Wednesday 8 June 2022 saw the celebrations for the 20th Anniversary of SEESOX. Rather than simply looking back at what we had achieved since 2002, we sought to review the challenges facing South Eastern Europe over the future, drawing on the collective experience of past and present SEESOX members. While many of the issues we face are similar to those of the past twenty years, the global context has changed.

When SEESOX was launched, EU enlargement was in full swing and the prospects for Turkey and the Western Balkans accessing to the EU were bright. Since then, we have been through a global financial crisis, and growing enlargement fatigue on the part of the EU parallels stalled reform in much of the region. Lately, we have experienced a global pandemic and, in 2022, war in Ukraine.

Thus the theme for our Anniversary event was obvious: South East Europe in the Shadow of the War in Ukraine. We viewed this from two perspectives: the relationship between the countries of the region and the EU, particularly with new candidates for EU accession from the former “Eastern Neighbourhood”; and the security challenges in the region. We were able to bring together a range of SEESOX alumni, from Oxford, Berlin, Florence, Belgrade, Zurich, Venice and Piraeus, along with one new face from Brussels. With two panelists attending virtually, we were also able to stream the proceedings to a wider audience, beyond those present in the room. While we made no attempt to reach conclusions in the two panels, it was clear that we still have plenty to keep us busy over the next twenty years.

The formal proceedings were concluded with a presentation, by Othon Anastasakis and Julie Adams – the twin pillars of SEESOX – of our achievements over the last twenty years. The formal proceedings were concluded with a presentation, by Othon Anastasakis and Julie Adams – the twin pillars of SEESOX – of our achievements over the last twenty years. And then we went out to party in the sunny garden. As the clouds gathered and the rain began to fall, we were thankful that Julie had organised a capri tent. But is the unreliable weather an omen for the future of the region?

Jonathan Scheele
Letter from the Director

On the 20th anniversary of SEESOX’s existence, we celebrate one more year of academic output on South East Europe, amid the difficult and challenging geopolitical times that we are all going through. The 2021-22 academic year was a gradual transition from the hybrid, pandemic mode to the on-site presence and it felt very good! It was nice to be back in our premises at the European Studies Centre and St Antony’s College with our meetings with students and colleagues, and socio-academic events, albeit with caution and not always managing to escape the attack of the pandemic. Having said that, the year has been hybrid and most of our activities combined some controlled physical presence with the online participation of colleagues from their own locations. Our menu, as always, contained a big variety of undertakings: panels on contemporary matters from geopolitics, to political economy and the region’s integration into the EU; our research on the region’s history, our diaspora project or our regular work on migration; engagement with the work of our visiting scholars; and events on book launches, some of our own books at SEESOX, as well as of colleagues and former SEESOX scholars. We were also happy to reconvene our outreach activities, including presenting our work at the Global Strategy Forum, organising events in the context of our partnership with NATO and bringing back the SEESOX Ambassadors in London for our customary working lunch, our so-called Ambassadorial Forum. A rich academic year, which culminated in the June celebrations of our 20th anniversary. This newsletter is a tribute to a rich post-pandemic academic year, as well as the 20th birthday of a long and successful SEESOX career.

Othon Anastasakis
Director of SEESOX

SEESOX news bites

Othon Anastasakis has taken over as Director of the European Studies Centre from July 2022. We owe enormous thanks to Hartmut Mayer who has been the ESC Director for the past five years.

Ladislav Charouz joined ESC in October 2021 providing technical assistance for our events. Ladislav is an MPhil Candidate in International Relations at St Antony’s.

Dimitar Bechev has joined the SEESOX Steering Committee. Dimitar is a Lecturer at the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies and was until recently Acting Programme Director for Core Activities at the Europaeum.

Anna Dominey joined the European Studies Centre in February 2022 as Administrator having previously worked in events marketing and charity fundraising for a number of small organisations across Oxford. Anna is keen on many aspects of European politics, culture and history. She has been fortunate to travel extensively across Europe.

Heartfelt congratulations to Manolis Pratsinakis who has secured a position as Assistant Professor in Social Geography at Harokopio University in Athens.

Aslı Töre has joined the ESC and SEESOX as a consultant working on communications including updating the ESC website. Aslı joined SEESOX three years’ ago as a research assistant working on the Migration Diplomacy project of the Oxford-Berlin Research Partnership.

Congratulations go to Marilena Anastasopoulou (Research Associate, SEESOX; Faculty of History, University of Oxford; Onassis Foundation Scholar) who has a new position as College Lecturer in History at Pembroke College.

