



One War, Many Responses: The New Security Order in Europe and its Implications for Small and Middle-sized States

Changing Orders Research Programme at Andrassy University Budapest

Proposed date: 14 – 15 November 2024
Venue: Andrassy University Budapest
Organizer: dr. András Hettyey

From the war in Ukraine to the rise of China, the world order we came to know over the past decades is undoubtedly in a process of transformation. This reorientation also affected Europe's security architecture, which, bringing together the former Eastern and Western blocs, converged around the ideas of inviolability of borders and peaceful conflict resolution. Overall, small states were clear beneficiaries of the security architecture which coalesced after 1990. Yet Russia's wars against Georgia and, more recently, its aggressions in 2014 and 2022 against Ukraine, questioned basic tenets of this architecture. In parallel, with the weakening of the United States of America, China emerged both as an economic partner and investor as well as strategic competitor. How can small states in Europe respond to these new security challenges?

Traditionally, small states opted either for neutrality or joining alliances such as NATO. Yet over the past couple of years an interesting heterogeneity of responses could be observed in these sub-groups, both vis-à-vis Russia and China. Some neutral countries chose to give up their neutrality, some did not. Some neutral countries sent weapons to Ukraine, some have not. Even among NATO members the picture was varied: Hungary did not send any weapons, and continued to maintain ties with Russia, while other similar-sized countries in similar geographical positions took a resolute stance against Moscow. Also, there has been great regional variation on de-risking from Beijing, with some states embracing the idea while others hesitated.

This conference aims to take stock and discuss the various responses small and middle-sized states have used to address these new security-related challenges. How can we account for this variation both between and within these sub-groups? What are the main drivers of foreign policy in the region? What future can we envisage for Europe's security architecture? Integrating the perspectives of eminent scholars in the field, this conference aims to give an answer to these questions, showing that instead of the traditionally restrictive imagination on the possibilities of small states, in reality they showed a remarkable heterogeneity and creativity in addressing the changing security architecture in Europe. While the focus of the



conference is mainly on Central Europe in the widest sense, the floor is open to the perspectives from other European countries as well.

This event is the first of a series of four conferences in the context of the “Changing Orders Research Programme – Focus Area 1: Strategic Challenges for Small and Middle-sized States” of the Andrásy University Budapest, supported by the Swiss Contribution.

Preliminary programme:

14 November 2024

18:00 Evening lecture: Carl Lutz Lecture, dr. Robert Diethelm
"How to avoid being on the menu when not sitting at the table: not just a European question"

15 November 2024

09:00 Welcome speech (Rector)

09:15 Introduction of overall theme of the conference

09:30 Panel 1

- Christoph Schwarz, Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy: Between Neutrality and Solidarity - Austria's Role in a Changing European Security Landscape
- Tamás Csiki Varga, John Lukacs Institute for Strategy and Politics, Ludovika University of Public Service: 'Hedging': an alternative explanation to Hungarian foreign and security policy in the early 2020s
- Zdenek Kriz, Masaryk University, Brno: The Czech response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine - a small state strategy?

11:00 Coffee break

11:30 Panel 2

- Marko Lovec, University of Ljubljana: Slovenia's response to the Ukraine war: pro-Western elites, anti-systemic society



- Ana Nenadic, Institute for International Relations and Development: A Balancing Act: Croatia's Foreign Policy Strategy in the New European Security Architecture
- Paul Popa, Babeş-Bolyai University: Romania's guarded response to the Ukrainian conflict

13:00 Lunch

14:30 Panel 3

- Mitrovits Miklós, Institute of Central European Studies, University of Public Service: Polish policy towards Ukraine from 1989 to the present
- Rácz Orsolya (tbc): Slovakia and the War in Ukraine
- Seraina Eldada, Geneva Centre for Security Policy: Security policy dialogue with Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan

16:00 Coffee break

16:15 Conference Discussion and Closing Remarks

17:00 End of conference