentralisation and Governance at their 2015 annual conference in Ohrid.

### Joanna Hanson



My LSE research covers two areas: (1) Monitoring the implementation of the 2013 First Brussels Agreement, the Kosovo dialogue process and their public acceptance. I have spoken to people on both political sides and members of the Kosovo public, in particular in the north most affected by the Agreement. In November 2014 I presented my assessment; (2) Studying the possible impact of political interference on civic-society development in Kosovo and Macedonia. I am doing this through interviews and a questionnaire with some quite interesting responses.

### James Ker-Lindsay



Over the course of the past academic year, I have continued to focus on the issue of secession and recognition in international politics. In March, I published a piece in *International Affairs* examining the concept of 'engagement without recognition'. This refers to situations where states interact with entities they do not recognise. The main cases for this were Kosovo and Northern Cyprus. In terms of next projects, I have been commissioned by Oxford University Press to co-author an introductory guide to secession and state creation for their 'What Everyone Needs to Know' series. In addition to my work on secession, I have also been working with Spyros Economides on aspects of EU conditionality in the Western Balkans. We co-wrote an article



published in the *Journal of Common Market Studies* that focused on Serbia's policy towards Kosovo. Following on from this, we are now working on another piece on how judicial institutions can shape conditionality in the region.

### Vassilis Monastiriotsis



One of the main areas of my research over the last year has been that of labour market adjustment and labour market performance – in the transition Balkans as well as in Greece. This included a paper on Labour market informality and non-standard employment in Serbia during the global financial crisis (with A. Martelli) published in December 2014 in the journal *Südosteuropa*; a paper on The impact of the crisis on wage returns across the Greek regions published in *Region et Developpement*; and a research project, currently under completion, on Higher education provision and labour market opportunities in the Western Balkan countries (with W. Bartlett and others) funded by the European Commission. Other research in the broader region, on issues on integration and growth, included two papers on The regional impact of EU association agreements (LEQS Paper No80) and Spatial dynamics and agglomeration forces in the external EU periphery (both with D. Kallioras and G. Petrakos) and a paper

on The Sustainability of External Imbalances in the European Periphery, co-authored with LSEE Visiting Fellow C. Tunalı. But the main activity that occupied my research time in early 2015 has been the preparation, with the valuable collaboration of all LSEE colleagues and many others, of LSEE's bid for a Horizon 2020 project under the Call 'The European Union and integration challenges in the Balkans' the results of which we eagerly await in late 2015.

### Mihail Arandarenko



During my stay at LSEE I have worked on the project Political Economy of Unemployment in the Western Balkans, presenting my findings at a seminar in November 2014. I kept my active involvement in the LSEE Research Network, by participating in the UNDP conference Creating Jobs for Equity and Prosperity - Employment and Social Inclusion in South East Europe and Turkey (Skopje, April 2015), and have been involved in the development of the National Employment Strategy of Montenegro and in the analysis of labour reform proposals in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

...Continues on Page 6



## ... more research by LSEE staff

### Dimitar Bechev



During my fellowship I worked on my book 'Rival Power: Russia in South East Europe' which will be published in late

2016 by Yale UP. In March, I co-convoked, together with James Ker-Lindsay and Othon Anastasakis of SEESOX, a conference exploring Russia's role in the Balkans. Taking part in number of academic and policy events on EU enlargement, the Western Balkans and Turkey, I also established, in cooperation with Julian Popov (former Environment Minister of Bulgaria), a network of scholars and practitioners dealing with energy in South East Europe. Last but not least, I helped with organising a public lecture by the Bulgarian Foreign Minister Daniel Mitov in June.

### Didem Buhari-Gulmez



My research at LSEE (sponsored by TUBITAK) involves a comparative study of self-determination movements in Kosovo, Northern Cyprus and Crimea

and investigates the global and regional dynamics behind the differential approach to secessionism in Europe. I have recently presented my research benefiting from the World Polity theory and Europeanization at the British International Studies Association's 40th conference under the title: "The Global Myth of Equality and National Self-Determination in Europe: Is Europeanization the Missing Link? (The Cases of Kosovo, Northern Cyprus and Crimea)".