Anna Dominey joined the European Studies Centre in February 2022 as
**Academic Visitors: In their own words ...**

Jarolím Antal

“My affiliation with SEESOX and ESC has been short but very intense, even though there were some covid19 restrictions. My stay allowed me to use all facilities of the university including the library, to attend conferences and seminars and meet many experts at the St. Antony’s College. I had a number of opportunities to discuss my research project focused on the EU-US economic relations and to receive feedback from other fellows. I also met distinguished experts from centres and College itself offers a large number of other events such as High Tables and Senior Members Dinner, which I also attended. New contacts and friendships gained during my stay are enormously important and I will do my best to further maintain my ties to the College and follow its activities. I’m convinced that the relations I managed to build can be further fostered by establishing research projects or other types of cooperation with my home institution (Faculty of International Relations, Prague University of Economics and Business). Anyways, I’m already planning to present some of my outputs at research seminars at ESC and SEESOX. My stay was only three months long, but fellows and staff at ESC and SEESOX made me feel like I was at home!”

Jarolím Antal  
(Prague University of Economics and Business)

Ioannis Krasonikolakis

“My visiting fellowship at SEESOX has been a wonderful experience despite the challenges of the pandemic and relying quite heavily on an online or hybrid format. I was positively surprised to immerse myself in the culture of SEESOX that ensures all members of staff interact with one another and there is a sense of community from early on. My background in management and digital marketing in no way hindered the intellectual exchange with the political scientists, IR and historians based at the European studies centre. On the contrary we were able to build the foundations for a new interdisciplinary project on mapping the Diaspora University entrepreneurship in the UK and set out a successful schedule for the next year in terms of milestones, funding and outputs. This initiative built of course on the already hugely successful Diaspora project housed at SEESOX under the directorship of Othon Anastasakis. Fundamentally, the research time at St Antony’s allowed me to progress with my own publication record, having access to databases that were rare to find and participating in different seminars and lectures not only at the College but also the Business School. It truly feels, this semester was only the beginning of a fruitful collaboration.”

Ioannis Krasonikolakis  
(University of Reading Malaysia)

Marilena Simiti

“I joined SEESOX as an Academic Visitor for two months during the Trinity term. It was an inspiring, lively and dense period! I attended multiple events organized by SEESOX and participated in SEESOX 20th Anniversary Panels speaking on social trends and Greek Public opinion towards Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Additionally, I presented my current project on ‘Political Disengagement from Contentious Politics’ which explores the decline of collective protests in the aftermath of the economic crisis in Greece. Being an Associate Professor of Political Sociology (with a Political Science background), I appreciated and enjoyed the interdisciplinary perspective of SEESOX. Furthermore, I appreciated SEESOX’s excellent integration of academic research with policy analysis and finally its extended network of academics, who provide an invaluable comparative perspective. During my stay I gained significant input from multiple discussions with members of the SEESOX community. This input was of special importance to me, since it came from academics who specialize in subjects different than mine (e.g. collective action in civil society). They provided, therefore, a distinctive and fresh perspective, which is not covered by the relevant literature on political protest. Besides being academically inspiring, SEESOX is also a very open and friendly community! I really enjoyed being part of it. I am looking forward to attend SEESOX future online activities, to keep in contact with members of the SEESOX community and to develop productive synergies between the Department of International and European Studies of the University of Piraeus and SEESOX.”

Marilena Simiti  
(University of Piraeus)
2021-2 saw a full programme of events on the Balkans.

On 24 November there was a hybrid seminar at SEESOX on the recent Bulgarian elections. The speakers were Eli Gateva (DPIR, University of Oxford) and Kyriil Drezov (Keele University). Jonathan Scheele chaired.

Eli Gateva reported the extraordinary sequence of three Parliamentary elections in the period April to November. The first and second produced no coalition government; but there was a clear picture of weakening support for GERB and Borisov and strengthened support for “There is such a people” (ITN) - which at that stage seemed to be favouring minority government rather than a coalition. The third elections in November saw another new party “Continuing the Change” (PP) emerge as surprise winners, with 25.3 % of the vote. GERB and BSP, the two previously leading parties, again failed to recover their popular support from elections in the previous decade, but GERB still won 23% and a respectable second place Drezov asked the question: why the proliferation of new parties? In 2009 Borisov had seemed “new”: 12 years down the line he was seen by many as worn out, narcissistic and corrupt. His GERB had failed to become a normal party, as worn out, narcissistic and corrupt. His 12 years down the line he was seen by many as worn out, narcissistic and corrupt.

