

VERA AXYONOVA, PhD

Marie Skłodowska Curie REWIRE Fellow

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EDUCATION

Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences, Germany

PhD in Political Science (Thesis submission and defense in 2013, publication in 2014)

Dissertation title: The European Union's Democratization Policy for Central Asia:

Failed in Success or Succeeded in Failure?

Committee: Professors Matthijs Bogaards, Beate Kohler-Koch, Marlene Laruelle, Ulrike Liebert, Heiko Pleines, and Dr. Janna Wolff

Fulda University of Applied Sciences, Germany

MA in Intercultural Communication and European Studies (2008)

East Kazakhstan State University, Kazakhstan

Diploma in International Relations (2006)

Lincoln Trail College, USA

Non-degree exchange program (2001-2002)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

University of Vienna, Department of Communication

Marie Skłodowska Curie REWIRE Fellow (since July 2021)

- PI of the project "Expert Knowledge in Times of Crisis: Uncovering Interaction Effects between Think Tanks, Media and Politics beyond Liberal Democracies", funded by the European Commission under MSCA COFUND

Freie Universität Berlin, Center for International Cooperation

Managing Director of the Academics in Solidarity Program (March 2019-June 2021)

- Strategic and operational management of transnational network and mentoring program for endangered scholars, funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research

Research Cluster "Regions of Conflict in Eastern Europe", Justus Liebig University Giessen and University of Marburg, funded under the Excellence Initiative of the Federal State of Hesse

Associate Researcher (March 2019-June 2021)

- Research centering on international conflict management practices, their local perceptions and security policies in post-Soviet Eastern Europe

Justus Liebig University Giessen, Institute of Political Science

Postdoctoral Researcher / Assistant Professor (October 2014-February 2019)

- Co-PI of project "Domestic Preferences and EU Cooperation - Explaining Foreign Policies in Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova. A Two-Level-Game Analysis" (2018-2019)
- Co-leader of project "Eastern Partnership Security Dialog" (2015-2016)
- Postdoc mentor in Research Cluster "Regions of Conflict in Eastern Europe" (2017-2019)

Europe-Central Asia Monitoring Program, Think Tank FRIDE, Brussels and Madrid

Associate Researcher (2012-2015)

Fulda University of Applied Sciences, Social and Cultural Studies Department, Centre for Intercultural and European Studies

Adjunct Lecturer (2010-2016), Researcher (2012-2015)

FELLOWSHIPS AND VISITING POSITIONS

University of Birmingham

Erasmus+ Teaching Mobility Program (November 2018)

Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies (IERES), The George Washington University,
Washington, DC

Visiting Research and Teaching Fellow (September 2018)

Carnegie Endowment's Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative (non-residential)

Hurford Next Generation Fellow (September 2014-July 2015)

University of Bremen

Research Centre for East European Studies

Associate Researcher (March-October 2014)

Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels, Belgium

Visiting Research Fellow (October-December 2010)

OSCE Secretariat, Center for Documentation, Prague, Czech Republic

Researcher in Residence (March-May 2008)

GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Grant by the German Research Foundation (DFG) for the project "Domestic Preferences and EU Cooperation - Explaining Foreign Policies in Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova. A Two-Level-Game Analysis" (2018-2020, co-PI with Andrea Gawrich)

Supplementary grants for the organization of guest lectures and research workshops in the framework of the Section "International Security and Statehood" of the Giessen Graduate Centre for Social Sciences, Business, Economics and Law, JLU Giessen (2015-2019, main applicant)

Award by the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Cultural Studies for the excellence in research funding acquisition in the framework of the Postdoc Matching Funds Program, JLU Giessen (2018, personalized award)

Individual grant by the President of JLU Giessen for the preparation of project application "Central Asia Research and Policy / CARES" in the framework of the EU Horizon 2020 (2016)

Competitive grant by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Foreign Office for the project "Eastern Partnership Security Dialog" (2016, co-author of application)

Travel grant by the DAAD to attend the ISA's 57th Annual Convention, Atlanta (2016)

Competitive grant by the German Foreign Office for the project "Giessen-Minsk Dialog on the Future of the Eastern Partnership Countries" (2015, co-author of application)

Hurford Next Generation Fellowship Project Grant, awarded by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace for the research project "Security Actors and Security Perceptions in the Post-Soviet Space" (2014-2015)

Travel grant by the DAAD to attend the 8th ECPR General Conference, University of Glasgow (2014)

Supplementary grant by the DAAD for the conference and book project "An Exercise in Normative and Real Power: Promoting European Values in the Post-Soviet Space" (2013)

Scholarship under the Excellence Initiative of the German Research Foundation for PhD studies at Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (2008-2011)

PUBLICATIONS

Monograph

The European Union's Democratization Policy for Central Asia: Failed in Success or Succeeded in Failure? Stuttgart: Ibidem & NY: Columbia University Press, 2014.

