

'West Coast Seminars'

on

**Economic and Social Change in Russia and Eastern Europe
(Glasgow, West of Scotland [Paisley campus] and Strathclyde Universities)****Seventeenth Annual Series 2010-2011****Wednesday 02 February 2011, 5.30 pm**

CEES Seminar Room, 8 Lilybank Gardens

Dr Valentyna Romanova

Marie Curie International Fellow

Politics and International Relations, School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh

"Democratisation vs Regional Diversity during Transition: the Case of Ukraine"

Tea and Coffee from 17.00

All Welcome

ABSTRACT

Academic literature often perceives regional diversity can be an obstacle for successful democratisation. To a large extent, this assumption is rooted into the notion of Rustow that national unity is a necessary condition for democratic transition (1970: 351). Recent in-depth studies on politics in transition states prove that in practice regional cleavages can be even favourable for democratisation (see Sasse, 2001 and 2010 for research on Ukraine). This paper tests the theoretical notion that regional cleavages can undermine democratisation. For doing this it uses a case-study on Ukraine. The first section summarizes the existing academic approaches towards interpreting regional diversity in Ukraine. Then the paper investigates if regional diversity has become an actual threat for (a) territorial integrity, and (b) democracy in Ukraine. The second section analyses the cases of territorial mobilization in Ukraine during the transition from authoritarian rule. The third section highlights the effects of territorial diversity on elections – a crucial element of a democratic polity and a main "barometer" of democratic achievements. The paper concludes that regional diversity in Ukraine did not undermine the state or democracy. On the contrary, its cross-cutting regional cleavages ended up ensuring both. Also, the paper shares an opinion on further research on this issue.

* for further details please contact
Prof Terry Cox, University of Glasgow
Dr Irene McMaster, University of Strathclyde
Prof Martin Myant, University of West of Scotland

0141 330 2343 t.m.cox@lbss.gla.ac.uk
0141 554 4905 irene.mcmaster@strath.ac.uk
0141 848 3367 martin.myant@uws.ac.uk