Jonathan Scheele and Eli Gateva

On 2 December 2021 SEESOX, in cooperation with The European University of Tirana, hosted an online panel discussion on the European and regional state of play of the Western Balkan countries. Speakers included Albin Kurti, Prime Minister of Kosovo, Dritan Abazovic, Deputy Prime Minister of Montenegro, and Zef Mazi, Albania’s Chief Negotiator to EU. Jessie Barton Xronesova (University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and Ca’ Foscari Venice) was discussant; and Othon Anastasakis, Director of SEESOX and Belina Budini, European University of Tirana, and SEESOX, co-chaired.

Albin Kurti argued that Western Balkan countries had a lot to gain by removing barriers to trade and travel, work and business, but they should also be cautious. Any regional initiative must be within the EU agenda and EU rules, and bring the aspiring countries closer to EU membership. Kosovo regarded the Berlin Process as the only inclusive umbrella framework. He had proposed a new framework for regional cooperation, called Southeast European Free Trade Agreement (SEFTA) intended to strengthen the common regional market.

Dritan Abazovic argued that Montenegro, like other Balkan states, faced several challenges, including corruption, state capture or problems with the rule of law. The more restricted the borders, the more scope for cross-border corruption. Cooperation was the only way to go forward against the drawbacks of nationalism, polarization and democratic backsliding.

Zef Mazi said Albania’s top strategic priority was EU accession. He pointed to the judiciary reform progress of his country, and mentioned that Albania has been a reliable partner of the EU in foreign policy.

On 18 May 2022, Labinot Greiçevci (Research Institute of Development and European Affairs, Pristina) presented his book ‘The EU as a State-builder in International Affairs: The Case of Kosovo’, with Belina Budini as discussant. The session was chaired by Richard Caplan (DPIR, University of Oxford).

Greiçevci looked at the role of the EU, and other international actors (USA, NATO, Russia, China, and Turkey) in state-building, using Kosovo as a case study. His conclusion was that the EU had undeniable advantages as a state-builder, given its nature as a “Kantian paradise” preserving internal peace, its readymade normative framework, its demonstrable transformative power, and its economic potential. It faced a number of challenges, however, reflecting both horizontal conflicts between EU Member States – particularly on recognition – and a consequent tendency towards lowest common denominator solutions.

Budini added that progress in Kosovo represented an overall success story. The EU’s role there and in the region, alongside the UN, USA and its allies, certainly could not be considered a failure.

On June 1, 2022, a panel, chaired by Kristijan...
Kristijan Fidanovski and Dijana Spasenoska

Fidanovski (Department of Social Policy and Intervention, Oxford), examined South East Europe’s rapidly ageing population.

Arjan Gjonca (Department of International Development, LSE) took stock of the three drivers of population ageing: low fertility, growing life expectancy, and net emigration. Dijana Spasenoska (Department of Social Policy, LSE) tackled health aspects. Life expectancy had increased, for both men and women, but was still below the EU average everywhere except Slovenia. Vladimir Nikitovic (Institute of Social Sciences, Belgrade) focussed on migration. His projections suggested a continued strong decline in the West Balkans 20-30 year-old age cohort. Branimir Jovanovic (Institute for International Economic Studies, Vienna) discussed the socio-economic challenges from ageing (associated with low growth) in Southeast Europe.

Finally, on 13 June, Lea Ypi (LSE), gave a talk on her fascinating book Free: Coming of age at the end of history. The event was chaired by Ezgi Basaran, and the discussants were Othon Anastasakis and Paul Betts (St Antony’s College). Free tells the story of Ypi as a little girl, growing up in Albania as the country transitions from communism to a free market economy.

Lea Ypi read the first few pages to the audience and then provided some historical context. She explained that the part she read took place in December 1990 - one year after the fall of the Berlin Wall; and that one of the reasons why Albania was not immediately touched by the events taking place in other parts of Eastern Europe was the fact that it had a peculiar history which made it believe that it was the only truly communist country in the world: liberated from Nazi fascist occupation without help from either the Allies or the Soviets. Yet, during the time in which the changes in Western Europe reach Albania and economic protests turn into political protests, the character discovers that points of view which she had always assumed were somehow aligned with each other – the one of her family and the state – were in fact pulling in opposite directions.

Paul Betts praised the book for its sharp observations and wit, and described it as a meditation on the meaning and limitations of freedom itself, and the story as a double disenchantment – first with communism and then with liberalism.

Othon Anastasakis commented on how brilliantly the author combined different disciplines of oral history, politics, political philosophy, and sociology in her story.