Edited volumes

Academics in Exile: Networks, Knowledge Exchange and New Forms of Internationalization. Bielefeld: Transcript, 2022 (co-edited with Carola Richter and Florian Kohstall).

European Engagement under Review: Exporting Values, Rules, and Practices to the Post-Soviet Space. Stuttgart: Ibidem & NY: Columbia University Press, 2016.

Peer-reviewed journal articles

Re-organizing the Neighborhood? Power Shifts and Regional Security Organizations in the Post-Soviet Space and Latin America. *Journal of Global Security Studies*, 6 (1), 2021, ogz080 (with Andrea Gawrich and Brigitte Weiffen).

International Negotiations and Domestic Change in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood: Deconstructing Anti-Discrimination Reforms in Moldova. *East European Politics and Societies*, 2020, online first, doi:10.1177/0888325420968911 (with Denis Cenusu and Andrea Gawrich).

Regional Organizations and Secessionist Entities: Analyzing Practices of the EU and the OSCE in Post-Soviet Protracted Conflict Areas. *Ethnopolitics*, 17 (4), 2018, pp. 408-425 (with Andrea Gawrich).

The European Union as a Transformative Power, a Donor or a Security Provider?: The View from the Eastern Partnership Countries. *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 23 (1/1), 2018, pp. 23-40 (with Sergiy Gerasymchuk, Kornely Kakachia and Alla Rosca).

The European Union through the Eyes of Ukrainian Think Tankers: Studying EU Perceptions Post-Euromaidan. *Kyiv-Mohyla Law and Politics Journal*, 3, 2017, pp. 181-200 (with Diana Zubko).

Mapping the Substance of the EU's Civil Society Support in Central Asia: From Neo-liberal to State-led Civil Society. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 49 (3), 2016, pp. 207-217 (with Fabienne Bossuyt).

Promoting Justice Reforms in Central Asia: The European Union's Rule of Law Initiative as Part of a Comprehensive Democratization Strategy? *Central Asian Affairs*, 3 (1), 2016, pp. 29-48.

Other journal articles

The Effectiveness of Sanctions and Regime Legitimacy in Central Asia: Examining the Substance of EU Sanctions against Uzbekistan. *L'Europe en formation* 375, 2015, pp. 21-35.

When Security Threatens Human Rights: Reviewing the Case of Central Asia. *Security and Human Rights* 24 (2), 2013, pp. 159-168.

Book chapters

The European Union's Democratization and Human Rights Policy. In: Jakob Lempp und Sebastian Mayer (eds.), *The European Union and Central Asia: External Action, Local Responses*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022 (with Tinatin Tsetvadze).

Ukrainian Think Tanks in the Post-Euromaidan Period: Exploring the Field. In: Natalia Shapovalova and Olga Burlyuk (eds.), *Civil Society in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine: From Revolution to Consolidation*. Stuttgart: ibidem, 2018, pp. 215-240 (with Fabian Schöppner).

Protecting the Rule of Law in Post-Soviet States: The Relevance of European and Eurasian Integration. In: Roman Petrov and Peter Van Elsuwege (eds.), *Post-Soviet Constitutions and Challenges of Regional Integration: Adapting to European and Eurasian Integration Projects*. London: Routledge, 2017, pp. 28-47 (with Olga Burlyuk).

On the Export of European Values, Rules and Practices: Introducing the Debate. In: Vera Axyonova (ed.), *European Engagement Under Review: Exporting Values, Rules, and Practices to the Post-Soviet Space*, Stuttgart: Ibidem, 2016.

