

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### **European Responses to the Decay of the Rule of Law and Human Rights Protections in Turkey: Exceptional or symptomatic?**

Freie Universität Berlin

**29-30 August 2019**

Today we witness the gradual entrenchment of policies and practices in a number of European states that run counter to the foundational tenets upon which the very idea of Europe as a political project rest. The limits and capacities of European intergovernmental institutions to respond to systemic violations of human rights, the decay in the rule of law and the weakening of democracy are being tested. The Council of Europe (CoE) and the European Union (EU) appear to be unprepared, ill-equipped or reluctant to produce rapid and effective responses.

At this juncture, the decay in the rule of law and human rights in Turkey represents a critical case-study to analyse how Europe and its institutions respond to such crises. Turkey is well-known for its long involvement with Europe as a long-term CoE member and as a candidate for membership to the EU. Both the CoE and the EU have thus closely monitored each development that has led to the current situation in the country.

Yet, responses of the European institutions to Turkey's move away from European constitutional ideals have remained not only feeble but also inconsistent and complicated. While some European institutions, such as the Venice Commission or the CoE High Commissioner for Human Rights, have strongly criticised developments, others, such as the Secretary General of the CoE or the European Court of Human Rights, have remained timid, cautious, slow and diplomatic. In the meantime, the relationships and partnerships between Europe and Turkey seem to remain intact in many areas - including the much criticized "refugee deal." Turkey thus continues to be a strategic partner of Europe, most notably in the governance of migration, security, and shared economic interests.

It is however not clear whether such feebleness and inconsistency in European responses to the decay in the rule of law and human rights protections are unique to Turkey or rather symptomatic of (new forms of) inter-governmentalism vis-à-vis the rise of populism and authoritarianism in Europe.

The aim of this workshop is to analyse the responses to the decay of the rule of law and human rights protections, in particular, by different organs of European intergovernmental institutions. Although the workshop focuses on European responses to Turkey as a springboard, we particularly encourage proposals that bring comparative analysis to bear on the workshop theme. These can be in two



directions: a comparative analysis of the responses of European institutions to the other states exhibiting similar tendencies and/or a comparative analysis of the European institutional responses with the responses of other intergovernmental organs such as the United Nations bodies.

We are particularly, but not exclusively, interested in paper proposals that focuses on European responses to Turkey as a single case study or as part of a comparative analysis and provide an account of

- the sequence of events that have been decisive in the shaping of certain policies and attitudes of Europe towards the decay of the rule of law and human rights protections
- if and how policies adopted in certain areas of interaction such as migration, security or economy have constrained or shaped responses with respect to the rule of law and human rights
- interactions between the CoE and the EU, as well as among different organs of these institutions, in responding to human rights and the rule of law decay
- whether European responses to the decay of the rule of law and human rights protections in Turkey represents an exceptional way of dealing with such crises or they are symptomatic of (new forms of) inter-governmental politics vis-à-vis authoritarianism when compared to similar examples
- if and how the responses of European institutions to the decay of the rule of law and human rights protections change the discourses that define Europe

The workshop is open to contributions from multidisciplinary perspectives, including from law, political science, economy, history, and sociology. Please send your 500 words abstract alongside a short CV to [demir.gursel@fu-berlin.de](mailto:demir.gursel@fu-berlin.de) by **29 March 2019**. Authors of the accepted papers will be notified by 15 April 2019. All selected participants will be asked to submit a think paper of 5 pages minimum by 1 August 2019. The workshop will take place at Freie Universität Berlin on **29 and 30 August 2019** with the support of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and in collaboration with Hertie School of Governance. Due to considerations for a prospective publication, only unpublished works will be accepted. Limited funds are available to cover travel and accommodation costs of workshop participants where necessary.

#### Workshop organisers

Esra Demir-Gürsel (Freie Universität Berlin)

Başak Çalı (Hertie School of Governance)