David Madden

Lea Ypi, Ezgi Basaran, Paul Betts, Othon Anastasakis

**Prime Minister of Montenegro, Krivokapić delivers a lecture at SEESOX**

During the lecture, Prime Minister Krivokapić emphasised the need to return ethics to Montenegrin politics, noting that in the case of Montenegro this is only possible with new people, provided that those individuals who have been involved in politics for many years and haven’t achieved tangible results or have a bad reputation, withdraw from politics: "Such people are a major obstacle to Montenegro’s economic and democratic development".

Prime Minister Krivokapić pointed out that corruption, especially political corruption, destroys the social fabric of Montenegro and distances it from European values. The Prime Minister added that the change of political culture and the establishment of dialogue, without political bargaining and corruption, are only possible with new progressive forces that truly cherish European values. This event was organised by St Antony’s International Review (STAIR).
In Hilary Term, SEESOX Seminar Series, covered a broad range of issues with lectures of high quality. It included both online webinars and hybrid seminars.

We began on 2 February, with a panel on What’s in a name? The classical Greek and Jewish diasporas and their implications for the present, consisting of a conversation between Robin Cohen (Kellogg College) and Manolis Pratsinakis (Centre on Migration Policy and Society – COMPAS), co-chaired by Renee Hirschon (St Peter’s College) and Othon Anastasakis (SEESOX). This allowed us to learn more about the different interpretations of the term “diaspora” in the classical period, both Jewish and Greek, covering both forced and economically driven migration, with the former typically only constituting a small proportion of the total. Nowadays, usage tends to ignore the cause of migration and focus more on the identity characteristics of an expatriate population with some orientation towards the homeland, whether as a country or state, or, perhaps more correctly, to “place”. Concepts should not be frozen by one particular interpretation based on one particular historical context. But the term certainly implied a degree of continuity over several generations, with an inherent element of networking.

On 9 February, Michael Llewellyn Smith (St Antony’s College; King’s College, London) spoke on the theme of Venizelos: Crete to Athens, the Great War and Schism, Peace Conference and after, marking the occasion of the publication of the first volume of his biography Venizelos: the making of a Greek statesman (1864 to 1914) and the reissue of his book Ionian Vision. Othon Anastasakis (SEESOX), Marilena Anastasopoulou (St Antony’s and Worcester College) and Helen Katsiadakis (Academy of Athens) were discussants, with David Madden (SEESOX) in the chair. The focus of Llewellyn Smith’s presentation was on the early career of Venizelos, particularly in Crete, and the Asia Minor catastrophe, looking both at the influence of the former on Venizelos’ later career, and on the evolution in Venizelos’ thinking regarding the invasion of Asia Minor and the reasons for the catastrophe. As regards the latter, although Venizelos had managed to secure strong support from Britain at the Paris Peace Conference, he had significantly enhanced Greece’s opportunities for future economic development; and the sustainability of the reform process in Greece – where guarded optimism was tempered by concerns about the demographic outlook.
lost the 1920 elections; Greece had inadequate finances to maintain its hold in Anatolia, geography and ethnography were against it, and Britain lacked sufficient power or interest to support Greece. The discussion highlighted the contrast between Venizelos’s undoubted diplomatic skill internationally and his inability to exploit them against his domestic opponents; the inherent tension between Venizelos’s desire for Greece’s territorial expansion and modernisation; and his astounding breadth of knowledge and ability to gain the trust of representatives of the great powers – even an arrogance that made it difficult for him to acknowledge anyone else as his equal.

On 23 February SEESOX organised a panel discussion on Bosnia and Herzegovina: Has the international community lost the plot? moderated by Jessie Barton Hronesova (University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill). Panellists were Jelena Dzankic (European University Institute, Florence), Nebosja Vladisavljevic (University of Belgrade), Jasmin Hanic (Sarajevo School of Science and Technology) and Dejan Jovic (University of Zagreb). The panel addressed various key aspects, the first of which was the actions of local actors and their long-term goals, with shared concern that they lacked care about the negative impact of ethnocentric rhetoric on the already fragile political structures of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and with all local actors displaying growing independence from the High Representative and other international actors. The discussion also looked at the role of the key politicians in the two “kin states”, Croatia and Serbia, with the former becoming increasingly involved in the electoral reform debate in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while Serbian President Vucic maintained an uneasy balance between not offending the West while trying to score domestic political points through support of Dodik. As regards the role of the West, there were concerns about increasing passivity among international actors, alongside a broader failure of Brussels’ policy towards the region. Finally, the role of Russia was assessed, with Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina seen in Moscow as a “Western Balkans Two”.