### Burhan Can Karahasan



Over the past academic year, my research has focused on the different dimensions of the socio-economic developments in the

Balkan region and its neighbourhood. I have worked on the historical evolution of the regional income distribution in Greece, in a joint effort with Dr Vassilis Monastiriotis. The research has a specific focus on the developments during the recent crisis. Additionally, I have worked on the spatial patterns of human capital in Turkey, on the subjective happiness and well-being in Turkish cities, and on the quality of governance at regional scale in Turkey.

### Denisa Kostovicova



I have been awarded a Research Fellowship for 2015-16 by the Leverhulme Trust, working on the project: 'Reconciliation Within and Across Divided Societies:

evidence from the Balkans'. Using the knowledge of all of the Balkan languages, and building on my work on civil society in post-conflict contexts, I will study the RECOM process in the Balkans. This unique, locally-driven NGO initiative for establishing facts about war crimes gathers civil society groups from all ethnic groups in the region. The research will provide a systematic evaluation of a claim that a regional character of contemporary wars has to be addressed with a regional approach to transitional justice, and identify conditions conducive to reconciliation across the ethnic divide.

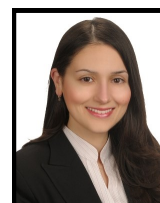
### Sherril Stroschein



I spent the year working on my book project on the Politics in Ethnic Enclaves, with related papers presented at the ASN conference in New York

and at SSEES-UCL. The book examines democratic politics under the "reversed" demographic conditions of ethnic enclaves, where a state's ethnic minority is the local majority. My work this year focused on Hungarian enclaves in Romania and in Slovakia, and will next expand the work to include Albanian enclaves in Serbia and Macedonia.

### Cigdem Borke Tunali



During my visit at LSEE I worked on the sustainability of external deficits in the Eastern European countries. Since the level of domestic

savings of these countries is not enough in order to realize the necessary investments for economic development they will unavoidably experience external deficits in the future as well. Hence, financing these deficits with long-term capital inflows, in particular foreign direct investments, is of the essence in terms of economic stability. Therefore, my next paper will be about the determinants of long-term capital inflows, especially foreign direct investments, in the Eastern European countries. ●

# The LSEE Blog

## 2014/2015



### Top international experts

Publishing 65 articles written by more than 70 authors from all over Europe, we gathered substantial attention of individuals working in the field of regional studies on the Balkans.

### Original high-quality content

Our mission has always been to go beyond the headlines, offering up-to-date, in-depth political and economic analysis written by our experts, while maintaining impartiality and fairness at the same time.

### Global reach

And we believe it is fair to say that we succeeded in this — our articles have been reprinted or quoted by leading media outlets across the region and beyond.

High-profile government figures from the region, when visiting London, chose LSEE as a venue to express their ideas, and LSEE blog interviews to discuss their stances.

### Strengthening the LSEE brand

The blog served as a tool to promote open-minded debates about South Eastern Europe, thus contributing to strengthen the LSEE name among keen SEE-watchers and beyond.

**Tena Prelec, Jakub Krupa**—the 2014/15 editorial team

### In numbers

**65** articles  
**76,433** views



VISIT THE LSEE BLOG TO READ MORE  
at [blogs.lse.ac.uk/lsee](http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lsee) or scan:

### Most popular articles

#### Ten rules by a 21st-century Machiavelli for the Balkan Prince

What would Machiavelli say about the Balkans today?, wonders **Florian Bieber** in this letter for a modern Balkan Prince.



Bieber outlines ten rules that would allow the Prince to keep the power whatever the conditions. 'Ruling is like dancing on the edge of a volcano', he warns, suggesting that there are still ways to stay safe.

