

Consortium for European Symposia on Turkey CEST Symposium 2024: Copenhagen, 21-23 November

Call for Papers: Turkey, Europe, and the Limits of Liberal Normativity

Deadline: 15 June 2024

In 2025, twenty years will have passed since the European Commission concluded that Turkey sufficiently fulfilled the European Union's political and legal accession requirements—the so-called Copenhagen Criteria—to begin negotiations for full membership. Since then, both the EU and Turkey have undergone fundamental changes. The EU was initially driven both by economic integration and the promise of a liberal rights-based political order, but the Union's ability to reach consensus on core political issues has been undermined by populist right-wing governments, while its commitment to universal values has been thrown into question by its approach to the refugee crisis and its reticence to constrain Israel during the Gaza war.

One of the EU's loudest critics has been Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Turkey's leader since 2003. Under his rule, however, Turkey has undergone democratic backsliding to the point where membership negotiations have stalled. Conditionality still plays a role in governing Turkey's relations with the EU in areas such as Customs Union modernization and visa liberalization, but other areas have become either transactional or outright conflictual. As a result, none of the EU's membership negotiation chapters have been closed save for one: Science and Research. Turkish academia has long upheld its status as the last bastion of oppositional critique, but even Turkey's foremost universities have lately come under attack by a governing party bent on securing hegemony over the country's intellectual and political spheres. With courts heavily politicized and prominent critics removed from their positions and often jailed, Turkish authorities appear increasingly unfettered by constitutional norms or international commitments. While Erdoğan boasts of having nurtured a globally competitive high-tech industry, many of Turkey's educated citizens from all sectors are seeking their fortunes abroad, leading to concerns of brain drain. Whether the democratic resilience manifested in Turkey's recent local elections will be enough to restore confidence in other sectors remains to be seen.

Against this background, we invite participants to join us at the home of the Copenhagen Criteria to present research on what role, if any, norms regarding democracy, constitutionalism and human rights can play in an era of increasing geopolitical conflict and transactionalism. What spaces exist for scholars, activists, lawyers and others in Turkey to intervene in this authoritarian slide, not the least on the subnational level? What modalities remain for European actors and institutions to promote democracy and the rule of law in Turkey when they are struggling with democratic challenges at home?

We welcome applications from all fields related to the study of society and politics. We would also like to stress our interest in historical studies and critical debate on the conclusions that can be drawn from historical cases for our understanding of the relations between state, party, and society today. Our emphasis is on Turkey and its region, but we welcome comparative or conceptual work that also incorporates insights from other world regions, so long as it promises valuable insights for our regional angle.

Applicants are invited to **submit to: cestsymposium@gmail.com**

- an **abstract** of max. 300 words,
- a **CV** of max. 300 words,
- a **full CV** with publications, if applicable.

The submission deadline is **15 June 2024**. Please note that incomplete applications will not be considered.

Fact Sheet

Convenors: Joakim Parslow (Copenhagen University), Paul T. Levin (SUITS)

Who can apply? Advanced MA students, PhD students, and postdocs as well as scholars from universities in Europe, including Turkey. (Organizers will strive to ensure a balanced representation of junior and senior scholars.)

Submission deadline: 15 June 2024

Submission requirements: 300-word abstract, 300-word CV, full CV with publication list.

Submission mailbox: cest.symposia@gmail.com

Expenses: Accommodation for two nights and travel expenses will be reimbursed, conference meals provided. Travel expenses will be reimbursed up to a limit, based on the country of your institution.

Submission of papers: Draft papers must be submitted by October 15.

Publication: Publication of a selection of papers is planned.

Successful applicants will be informed late-July 2024.

Conference location: Copenhagen University, Denmark.

Conference dates: 21-23 November 2024.

Please consult the symposium coordinators at cest.symposia@gmail.com with the subject line "Question About CEST 2024 Copenhagen"

This Symposium is convened as part of the Consortium for European Symposia on Turkey (CEST) which is funded by Stiftung Mercator and Stockholm University. CEST is committed to the study of modern Turkey by bringing together the expertise of leading European research institutions: SciencesPo Paris, Stockholm University, University of Vienna, Universita Ca'Foscari, L'Orientale Napoli.