The last event in the Seminar Series, on 9 March, was on Turkey under Erdogan: How a Country Turned from Democracy and the West. The seminar took its title from, and focused on, the recent book published, and presented, by Dimitar Bechev (Oxford School of Global and Area Studies), with Mehmet Karli (St Antony’s College and Kerem Öktem (Ca’ Foscari University of Venice) as discussants, and Ezgi Basaran (St Antony’s College) in the chair. After a brief presentation of the current situation in Turkey, stuck between NATO and Russia over the war in Ukraine, and with tremendous economic and domestic political challenges, Bechev’s analysis focused on the evolution of Turkey’s foreign policy since the end of the Cold War, moving from an EU applicant to a central player in the Middle East region, as well as the depressing story of its de-democratisation. Within Turkey there was now an intense debate over whether Erdogan had always planned to hijack Turkey’s process of Europeanisation, or whether the current situation was a consequence of contingency, with Bechev taking the latter view. In the end he was guardedly optimistic that Turkey might, as in Latin America, move back towards democracy. In the discussion, some felt that Erdogan’s instinct had always been to consolidate his power, while others wondered what might be left of “Erdoganism” after Erdogan.

Jonathan Scheele
On 17 May, Lord Robertson, former NATO Secretary General, gave the annual SEESOX/ESC lecture in St Antony’s College. The Directors of the ESC and SEESOX, Hartmut Mayer and Othon Anastasakis, chaired jointly.

Lord Robertson began by describing Russia as an immensely complicated entity. It was important to distinguish fact from fiction. The 9 May Victory Day parade in Moscow was impressive, but had nothing to do with the facts on the ground in Ukraine.

The parade prompted three observations: victory in the war was not Russia’s alone, but equally we should recognise Soviet losses; there was a danger of conflating Russia and Putin – the Putin clique was not representative of his people; Russia was given insufficient credit for allowing a peaceful transfer of power in Poland and a peaceful conclusion of communism. The contrast with China and Tienanmen Square was stark.

Putin gave a totally dishonest characterisation of Ukraine: because of his emotionalism and messianic obsession with Russia. But there was a risk of reactions to younger Russians; getting away from the greatness or not; nationalistic leanings of the West sufficiently sensitive in the manner of NATO enlargement; was there scope for NATO and the EU between them to create non-threatening policies; in NATO enlargement, should a promise of membership go hand in hand with protection; what should we say to Ukraine (or others) about the Budapest Memorandum; what if Ukraine sought to restore pre-23 February boundaries; the rapidity of war crimes tribunals (new / deterrent); implications for China, India and Brazil; role of UK; could we learn good lessons from the Cold War period?

Lord Robertson said it was clear that we needed to include Russia and treat them as an equal, as and when we could: e.g. on climate change. We needed a narrative to go out to decent Russians after the collapse of the Russian invasion.

Joining NATO was a process which went through various calculated stages. NATO should carefully explain to Erdogan the price of a veto.

We were NOT insufficiently sensitive about the likely Russian reaction to NATO enlargement. As Secretary General, he had had 9 meetings with Putin, and the latter had never complained to him. And Putin himself had signed the NATO-Russia Council document. He was now busily engaged in rewriting history.

Liddell Hart had reminded everyone that the enemy of today was the customer of tomorrow and the ally of the future. This should temper our response.

The West had reacted very quickly and effectively to war crimes in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, so there were precedents.

We needed strategic patience, and to recover the lost arts of arms control, dialogue (even in difficult circumstances) and trip wires: a renewed modus operandi. The consequences in Germany of Putin’s invasion had been remarkable: and vis a vis Sweden and Finland, Putin had achieved in four weeks what the Alliance had not achieved in 40 plus years.

David Madden
Our book *Homeland-Diaspora Engagement in times of Severe Economic Crisis: The case of Greece*, which was published in July 2022 in the Migration, Diaspora and Citizenship series of Palgrave Macmillan, is the culmination of the Greek diaspora project’s work during the past five years and marks the end of its first phase. In this period the emphasis was on the role of the economic crisis as well as the pandemic in reconfiguring the relationship between Greece and its diaspora. Yet as the topic remains as important as ever SEESOX dynamically continues its research endeavors on this multifaceted and multi-actored relationship and how it may be best supported. Several projects have been prepared in this year.

First, SEESOX put together a detailed research proposal for the study of the new Greek Diaspora in Germany that was approved for funding by diaNEosis. Our aim is to conduct a nationwide representative survey based on the innovative quantitative methodology that we developed in the context of the previous two surveys on the UK and US Greek diaspora. We will thoroughly explore three distinct fields of inquiry: (1) The socioeconomic, political and cultural profile of the new migrants and second-generation Greeks in Germany, (2) their socioeconomic integration and (3) their connection to Greece and the extent and conditions under which they are willing and able to contribute to Greece.