(February 2015)

#### Belgrade Waterfront: when Sultanism enters city planning



Belgrade Waterfront – Beograd na Vodi: top-notch urban design or glossy but shady façade? **Jorn Koelemaij** and **Barend Wind** discuss. Two young urbanists take us through the many layers of this controversial project. This blog post has been provided by *The ProtoCity* as part of a blog exchange. (December 2014)

#### Interview with Aleksandar Vucic: 'We're not asking for mercy, but reforming Serbia'



„We have a lot of pluralism: I enjoy it very much when people are attacking me. I feel particularly well then.”, Aleksandar Vucic tells LSEE. We caught up with Serbian Prime Minister **Aleksandar Vucic** after his talk at the London School of Economics. Interview by LSEE's **Tena Prelec**. (October 2014)

### Mentioned in:

THE  
HUFFINGTON  
POST



Ako vam je dobro  
**PESCANIK** onda ništa

BalkanInsight



UCL

БАЛКАНИСТ

ДНЕВНИК

КУРИР



# Visiting Speaker Programme

A series of research and policy seminars



The audience at the Canada Blanch Room

Five years onwards, the LSEE Visiting Speaker Programme has continued its excellent range of contributions throughout the Michaelmas and Lent Terms.

Held on alternate Tuesday evenings, the programme has become a leading forum for new and established scholars working on aspects of contemporary economics, politics and international relations in South East Europe.

This year, the programme started with **Dr James Dawson** (University College London) who presented his research on cultures of democracy in Serbia and Bulgaria, exploring ideas and political identities in an attempt to explain why institutional progress has not necessarily led to the formation of liberal democratic publics in those two countries.

This was followed by a talk on political orientations and internal power-struggles within the nationalist movement in Kosovo in the period 1968-2008, by **Gëzim Krasniqi** (SSEES-University College of London); the political economy of unemployment in the Western Balkans, by **Dr Mihail Arandarenko** (Belgrade University/LSEE Visiting Fellow); an assessment of the real objective of the 2013 Belgrade-Pristina Normalization Agreement and whether it could be considered as a model to be replicated

elsewhere, by **Dr Joanna Hanson** (LSE).

In the Lent Term, the programme continued with a seminar by **Dr Jan-Hinrik Meyer-Sahling** (University of Nottingham), on bureaucracy and corruption in Central and Eastern Europe through the perspective of public officials; followed by an engaging talk by **Dr Florian Bieber** (University of Graz) on emerging democracies in the Western Balkans with strong authoritarian tendencies, and the role of EU integration in this process.

The next two presentations were by **Kyril Drezov** (Keele University) on the long-standing disagreements between Bulgarians and Macedonians on ethnic and regional identities; and by **Dr Nicole Lindstrom** (University of York) on the findings of her forthcoming book, *Europeanization and Post-Socialist Transformations*, as they relate to Estonia and Slovenia.

Podcasts for all of the events are available on the LSEE website. ●



Scan here to go to the [Visiting Speaker Programme Page](#)





**seesox**  
South East European Studies at Oxford

**LSEE**  
Research on  
South Eastern Europe

## A LSEE-SEESOX Public Event Conference: Russia in the Balkans

LSEE and South East European Studies at Oxford (SEESOX) convened a conference on **13 March 2015** looking at Russia's role in the Balkans. It brought together leading experts from the UK, Russia and South East Europe to gauge the nature and extent of Moscow's influence across a variety of areas - from energy, inter-ethnic relations in post-conflict countries, to society and political culture. Below are some of the main conclusions from the Conference.

1. Russia is back to the Balkans in order to score points against the West by exploiting loopholes and blind spots in its policy. Unlike with Russia's "near abroad", the overarching goal is not to roll back NATO and EU enlargement but to build influence in countries that are either part of Western clubs, or are well on their way of joining them, and are therefore useful "door openers".

2. Russia may lack a long-term vision, but it is an accomplished tactical player and, unlike its competitors, takes swift decisions and acts flexibly. In a crisis-stricken Balkans, rife with clientelism and state-capture, it is mostly the

money that comes into play. What is more, funds channeled into Southeast Europe find their way back to the Kremlin establishment.

