



## INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF BELARUSIAN STUDIES

### **Call for proposals: panel “Local Institutions and Politics in Central and Eastern Europe: the Results of (Un)democratic transformations”**

Organising committee of the 4<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Belarusian Studies is pleased to announce call for proposals for the panel “Local Institutions and Politics in Central and Eastern Europe: the Results of (Un)democratic Transformations”. The panel will consider the issues of self-government development in authoritarian and democratic regimes, local political elite, as well as economic transformations, Europeanisation and governance at local level. Researchers from Belarus, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Ukraine are expected to participate in the panel.

Individual proposals are due by **2 June 2014**.

To apply for participation in the panel, please fill in the online form: <http://icbs.palityka.org/4th-international-congress-of-belarusian-studies.htm>

Since the fall of the socialist bloc the countries of Central and Eastern Europe went quite a long way towards the reform of political system, and in particular the institute of local self-government and relations of central government with local communities. Some countries (Poland, Czech Republic, Lithuania) implemented profound reforms and legally established the principles of decentralisation of power, subsidiarity and autonomy of local communities. However, later it became clear that the expectations for reform effects were too high: local communities appeared to be unable to manage their economy and government, while the citizens demonstrated low level of participation in local affairs.

On the other side, most former Soviet republics attempted to establish such norms only partially. Further, as the authoritarian (Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan) or hybrid (Ukraine, Georgia) regimes consolidated in the region, the reforms were rejected or reversed. Currently, each of these countries has a unique trajectory of local institutions. In Ukraine, the reforms stagnate as a result of elite games and permanent conflicts between central government bodies. Moreover, central executive institutions compete with local self-government for power, as the clear division of competences has not been legally set. Russia started the reform of self-government in 1990s, but soon saw a reversal and restoration of the executive “vertical” in the regions as Vladimir Putin came to power. Before him, in 1995 already, Aliaksandr Lukashenka built this system in Belarus, resulting in the least autonomous self-government among the mentioned countries.

Today, these institutional processes shape political and socio-economic dynamics on subnational level in the region and remain a vast field for research. The panel suggests the following areas for discuss:

- Local politics in democratic and authoritarian regimes
- Formation and evolution of regional elite
- Local (self)government reforms: political and economic aspects
- Convergence with the EU standards of local government and local governance

### **A preliminary list of participants:**

**Adam Gendźwill** (MA in Sociology, Warsaw University, Poland), to be confirmed

**Andrej Zavadski** (Leŭ Sapieha Foundation, Belarus)

**Gabrielė Burbulytė-Tsiskarishvili** (Master in Public Administration, Klaipeda University, Lithuania), to be confirmed

**Irina Busygina** (Dr.hab. in Political Science, Moscow State Institute of International Relations, Russia)

**Jacek Wasilewski** (Dr.hab. in Sociology, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Poland), to be confirmed

**Jury Kryvaročka** (Dr.hab. in Economics, Belarusian Institute of Law, Belarus)

**Mažvydas Jastramskis** (PhD candidate in Political Science, Vilnius University, Lithuania), to be confirmed

**Michal Illner** (UDr., Academy of Science of the Czech Republic), to be confirmed

**Myroslava Lendel** (Dr.hab. in Political Science, Uzhhorod Univesity, Ukraine)

**Pawel Swianiewicz** (Dr.hab. in Economics, Warsaw University, Poland), to be confirmed

**Petr Jüptner** (PhD in Political Science, Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic)

**Rostislav Turovsky** (Dr.hab. in Political Science, Higher School of Economics, Russia)

**Tatiana Majcherkiewicz** (PhD in Sociology, Pedagogical University in Cracow, Poland), to be confirmed

**Vadzim Smok** (MA in Political Science, Institute of Political Studies ‘Political Sphere’, Belarus)