



**University of  
Zurich** <sup>UZH</sup>

**CEES  
Center for Eastern European Studies**

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## **Belarus between East and West – Strategic Reorientation or Pragmatic Maneuvers?**

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# Workshop |

# FS 19

**27.02.2019 | 12.15–13.45 Uhr | KOL-F-118  
Uni Zürich | Kollegiengebäude | Rämistrasse 71**

Belarus and Russia are increasingly at odds over gas prices, the recognition of Crimea, border and visa management, and the terms of their military cooperation. Particularly since 2014, President Lukashenka's government has been emphasizing its role as a mediator in Ukraine, how its independent foreign policy is valuable to the West, and is fostering a moderate nationalism. This challenges the common perception that Belarus is Russia's most loyal ally, united through shared language, culture and authoritarianism in a vague "Union State". Are these signs of an increasing strategic rift between the two countries, or does this rhetoric cater domestic audiences and implies pragmatic bargaining over the terms of future cooperation? Past disputes imply elements of both. Meanwhile, Belarus' state-dominated economy requires urgent reforms to diversify, modernize and attract investments. These external and domestic challenges increasingly put pressure on the social contract with the Belarusian people about social security and stability.

Studierende und Interessierte sind herzlich eingeladen.

**Um Anmeldung wird gebeten:** [cees@hist.uzh.ch](mailto:cees@hist.uzh.ch)