3. Starting from the late 1990s, Russian energy firms such as Lukoil and Gazprom have made inroads into Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Over time, the Kremlin has harnessed economic interdependence. Yet, a leading position in the oil sector and a monopoly in gas do not always bring it political leverage. Furthermore, investment by Russia is dwarfed by that of the EU. Also, gas plays a minor role in the region's energy consumption, so dependence on Russia should not be

over-estimated. However, Balkan elites bet on the failed South Stream as a great commercial and political opportunity and took a hit when the pipeline was called off.

4. Putin has turned Kosovo into a key part of the narrative concerning the West's humiliation of Russia. The region of the Balkans is central to the Kremlin's narrative about the post-Cold War normative order being broken.

5. Russia and Putin enjoy popularity in Serbia and other Balkan countries because of the resentment felt towards the West. But, when push comes to shove, elites and citizens in the region opt for the EU and the West – a fact well understood by Russian policymakers. ●



Group photo of the Conference speakers, The Shaw Library, Old Building, LSE



Scan here to see the [photo gallery and video recordings](#) from the Conference.

### LSEE-SEESOX Workshop

## Bosnia and Herzegovina: New International Thinking

Following on from the successful event on the Serbia Kosovo dialogue in 2014, this year saw a second joint policy workshop organised by LSEE, SEESOX and the Department for Politics and International Relations at Oxford University. Held at St Antony's College,

on **30 January**, the aim of the workshop was to explore the ways in which the international community could help overcome the political and economic deadlock in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The event brought together academics, opinion formers

and policy makers from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the German Foreign Ministry, the US State Department, United Nations, European Union, World Bank, OSCE, NATO and the EBRD. ●

## LSEE Events

# The View into the Future: Serbia and the Western Balkans in the EU

## Public Lecture by Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić



Left to right: Dr James Ker-Lindsay (Senior Research Fellow, LSEE Research on SEE), Mr Aleksandar Vučić, Professor Craig Calhoun (Director of the LSE), Professor Kevin Featherstone (Hellenic Observatory Director)

Relations with Russia were also in the spotlight. Vučić was unapologetic about Serbia's warm ties to Moscow and talked at length about the benefits of such massive energy projects as the South Stream gas pipeline. At the same time, he reiterated that Serbia's long-term, strategic target is to join the European Union.

He addressed with sarcasm and bluntness the uneasy issues regarding his past political inclinations ("I think my current politics best speaks about it") and allegations that Serbian media are not allowed much space for criticism towards his persona ("I enjoy it very much when people are attacking me. I feel particularly well then").

The lecture and the ensuing LSEE interview with Vučić, published on our blog in both English and Serbian, prompted wide media coverage in Serbia and beyond. ●

*Scan here to visit [the event page](#) and to see a selection of [photographs and a video recording of the lecture](#).*



On 27th October 2014, the LSE's Sheikh Zayed theatre was tightly packed to its full capacity of 400 guests: predictably, spots to attend the LSEE public lecture given by **Serbia's Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić** were in very high demand.

The controversial Serbian leader projected confidence, fending off tough

questions on media freedom, recalling how the government handled the recent Gay Pride Parade and underscoring the fact that the ballot box has confirmed his popular legitimacy.

Vučić focused on the economy and underscored his resolve to make Serbia a top performer in this field. "We want to lead in building highways, attracting investment and agriculture," he said. He highlighted legislative changes in areas such as privatisation, the labour market and bankruptcy regulations as the key to success, adding that Air Serbia is the best carrier in the region.



## LSEE Events

### Long-standing Stability in South East Europe: from security to economic growth

#### Public Lecture by Albanian Foreign Minister Ditmir Bushati



the EU accession process needs to be used as a common denominator for normalising relations between the two countries. 'Those still thinking about a Greater Albania live in a different world', he added in an interview for LSEE.

Prior to his political career, Mr. Ditmir Bushati was a civil society leader and a Founding Director of the European Movement in Albania. He has lectured on European Law and the EU enlargement process at different institutions and universities in Albania and Kosovo and published many scientific papers and articles. ●

**Mr Ditmir Bushati** has served as Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania since September 2013. In his very well attended presentation at LSEE on **3rd November 2014**, chaired by **Dr Arjan Gjonca** and organised in cooperation with the LSE's Albanian Society, Bushati spoke about economic growth and stability in South-Eastern Europe.