Do They Deliver What They Promise? The Capability-Expectation Gap in the Perceptions of Regional Security Actors in the Post-Soviet Space. In: Samuel Goda, Oleksandr Tytarchuk and Maksym Khylo (eds.), *International Crisis Management: NATO, EU, OSCE and Civil Society*. Amsterdam et al.: IOS Press, 2016, pp. 139-150.

Policy publications

From Conflict to Engagement: Threat Perceptions in the OSCE Area. In: FLEET, *Islands of Cooperation*, Policy Paper. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2018 (with Victoria Bucataru, Alexander Graef, Dzmitry Halubnichy, Alla Leukavets and Julia Wanninger).

From a Security Community to a Post-Ukraine Uncertainty: Security Actors and Security Perceptions in Kazakhstan and Belarus. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Hurford Next Generation Fellowship Research Paper No. 3, 2015.

Evaluation of the EU's Human Rights Policies and Engagement in Central Asia. Study commissioned by the European Parliament, Directorate-General for External Policies. Brussels, 2014 (with Jos Boonstra and Tika Tsertsvadze).

Trading Values with Kazakhstan. EUCAM Policy Brief No. 32, September 2013 (with Tika Tsertsvadze).

Security Sector Reform in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan: What Role for Europe? EUCAM Working Paper No. 14, May 2013 (with Jos Boonstra and Erica Marat).

The Afghanistan-Central Asia Relationship: What Role for the EU? EUCAM Working Paper No. 13, February 2013 (with Marlene Laruelle and Sebastien Peyrouse).

The EU Education Initiative for Central Asia Five Years On: Lessons Learnt? EUCAM Policy Brief No. 30, February 2013.

Ten Tasks for the New EU Special Representative to Central Asia. EUCAM Policy Brief No. 24, June 2012 (with Jos Boonstra, Michael Denison, Jacqueline Hale, Marlene Laruelle, Erica Marat, Sebastien Peyrouse, and Tika Tsertsvadze).

EU Human Rights and Democratisation Assistance to Central Asia: In Need of Further Reform. EUCAM Policy Brief No. 22, January 2012.

Insights into Development: Meeting Civil Society's Needs in Kazakhstan? Kennewick: The International Education Institute, 2011 (co-edited with Kristin Williams and Ken Harvey).

The EU-Central Asia Human Rights Dialogues: Making a Difference? EUCAM Policy Brief No. 16, April 2011.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND GUEST TALKS

International Organizations and Violence Prevention: A Study of Dialogue Orchestration as a Mode of IO Governance in Ukraine. At: ECPR General Conference, online, 22-26 August 2021.

Conducting Focus Groups in Studying Conflict Perceptions: Methodological Considerations before and after the Covid-19 Pandemic. At: International Workshop "Researching Conflict: Methodological Challenges and Opportunities", online, 2-3 July 2020.

From Conflict Resolution to Normalization: The European Union's Approach towards Secessionist Entities in the Eastern Neighbourhood. At: European Workshops in International Studies (EWIS), Kraków, 26-29 June 2019.

International Negotiations and Domestic Change: Deconstructing Anti-Discrimination Reforms in Moldova. At: SPSA Annual Conference & Dreiländertagung, Zurich, 14-16 February 2019.

Analytical Communities and the State – Exercising Policy Influence in Non-Democratic Regimes. At: International Workshop "Reconfiguration of Politics in Central Asia and Eastern Europe in a Comparative Perspective", Marburg, 22-23 November 2018.

Conflict Transformation through Dialogue: Analyzing the Role of International Organizations in Ukraine. Guest lecture at: University of Birmingham, 12 November 2018.

Post-Soviet Think Tanks: The Influence of Think Tanks on Policy Processes in Post-Soviet States. Guest lecture at: George Washington University, 17 September 2018.

The EU and Secessionist Conflicts in the Eastern Neighbourhood: A Practice Approach. At: UACES 48th Annual Conference, University of Bath, 2-5 September 2018.

Understanding Secessionist Conflicts in Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova: Combining Local, Regional and Global Perspectives. At: LOEWE Milestone Conference "Conflict Regions: Theories and Conceptual Voids", University of Marburg, 12-13 July 2018.

Lost in Dialogue? International Organizations as Orchestrators of Dialogue Initiatives in Ukraine. At: International Workshop "The Present and Future of Secessionist Conflicts", New Europe College, Bucharest, 7 July 2018.

