Funded Jean Monnet Networking Workshop

Geopolitics of Central and Eastern Europe and the Ukraine War

University of Southampton, 10 June 2024

**Dr Kamil Zwolski,** University of Southampton

Supported by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

**Building 58 (Murray Building), room 1065**

The collective accession of central and eastern European (CEE) countries to NATO and the EU was meant, among other objectives, to fundamentally end a long history of geopolitical games in the region. “Return to Europe” was envisaged as the restoration of the region’s rightful place in the Euro-Atlantic family of free, prosperous and secure nations.

And yet, the history has not ended for CEE countries. In fact, it appears to be going backwards, with the regional geopolitical environment deteriorating rapidly with no end in sight. Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine is, of course, at the centre of this new age of geopolitical insecurity and historical comparisons, if not traumas, are plentiful.

Regardless of how consequential and tragic for European security the war has been, the CEE region is bracing for more undesirable developments, including the possible spillover of the war to the territory of NATO, or the more immediate threat of further destabilisation in Moldova. It is thus going to be the purpose of this Networking Workshop to address the following questions:

1. How has the Russian invasion of Ukraine impacted the geopolitics of central and eastern Europe?
2. What foreign and security strategies have the CEE countries been adopting in response to the war?
3. How have the CEE countries been positioning themselves vis-à-vis other European countries, the EU, NATO, the US, Russia and China?

We will explore these questions at the Networking Workshop organised by Dr Kamil Zwolski at the University of Southampton on June 10, 2024.

**Programme**

**09.30 – 11.15: Welcome and Session 1**

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| **Amy Eaglestone**, University of Birmingham; **Dorina Baltag** Loughborough University | Furthest away from Russia and ever closer to the EU? Moldova hedging its bets on alternating differentiated (dis)integration?” |
| **Damian Strycharz**, Cracow University of Economics | Foreign policy of the 'new Russia': change and continuity in Moscow’s international behaviour towards Central and Eastern Europe after February 2022 |
| **Martin Dangerfield**, University of Wolverhampton  | The Visegrad Group and the Ukraine War: Can the Central European ‘Alliance’ Survive? |
| **Jan Ruzicka**, Aberystwyth University | What explains the different reactions of the Visegrad Group countries to Russia’s Invasion of Ukraine? |
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**11.15 – 11.30: Coffee Break**

**11.30 – 13.00: Session 2**

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| **Alicja Prochniak**, Loughborough University London | the roles and functions of the Intermarium concept in the foreign policy discourse in Poland |
| **Karen van Loon**, Egmont – Royal Institute for International Relations | The Geopolitical Energy Puzzle: Visegrad Nations in the Shadow of Russian Aggression |
| **Artur Gruszczak**, Jagiellonian University | The Russian invasion of Ukraine as a security protocol: Repercussions for regional and global geopolitics |
| **Laura Chappell**, University of Surrey; **Michael Martin Richter**, University of Surrey | Cooperation or competition? German and Polish security leadership in the Central and Eastern European (CEE) region |
| **Ivan U. K. Klyszcz**, International Centre for Defence and Security, Estonia | CEE’s Shadow War: Estonia and Poland under Pressure from Russian Intelligence |

**13.00 – 14.30: Lunch Break**

**14.30 – 16.00: Session 3**

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| **John Ryan**, CESifo, Munich, Germany | Can Macron make his European Strategic Autonomy vision viable? |
| **Andreea Udrea**, Royal Holloway, University of London; **David Smith**, University of Glasgow | The war in Ukraine and the geopolitics of cross-border ethnic kinship in eastern Europe |
| **Tomasz Stępniewski**, The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland | Shifting Security Dynamics in Eastern Europe: Implications in the Aftermath of Russia’s Full-Scale War Against Ukraine |
| **Vadym Zheltovskyy**, University of Warsaw | Dream wish or necessity? In search of common agenda in the approach of CEE countries towards the reconsideration of the EU foreign policy |

**16.00 – 17.00: Networking Session**

Share what you do, any events you will organise, any publications you are working on, grants, or any other opportunities relevant to the theme of the workshop.