Commenting on Albania's still strained relations with Serbia, which have improved of late but have nevertheless gone through hiccups such as a much-covered drone incident in a stadium in Belgrade, he said that



### Public Lecture by Bekim Çollaku

#### Minister of EU Integration of the Republic of Kosovo

**Bekim Çollaku**, Kosovo's Minister of European Integration as of December 2014, spoke at LSEE on **25th February 2015**. The Minister outlined Kosovo's struggle to reinforce the rule of law and tackle pressing internal problems along its path towards the European Union, with a special reference to the progress made in the sphere of visa liberalisation with EU countries. Mr Çollaku, who is a close collaborator of former Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi and was his senior political adviser during the previous mandate, has an academic background and has expressed his wish to go back to academia after the conclusion of his political career. ●



## LSEE Events

### EU Foreign Policy: The View from Bulgaria

#### Public Lecture by Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, H.E. Mr Daniel Mitov



On **16 June** Bulgarian Foreign Minister **Daniel Mitov** delivered a lecture at the LSEE. Titled “EU Foreign Policy: the view from Bulgaria” it covered the manifold external challenges confronting Europe, from the war in Eastern Ukraine to the rise of Islamic State in Syria and Iraq and the humanitarian crisis in the Mediterranean. “The ideologies of aggression and tolerance



Left to right: Tena Prelec (LSEE), Dimitar Bechev (LSEE), Daniel Mitov, James Ker-Lindsay (LSEE), Konstantin Dimitrov (Ambassador, Republic of Bulgaria), Dessislava Proshkova (Adviser, MFA of Bulgaria)

have no place in the 21 century world”, he said. In a passionate defence of liberal democracy, Bulgaria’s first diplomat argued for continuing the

enlargement to the Western Balkans as a key driver of badly-needed political, economic and institutional reforms. ●

### The Western Balkans in the European Union: Mission to be Completed

#### Public Lecture by Macedonian Prime Minister for EU, H.E. Dr Fatmir Besimi



H.E. **Fatmir Besimi** spoke at LSEE on **19<sup>th</sup> January 2015**. Presenting a paper titled ‘The Western Balkans in the EU: Mission to be Completed’, Besimi took on board Churchill’s vision of a united

Europe as the only concrete bearer of political stability and economic prosperity (‘We cannot aim at anything less than the Union of Europe as a whole, and we look forward with confidence to the day when that Union will be achieved’) to advocate for a speedy integration of the Western Balkan countries that are still out of the club. In a clearly momentous year for his country – which has seen ethnic tensions, high-level scandals and mass protests – the Albanian ethnic politician advocated for a more equal spending

of funds as a concrete way of promoting better integration among different Macedonian communities. Interviewed by LSEE, he said that the wire-tapping scandal that has engulfed the highest governmental ranks is taking Macedonia ‘in the opposite direction’ of where it is supposed to go. There was space for self-criticism: civil society needs to be more involved in the decisions of the government, and the resources channelled into the ‘Skopje 2014’ project could have been spent better, he said. ●

## LSEE Events

### Workshop: Resistance or Resilience?

### New avenues of activist citizenship in Southeast Europe



The Centre for European Research, Queen Mary University of London and LSEE co-hosted a workshop entitled 'Resistance or Resilience? New Avenues of Activist Citizenship in Southeast Europe' on **7-8 May 2015**. Participants discussed recent mass citizen-led mobilisations in the region that have strived to engender more inclusive democratic practices.

**Professor Engin Isin** (Open University), who developed the concept of 'activist citizenship', delivered the opening address on the origins of the term.

Workshop participants distilled common themes of mass protest that resonate across the region. In particular, despite the a weak legacy of protest in SEE, local activists have been able to construct new understandings of citizenship through novel forms of representation (e.g., citizens' assemblies)

and have employed new and often creative ways to communicate their objectives (e.g., activist art and photography). Some or all of the workshop papers will be included in a special issue of Europe-Asia Studies scheduled for next year. ●

### Workshop: World Society and Turkey

The 'World Society and Turkey' workshop organized by LSEE Research on South Eastern Europe and Contemporary Turkish Studies on **15th June 2015** brought together experts on different aspects of the modern global system, including norms, identity, legitimacy and interests.