Domestic Preferences and EU Cooperation. Explaining Foreign Policies in Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova. Guest talk at: Centre for EU Studies, Ghent University, 20 June 2018.

The European Union and Ukrainian Think Tanks: Studying EU Perceptions Post-Euromaidan. At: Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies, Regensburg, 12 January 2017.

Regional Organizations and Secessionist Entities: Analyzing the Role of the EU, NATO, and the OSCE in Post-Soviet Protracted Conflict Areas. At: Joint Conference of DVPW, ÖGPW and SVPW, Heidelberg, 29 September-1 October 2016.

The European Union as a Transformative Power, a Donor or a Security Provider? A View from the Eastern Partnership Countries. At: 10th ECPR General Conference, Charles University, Prague, 8-10 September 2016.

The Security-Democratization Nexus in the European Normative Agenda: Re-Visiting the EU's and the OSCE's Engagement in Central Asia. At: ISA Annual Convention, Atlanta, 16-19 March 2016.

The OSCE in Central Asia – Shaping the Regional Security Governance? At: 9th Pan-European Conference on International Relations, University of Catania, Giardini Naxos, 23-26 September 2015.

From a Security Community to a Post-Ukraine Uncertainty: Security Actors and Security Perceptions in Kazakhstan and Belarus. At: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, DC, 17 July 2015.

Recommendations for Operationalizing a New EU Strategy for Central Asia. At: German Foreign Office, Brainstorming Workshop II “Central Asia – Exploring EU Interests and Options”, Berlin, 19 January 2015.

Civil Society Development Trends in Central Asia. At: European Economic and Social Committee, Hearing on the Review of Central Asia Strategy, Brussels, 3 December 2014.

Democratization in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: 25 Years On. Guest talk at: State University of New York at Cortland, 4 March 2014.

The European Union’s Support to Security Sector Reform in Central Asia. At: International DAAD Summer School “Opportunities and Risks of Transformation in Central Asia and Afghanistan”, Dushanbe, Tajikistan, 12-19 August 2013.

EU Assistance to Civil Society in Kazakhstan. Seminar “Kazakhstan and Europe: Linking Security and Stability to Democratic Development”, KIMEP University, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 11 May 2012.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Ukraine

Comparative Conflict Analysis, MA-level hybrid seminar, fall 2021

University of Tartu, Estonia

Fieldwork in the Study of Conflict and Authoritarianism, MA-level block seminar, spring 2020

University of Birmingham, UK

Doing Fieldwork in Challenging Environments, postgrad block seminar, in the framework of Erasmus+ Teaching Mobility Program, fall 2018

George Washington University, USA

Research Design and Qualitative Research Methods, postgrad block seminar, fall 2018

Introduction to Expert Interviews, postgrad block seminar, fall 2018

Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany

Selected Methods in Conflict Studies, postgrad block seminar, summer term 2018

Europeanization in a Comparative Perspective, BA & MA-level lecture, winter term 2016/2017

Interviewing Experts and Elites in an International Context, postgrad seminar, winter 2017

Geopolitics in Post-Soviet Regions, MA-level seminar, summer term 2016

Interviewing Experts and Elites in an International Context, postgrad seminar, winter 2016

Foreign Policy Analysis, MA-level seminar, winter term 2015/2016

Current Debates in German and European Politics, BA-level seminar, winter term 2015/2016

International Security Organizations, BA-level seminar, summer term 2015

Foreign Relations of the European Union, BA-level seminar, winter term 2014/2015

Fulda University of Applied Sciences, Germany

European Foreign and Security Policy, MA-level research seminar, summer term 2016
Foreign Policies of EU Member States, MA-level seminar, winter term 2015/2016
EU Foreign Affairs and the Neighbourhood Policy, MA-level seminar, summer term 2015
Research Methods in European Studies, MA-level block seminar, winter term 2014/2015
European Foreign and Security Policy, MA-level research seminar, summer term 2014
European Foreign and Security Policy, MA-level seminar, summer term 2013
Foreign Policies of the European Union, MA-level seminar, summer term 2012
External Relations of the European Union, MA-level seminar, summer term 2011
The EU Democratization Policy, MA-level block seminar, winter term 2010/2011

