

Discussion: KPSRL – The Nature of Authoritarian Regimes

Tuesday, 13th June 2023, 14:30 – 16:00

[Register here!](#)

Goals

- Understand the balance of consent and repression in the social contracts that sustain Authoritarian regimes.
- Show examples drawn from different geographical locations: Russia, the Middle East.
- Draw and discuss the most relevant implications and recommendations for policy and practice.

Background

In 2022, the network of the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (KPSRL) unpacked its Thematic Headline ‘Reimagine Social Contracts’. This theme a.o. guided a kick-off webinar, a window of the Knowledge Management Fund (KMF) and the Annual Conference (KPAC22).

The findings throughout the year have been bundled in an [analytical paper](#). Through an online survey, the KPSRL network expressed an eagerness to unpack this complex theme further, moving from concepts to operationalization.

Speakers

- Erwin van Veen, Clingendael
- Natalia Forrat, Freedom House and University of Michigan.
- Alejandro Urrutia, Institute for Integrated Transitions.

Agenda

- We will set the scene on the overall topic.
- Natalia Forrat will share about unity and division as the two social roots of authoritarianism and on how autocrats use different tools to build their regimes from grassroots. The presentation will be based on her research in four Russian regions.
- Erwin van Veen will provide an overview of ‘shades of authoritarianism’ in the Middle East with a focus on the use of ideology, clientelism and the security apparatus to maintain control in the face of mounting development needs, popular dissatisfaction and protest.
- Alejandro Urrutia will present his ongoing research on ‘The Scope for Dialogue Between Civic and State Security Actors in Hybrid Regime Contexts’ and discuss 1) the typical sources of resilience of hybrid regimes; 2) the mechanisms used by ruling parties to gain control or secure the loyalty of security forces; and 3) how civic and democratic forces can overcome common dilemmas when attempting to engage and dialogue with state security actors in such contexts.

- Participants will then rank on a Mentimeter the policy implications presented in the presentations from the most to the least relevant, and discuss then the 2-3 most relevant recommendations and practical implications.
- Finally, we introduce a second webinar on the series, which will focus on the margins for reforms inside authoritarian regimes.

Time	Topic	Contributor
14:30 – 14:35	Welcome & background	Giorgio Ferrari
14:35 – 14:55	Unity and division as social roots of authoritarianism 15 minutes presentation, 5 minutes Q&A	Natalia Forrat
14:55 – 15:15	Shades of authoritarianism in the Middle East 15 minutes presentation, 5 minutes Q&A	Erwin van Veen
15:15– 15:35	The Scope for Dialogue Between Civic and State Security Actors in Hybrid Regime Contexts 15 minutes presentation, 5 minutes Q&A	Alejandro Urrutia
15:35 – 16:00	Plenary discussion Mentimeter: ranking the most relevant recommendations and practical implications. Discussing the 2-3 most relevant recommendations and practical implications	Giorgio Ferrari (moderation)
16:00 – 16:05	Next steps	Giorgio Ferrari