Prof. Roland Robertson, a world-leading scholar on globalization and sociology of religion, gave the keynote speech chaired by **Dr James Ker-Lindsay** (LSE), outlining the characteristics of the contemporary global system.

**Dr Zeynep Kaya** (LSE) discussed Iraqi Kurds' self-determination focusing on international norms and legitimacy and Dr. Seckin Baris Gulmez (University of Warwick) questioned the thesis of national uniqueness comparing Euroscepticism in Turkey and Central and Eastern Europe. **Dr C. Akca Atac** (Cankaya University) dwelled on the threatening Islamic State and Turkey's diminishing role in the dialogue of civilizations. **Dr Muge Kinacioğlu** (Hacettepe University) critically analysed the Turkish foreign policy discourse about Turkey's global power, and **Dr Pinar Ipek** (Bilkent University) emphasized the material and ideational interests shaping Turkish foreign and energy policy. ●



**LSEE**  
Research on  
South Eastern Europe

**LSE** Contemporary  
Turkish Studies



## LSEE Events

### Book Launch: False Apocalypse

Fatos Lubonja



Fatos Lubonja's 'False Apocalypse' was launched on **15 October 2014**. A book which starts as a classic novel but then evolves into a history, a memoir, political analysis, self analysis. A compelling read about Albanian society and its history which fed the new post 1990 Albania. It is also a vital contribution to understanding authoritarian systems and the complexity of unravelling their

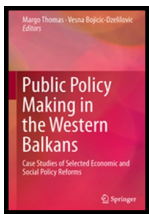
damage. During the animated discussion at the book launch Fatos developed and explained his thinking and memoirs, in a manner typical of him, full of common sense, openness and straightforward logic. His remarks about Albania's new socialist government led by Edi Rama reflect Lubonja's subtlety of language: Rama 'makes a better façade' ●



Left to right: the author, Joanna Hanson (LSEE), Susan Curtis-Kojakovic (Istros Books), and John Hodgson (translator) at the launch event at LSEE

### Book Launch: Public Policy Making in the Western Balkans

Vesna Bojičić-Dželilović and Margo Thomas (eds.)



On **May 9 2015**, the book *Public Policy Making in the Western Balkans: Case Studies of Selected Economic and Social Policy Reforms* co-edited by **Vesna Bojičić - Dželilović** and **Margo Thomas** was launched at a public event organised by the LSEE. The book authors all of whom are academics based at South East European universities examine a range of public

policy reforms by focusing on the role of a spectrum of policy actors - local and international - in setting and implementing policy agendas, and assess reform outcomes.

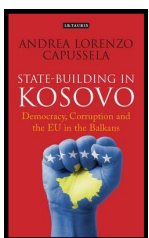
The book provides a valuable insider perspective on the Western Balkans' experience in policy making process and contributes to a nascent literature on this subject ●



Left to right: Marija Babović (Belgrade University), Adam Fagan (QMUL/LSEE), Slavo Radošević (UCL SSEES)

### Book Launch: State-building in Kosovo

Andrea Lorenzo Capussela



The West decided to go to war for Kosovo, administered it for nine years, made it independent, then supervised the country for 4 years, and gave unprecedented aid.

The aim was to erect a stable and well-governed democracy. The outcome is a poor, ill-governed and still fragile state, threatening Europe's internal security

and the stability of the Balkans – argues **Dr Andrea Lorenzo Capussela** in his new book 'State-Building in Kosovo: Democracy, Corruption and the EU in the Balkans', published by I.B. Tauris.

