Belarus and the Neighborhood: Where is Democracy Possible? 

Part of IERES’s Behind the Headlines Series
Co-Sponsored with European Humanities University

with

Alexei Pikulik and Virginijus Valentinavicius
European Humanities University (EHU)

In his presentation, "Making Autocracy Work: Why is Belarus' Political Regime Stable?" Alexei Pikulik will provide a comparative perspective in defining the key factors leading both to the consolidation of political autocracy and a socialist-mixed economy in Belarus in the 1990s and to the stability of the Lukashenko regime. The speaker will discuss some structural weaknesses of the opposition, assess Western efforts to promote democratization, and suggest some potential pathways and scenarios for change.

Virginijus Valentinavicius will discuss "Promoting Democracy in an Autocratic Neighbor: Belarus, Lithuania, and the EU." He will address the policy choices and problems that Lithuania has confronted in its efforts to promote democratization in Belarus. The speaker will examine the balance Lithuania has sought to strike between adherence to the EU's sanction-centered approach, on the one hand, and the need to sustain at least a minimal dialogue with a neighbor, on the other. He will also address why Lithuania's efforts to mediate on the EU's behalf are gradually losing leverage as Russia has become increasingly assertive in the region.

Alexei Pikulik is Lecturer in Political Science at EHU, Academic Director, Belarusian Institute for Strategic Studies, and Professor at European University, St. Petersburg. Virginijus Valentinavicius, is Head of Social and Political Sciences at EHU and political and communications adviser to former Lithuanian Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius.

Monday, April 8, 2013
4:00 – 6:00 pm
Voesar Conference Room
1957 E Street NW, Suite 412
Please RSVP at http://go.gwu.edu/Belarus

This event is on the record