Second, SEESOX has embarked on a new project to study the interaction between Greek diaspora entrepreneurs and the Greek start-up ecosystem. The project will focus on University entrepreneurship on the UK and US, which are the two countries that appear to have the most dynamic Greek start-up presence. Collecting demographic, behavioural, and psychographic data through participatory research, survey work and interviews, this project will be the first to chart the contours of Greek Diaspora’s presence in the UK and US start-up ecosystem and to inform a series of stakeholders as to how the interconnections between the Diaspora and the Greek start-up ecosystem can be initiated or strengthened.

Third, in collaboration with the Athens International Airport (AIA) the Greek Diaspora team has been conducting research on the changing traveling patterns of the Greek diaspora in the past 15 years as seen through data collected at AIA, the main point of entrance to Greece. The focus of the research is on the volume of travel and its fluctuation, the demographic and socioeconomic profile of the Greek diaspora travelers and their geographical distribution. Close attention is also paid to the impact of Greece’s economic crisis and the Covid-19 Pandemic, two events of which have dramatically affected mobility patterns to and from Greece in the previous years. In addition, the research explores the differences between those members of the diaspora who had left Greece in earlier years and those who left in recent years as part of the new mass emigration outflow that took place in Greece in the years of the crisis. The report is currently being finalized.

Last but not least, in May 2022 Othon Anastasakis, Principal Investigator of the Greek Diaspora Project and Alexandros Sarrigeorgiou, chair of the SEESOX Hellenic Advisory Board, visited New York where they had the opportunity to meet with prominent members of the Greek American diaspora. On May 13, together with Manolis Pratsinakis (online) they presented the Greek Diaspora Project at the Greek Consulate General in New York in a panel entitled “Greek-Homeland Diaspora relations in times of uncertainty: Towards new modes of engagement” chaired by the General Consul Konstantinos Koutras. The event was by invitation only and was attended by many members of Greek American associations and organisations.

*Manolis Pratsinakis*

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**New edited volume**

**Diaspora Engagement in Times of Severe Economic Crisis**

**Greece and Beyond**

**July 2022**

How does a severe economic crisis impact on diaspora-homeland relations? The present volume addresses this question by exploring diaspora engagement in Greece during the protracted post-2009 eurozone crisis. In so doing, it looks at the crisis as a critical juncture in Greece’s relations with its nationals abroad. The contributors in this book explore aspects of diaspora engagement, including transnational mobilisation, homeland reform, the role of diasporic institutions, crisis driven migration, as well as, comparisons with other countries in Europe. This book provides a compelling and original interdisciplinary study of contemporary diaspora issues, through the lens of an advanced economy and democracy facing a prolonged crisis, and, as such, it is a significant addition to the literature on European diasporas.
Political disengagement from contentious politics

On 22 June Marilena Simiti (University of Piraeus) presented her research project entitled ‘Political Disengagement from Contentious Politics’ to the SEESOX team. She explained that during the economic crisis Greece experienced a significant expansion of protests (e.g. overall from May 2010 to April 2014 20,210 protests occurred across the country). However, following 2014, protests de-escalated and the anti-austerity movement ultimately demobilized. Her project explores the subsequent trajectory of the former protestors and the reasons why some of them chose to disengage from political activism. She argued that the driving factors of political disengagement can be traced at the micro-level (individual), the meso-level (organizational) and the macro-level (socio-political context). She focused mainly on the micro-level analyzing factors like the presence of personal constraints that increase the cost of movement participation, the disconnection between an activist’s central life-spheres (like family, studies and work) and her/his sphere of political disengagement, the experience of burnout, the lack of sufficient gratification that leads to declining levels of commitment and finally disillusionment. She also made a brief reference to factors on the meso- and macro-level, focusing especially on the interaction between electoral cycles and collective protests; a factor that was especially prevalent in the Greek case. Finally, she underlined that there are multiple pathways to disengagement and the way disengagement manifests itself differs from case to case. Othon Anastasakis chaired the seminar. David Madden, Jonathan Scheele, Adrienne Cheasty, Eli Gateva, Marilena Anastasopoulou acted as discussants. They highlighted factors like counter-mobilizations and the changing paradigm of political activism as well as the need to bridge the gap between the micro- and the macro-level.
SEESOX on Turkey

As part of one of its main focus areas, SEESOX has been promoting academic debate on Turkey's politics, geopolitics, economy, and international relations since 2003. In this academic year, the centre continued to host and supported the research of prominent academics doing research on Turkey. Two seminars were held during the Michaelmas Term, one focusing on migration and the other discussing the present and the future of Erdoğan's government.

