

## RUSSIA'S DOMESTIC POLITICAL LANDSCAPE AFTER THE ELECTION: IS A STALEMATE APPROACHING?

On Monday 14 May 2018, 14:00 – 15:30  
At the Seminar Hall  
Arkadiankatu 23, entrance H (inner courtyard), Helsinki

The Russian presidential elections in March 2018 took place as expected. Vladimir Putin received a landslide victory, whereas the most active opposition figure, Aleksey Navalny, was not allowed to compete and his boycott campaign that followed did not become a problem for the regime. Putin's other competitors proved incapable of providing any viable alternative under the circumstances of strengthening authoritarianism. However, the question remains open whether the opposition has a chance to challenge the regime in the future. While the divide-and-rule tactics against the opposition have been effective thus far, Putin's victory does not automatically promise any further consolidation of the society around the president. Old problems resurfaced after the elections in the form of protests over landfills in Moscow and against corrupt authorities in Kemerovo. Quite possibly, persisting domestic challenges along with hardening international circumstances may bring Russian political process to a stalemate. This seminar will offer an opportunity to discuss the situation in Russian politics and society in the beginning of Putin's fourth presidential term.

*Speakers:*

**Ekaterina Schulmann**, Senior Lecturer, the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration

**Jussi Lassila**, Senior Research Fellow, the Finnish Institute of International Affairs

*Comments:*

**Helge Blakkisrud**, Senior Research Fellow, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs

*Chair:*

**Arkady Moshes**, Programme Director, the Finnish Institute of International Affairs

## Biographies



**Ekaterina Schulmann** is a political scientist specialising in legislative processes. She holds the position of Senior Lecturer (associate professor) at the School of Public Policy of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration in Moscow. She is the author of the books *Legislation as a Political Process* and *Practical Politology: a guide to the contact with reality* (collection of articles), and is a regular contributor to *Vedomosti* newspaper, *The New Times* magazine, as well as online media such as *Republica*, *Colta.ru* and *Carnegie.ru*. She also has a weekly program on Echo Moscow radio station dedicated to popularising political science. Previously, she has worked as a civil servant in local administration, as a deputy's assistant in the Russian State Duma, as a political faction analyst, and as an expert at the Analytical department of the Russian State Duma.



**Jussi Lassila** works as a senior research fellow in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood and Russia research programme of the FIIA. His recent publications include *After the election of no alternatives: The Kremlin's domestic political challenges from 2018 onwards* (FIIA Working paper 101) and a co-edited and co-authored volume *War and Memory in Russia, Russia and Belarus* (Palgrave Macmillan 2017). He has published widely on issues related to Russian domestic politics, in particular identity politics, nationalism, populism and political communication. Lassila has published, for instance, the monograph *The Quest for an Ideal Youth in Putin's Russia II: The Search for Distinctive Conformism in the Political Communication of Nashi, 2005–2009* (2012; 2nd revised ed. 2014) and contributed to numerous journals and collected volumes.



**Helge Blakkisrud** is a Senior Research Fellow and Head of the Research group on Russia, Eurasia and the Arctic at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs. His main research interests include Russian federalism and centre-region relations, in particular, the development of the institution of governors. His research interests also include Russia's High North/Arctic policy, nationality policy and Russian nationalism, as well as processes of state-building and nation-building in Eurasia, especially in Eurasian de facto states. Blakkisrud is editor of *Nordisk Østforum*, a Nordic peer-reviewed journal for Russian and East European studies. He has been a guest lecturer at the OSCE Academy, Bishkek, since 2008. In 2009–2010, Blakkisrud was a Fulbright Visiting Fellow at UC Berkeley.



**Arkady Moshes** is the Programme Director of the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood and Russia research programme at the FIIA. From 2008 to 2015 he was an Associate Fellow with the Russia and Eurasia Programme at Chatham House. He received his PhD from the Institute of Europe, Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow. His main areas of expertise include Russia-EU relations and the internal and foreign policy of Ukraine and Belarus. He has written extensively on those issues, as well as on Russia's policy toward the CIS and Baltic States.