The question why the most ambitious state-building intervention ever attempted by the West has largely failed had not yet been posed. This book offers an answer that moves from the literature on state-building and economic development, draws on the author's own experience, and takes the



perspective of the interests of the EU. The book launch was hosted by LSEE on **11 May 2015** and attracted a keen audience and good media attention by some of Europe's foremost papers ●

## LSEE Events

# Panel Discussion: Where Does Romania Go from Here? Romania and the Presidential Elections

LSEE, in association with the [Romanian-Moldovan Research Group](#), hosted an event chaired by **Dr Sherrill Stroschein (LSEE/UCL)** discussing Romania's contentious and controversial 2014 presidential elections.



Sherrill Stroschein (LSEE) chairing the event

The 2014 elections were Romania's seventh presidential elections in the 25 years since the fall of Communism, the end of Basescu's electoral term (2004-2014) and the unexpected victory of Klaus Iohannis (PNL) against Romania's current Prime Minister, Victor Ponta (PSD). They marked too a critical point in Romania's political landscape, with fears that Romania could retreat from democratic principles, but also offer an opportunity for more commitment to anti-corruption efforts as Romania left the Băseșcu-era. As Ponta embraced an increasingly intolerant and provocative nationalist discourse to mobilise his supporters, there was a grassroots counter mobilisation in Romania and abroad to oppose this. Ultimately, the results of Romania's elections offered more optimism than expected, with the victory of

Iohannis, as one of the few ethnic minority individuals to be elected in post-Communist East and Central Europe.

The election campaign had been marked by fears of an attempt to suppress the vote within the diaspora and across Europe the diaspora were subject to an attempt to prevent them from voting. As a result, there was considerable interest in the discussion by the diaspora and the event was full with standing room only.

The panel comprised 5 speakers: **Dr Daniel Brett** (Open University) opened the event by discussing the political and historical context of the Romanian elections. **Dr Radu Cinpoes** (Kingston University)



Emanuel Coman (Oxford University)

analysed the left-right debates in the elections, in relation to themes of exclusion and tolerance in the election campaign. **Dr Emanuel Coman** (Oxford University) discussed how and why the polling data, which predicted a Ponta victory, was so wrong in predicting the outcome of the election. **Roxana Mihaila** (Sussex University) analysed the elections in terms of debates between domestic and EU politics. Lastly, **Ellie Knott** (LSE) discussed diaspora voters in Romania's elections, focusing in particular on the growth of extra-territorial voters within Moldova.

Overall, the event was a forum to recognise the ongoing importance of academic attention on Romanian politics, in a climate of political polarisation and institutionalised corruption, and reflect on the current position of Romanian studies, given Romania's peripheral status in EU, Balkan and Central European political studies. ●



Ellie Knott (LSE Government) and Daniel Brett (Open University)



**LSEE Staff presentations**

- Balkan Trust for Democracy
- German Federal Foreign Office
- National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia
- Regional Cooperation Council (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- RRPP (Regional Research Promotion Programme)
- UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- University of Oxford (UK)
- University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius (FYR Macedonia)
- UN Good Offices Mission in Cyprus and more...

**LSEE Staff in the news**

- AlJazeera
- BalkanInsight
- BBC (UK)
- Blic (Serbia)
- BNT (Bulgaria)
- The Economist (UK)
- Euronews
- The Financial Times (UK)
- Foreign Policy (USA)
- Koha Ditore (Kosovo)
- LBC (UK)
- Politico
- Politika (Serbia)
- The Wall Street Journal (USA) and more...

**Others about LSEE on Twitter - selected tweets**

@LSEE\_LSE - LSEE-Research on SEE



**Tim Judah @timjudah1 - journalist, The Economist.** Great talk by @fbieber on the authoritarian temptation in the Balkans tonight @LSEE\_LSE

**Neil Buckley @NeilRBuckley - journalist, The Financial Times** Great @LSEE\_LSE blog on why Klaus Iohannis won Romania's 2014 Presidential elections, and where do we go from here?

**Ian Bancroft @bancroftian - formerly head of OSCE Brcko Office, Bosnia.** @LSEE\_LSE pleasure to welcome you all to #Brcko! Great to see such passion for elections!

**Michael Harris @mjrharris - CEO, http://89up.org** This is great the LSEE is live-blogging the Bulgarian elections. 7000 voters in London alone

**The people of LSEE**

**LSEE**

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