The first seminar of the academic year entitled 'Afghan Crisis, Migration Diplomacy, and Turkey-EU Relations' was held on 27 October 2021. The speakers were Franck Duvell (Universitat Osnabrück), Başak Kale (METU) and Kemal Kirişçi (Brookings Institution) and the panel was chaired by Othon Anastasakis (SEESOX) and Mehmet Karli (SEESOX). After a brief historical account of the last 15 years of the migration diplomacies between the EU and Turkey, the panel looked at the current state and the prospects of the migration deal between the EU and Turkey, emphasizing the transactional nature of the deal, its legal and humanitarian issues, and the instrumentalization of the refugees. Then the attention was on the impact of the Afghan crisis with a focus on the development of two interdependent streams of diplomacy; one between Turkey and the EU, and another between Turkey and Iran & Pakistan.

The second seminar on Turkey, 'All the President’s Men: Institutions and Key Players in Erdoğan’s Turkey', was held on 3 November 2021. The speaker was Selim Koru (Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey), the discussant was Sinem Adar (German Institute for International and Security Affairs), and Dimitar Bechev (Oxford School of Global and Area Studies) chaired. The panel discussed the current state of the Turkish economy, the external dynamics, the role of informal networks, the prioritization of geopolitics and foreign policy. The Q&A section developed the discussed themes on AKP as an ideological movement, relations with Russia, and the preparations of the opposition for the 2023 elections.

Aslı Töre

The Migration Diplomacy Team at the inaugural meeting in Berlin in 6464

Mehmet Karli, Othon Anastasakis, Kemal Kirişçi, Franck Duvell and Başak Kale

Sinem Adar Dimitar Bechev and Selim Koru

Migration Diplomacy and Turkey-EU Relations

The Oxford-Berlin Partnership seed-funded SEESOX project on the migration diplomacy between Turkey and the EU continued its research and communication activities in its second year. Making use of the literature review, chronology of events, news reports, and brainstorming meeting reports that were prepared in the past year, the core research team concentrated on the preparation of a proposal for a larger-scale research project. The aim was to extend the discussion on the migration diplomacy between Turkey and the EU to Turkey’s geopolitics and domestic affairs. Recently, the team gave a presentation on the issue at the Global Strategy Forum. The presentation provided an overview of the conceptual framework of migration diplomacy, the externalisation of the EU’s migration management to third countries, its sustainability and political implications, the current status of the migration deal, and the domestic politics and factors shaping Turkey’s stance on migration diplomacy. Othon Anastasakis (SEESOX), Mehmet Karli (SEESOX), Başak Kale (METU), Aslı Töre (SEESOX), and Franck Duvell (Universitat Osnabrück) continue to work on their research proposal.

Aslı Töre

The Migration Diplomacy Team at the inaugural meeting in Berlin in 2020
SEESOX reaches out!
Ambassadors’ Forum

On 15 June SEESOX revived the pre-pandemic tradition of inviting the Ambassadors of South East Europe posted in London to an annual Forum over lunch at St Antony’s. 10 Ambassadors, one Chargé, and three DHMs attended: plus Team SEESOX.

Othon Anastasakis welcomed the guests and set the scene. Since we had last met, much had changed and changed dramatically: Brexit, the pandemic, world geopolitics, and Ukraine. He emphasised in particular the role of Brexit. How was this affecting e.g. educational links between our countries? And how did it, and the shift from multilateralism to bilateralism, change the role of Embassies in London and the view of their governments back home? What were the nuances of this major European change? And how did it affect issues which were at the core of SEESOX’s work: the transatlantic agenda (especially in the wake of developments in Ukraine), the enlargement of the EU, migration, diasporas, brain drain, brain return. SEESOX ran special projects on migration and diasporas?

David Madden chaired the succeeding round table discussion, which allowed everyone around the table to respond to these questions: covering student scholarships and exchanges, the altered picture in Europe, the shift to bilateral diplomacy e.g. with the nomination of a number of UK envoys to the region, emigration and the role of Consulates.

It was agreed that this represented a very useful exchange of knowledge and opinions, and that the tradition should be continued, if possible.

David Madden
This 8th collaboration between SEESOX and Global Strategy Forum (GSF) took place on 22 June. Lord Lothian, Chair of GSF convened and welcomed, David Madden chaired, and Jacqueline Jinks directed proceedings.