University of Bremen, Germany

External Relations of the European Union, BA-level seminar, summer term 2010
Introduction to Comparative Politics, BA-level tutorial, winter term 2009/2010

REPRESENTATION AND COMMITTEES

Co-founder and co-chair of the ECPR Research Network on Statehood, Sovereignty and Conflict (since 2021)

Member of the Institutional Review Board, Department of Communication, University of Vienna (since 2021)

External advisor of Academics in Solidarity, a transnational mentoring program for at-risk and displaced scholars (since 2021)

Member of the Younger Generation Leaders Network on Euro-Atlantic Security (since 2016)

Associate Expert of the East European Security Research Initiative (since 2016)

Member of the Working Group “Innovative and Future-Oriented Learning and Teaching Formats”, in the framework of the Strategy Development Process “Teaching and Education in 2030 – Shaping the Future Together”, Freie Universität Berlin (2020-2021)

Member of the FLEET Expert Group, Friedrich Ebert Foundation and OSCE (2017-2019)

Peer-mentor of the Research Funding Expert Program at the Giessen Graduate Centre for Social Sciences, Business, Economics and Law / GGS (2016-2019)

Speaker of the Section “International Security and Statehood” (elected), GGS (2015-2019)

Liaison Officer (elected) for the European Consortium for Political Research at the Institute of Political Science, Justus Liebig University Giessen (2014-2017)

Member of the Working Group on Antidiscrimination and Antiracism, Fulda University of Applied Sciences (2012-2015)

Co-organizer of Career Initiative for Doctoral Fellows at Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences / BIGSSS (2010-2011)

Equal Opportunities Officer (elected) at BIGSSS (2009-2010)

ORGANIZATION OF CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS AND PANELS

Panel “International Perspectives on Expert Knowledge in (Times of) Crisis”, Congress of the German Political Science Association, online, September 2021.

Book discussion “Internationalization, Researcher Mobility and Intellectual Exile: Shaping Institutions, Networks and Narratives beyond the Center-Periphery Divide”, EISA Pan-European Conference in IR, online, September 2021.

Panel „Intrastate Conflicts, Violence Mitigation and the Problems of Governance“, ECPR General Conference, online, August 2021.

Roundtable on Conflict Knowledge in Times of Global Crisis and Digitalization, as part of the Launch Event of the ECPR Research Network on Statehood, Sovereignty and Conflict, online, June 2021.

Virtual Conference “Protracted Displacement: Hopes, Perspectives and Solutions?”, in Cooperation with the German Academic Exchange Service and German Jordanian University, October 2020.

Online-Workshop „Researching Conflict: Methodological Challenges and Opportunities“, in cooperation with the University of Birmingham, June 2020.

Academics in Solidarity Network Conference “Regaining Lost Knowledge – Connecting Research at Home and in Exile” (>100 participants), Freie Universität Berlin, November 2019.

Workshop “The International Dimensions of Unilateral Secession”, as part of EISA’s European Workshops in International Studies, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, June 2019.

Research colloquia of the GGS Section “International Security and Statehood”, JLU Giessen, twice a year, 2015-2018.

Conference “The Future of Eastern Europe and South Caucasus: At the Intersection of Foreign Policy, Security and Business”, in cooperation with Liberal Club Belarus, Minsk, November 2016.

Workshop “Image Studies and Perceptions Analysis of International Actors: Theoretical and Methodological Reflections”, JLU Giessen, October 2016.

Two workshops in the framework of the “Giessen-Minsk Dialogue on the Future of the Eastern Partnership Countries” in Minsk, November 2015, and in Giessen, December 2015.

Panel “Security, Human Rights and Autocratic Diffusion: Regional Organisations as Arenas and Promoters” at the DVPW Congress, University Duisburg-Essen, September 2015.

Workshop “An Exercise in Normative and Real Power: Promoting European Values in the Post-Soviet Space”, Centre for Intercultural and European Studies, in cooperation with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Fulda, October 2013.

REVIEWER FOR

Cambridge Review of International Affairs; Ethnopolitics; International Affairs; Australian Journal of International Affairs; Journal of Common Market Studies; Europe-Asia Studies; Demokratizatsiya: The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization; Central Asian Affairs; Central Asian Survey; Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft - Comparative Governance and Politics

LANGUAGES

Russian (native); English and German (full professional proficiency)