The panel consisted of: Dr Basak Kale, Professor of International Relations at the Middle East Technical University, Ankara; Asli Tore of SEESOX; Jonathan Scheele of SEESOX; and Dr Mehmet Karli, Co-ordinator of the Programme on Contemporary Turkey at SEESOX. They looked at a number of questions about migration diplomacy: how was it linked to foreign policy making; what were the linkages to geopolitical considerations; was it compatible with democratic politics; what was the current status of the EU-Turkey Deal; was the externalisation of the EU’s migration management to third countries sustainable?

Basak Kale examined the factors behind and some of the consequences of the EU-Turkey Deal, and drew some comparisons; Asli Tore provided a conceptual framework; Jonathan Scheele covered political implications, especially in the EU; and Mehmet Karli addressed the domestic politics and factors which had shaped Turkey’s stance on migration diplomacy.

The overall conclusion was that migration diplomacy played an enormous role in the policies of today’s Europe, and was inter-connected with a very wide range of other issues.

The same general conclusion emerged from the lunch hosted in the Attlee Dining Room of the House of Lords by Lord Lothian after the presentation: where the speaker was Professor Kelly Greenhill of Tufts University.

David Madden

Some of the SEESOX team enjoying a drink on the terrace at The House of Lords before lunch
Jonathan Scheele, Julie Adams, Marilena Simiti, Asli Tore, Marilena Anastasopoulou, David Madden, Adrienne Cheasty
The main event on the SEESOX Twentieth Anniversary Day on 8 June 2022 was a pair of panels looking at the implications of war in Ukraine for the region.

The first, on The relationship between the EU and the countries of the Region, was chaired by David Madden (SEESOX). It brought together Michael Emerson (Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels), Jonathan Scheele (SEESOX), Eli Gateva (DPIR, Oxford), Kristijan Fidanovski (Department of Social Policy and Intervention, Oxford), Jens Bastian (German Institute of International and Security Affairs, Berlin) and Kalypso Nicolaidis (EUI, Florence).

The panel looked at the applications by Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, for accession to the EU; the implications for the EU enlargement process in the Western Balkans; the state of Rule of Law in the region; the prospects for opening North Macedonia’s and Albania’s EU accession negotiations; the implications of differing approaches across the region to sanctions against Russia; and the prospects for relaunching EU enlargement policy.

The second panel, chaired by Kalypso Nicolaidis, discussed Security Challenges in the Region. It brought together Dimitar Bechev (Oxford School of Global and Area Studies), Milos Damjanovic (Balkan Investigative Reporting Network, Belgrade), Adis Merdjanovic (Zurich University of Applied Sciences), Kerem Öktem (Università Ca’ Foscari, Venice) and Marilena Simiti (University of Piraeus).

After looking at growing multipolarity across the region, and the growing role of China and emergence Turkey, with twenty years of EU reform efforts having failed to overcome local elites’ resistance, discussion turned to the implications of Serbia’s failure to align with the EU against Russia; the continuing survival of the current political elites in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a factor in preventing progress towards EU accession; the effects of the war in Ukraine on Erdogan’s position in the region and on EU leverage over Turkey; and the tension between the Greek government’s pro-Ukraine, pro-West stand and underlying anti-US and pro-Russia tendencies in public opinion.

Jonathan Scheele
SEESOX seminars and events

Michaelmas 2021 (October-December)

Afghan crisis, migration diplomacy and Turkey-EU relations
Speakers: Franck Duvel (Universitat Osnabrück); Başak Kale (METU); Kemal Kirişçi (Brookings Institution)
Chairs: Othon Anastasakis (St Antony’s College, Oxford); Mehmet Karlı (St Antony’s College, Oxford)
Organized as part of the research programme ‘Migration Diplomacy and Turkey-EU Relations’ funded by the Oxford-Berlin Research Partnership

All the President’s Men: Institutions and key players in Erdogan’s Turkey
Speaker: Selim Koru (University of Nottingham)
Discussant: Sinem Adar (German Institute for International and Security Affairs)
Chair: Dimitar Bechev (Oxford School of Global and Area Studies)

Speakers: Othon Anastasakis (St Antony’s College, Oxford); Fotini Dimirouli (Kebbe College, Oxford); Kostis Kornetis (Universidad Autonoma de Madrid)
Chair: Katerina Lagos (California State University, Sacramento)

Bulgarian elections: Third time lucky?
Speakers: Eli Gateva (Department of Politics and International Relations, Oxford); Dimitar Bechev (Oxford School of Global and Area Studies)
Chair: Jonathan Scheele (St Antony’s College, Oxford)

Open Balkans and/or European integration: An answer or a diversion?
Speakers: Dritan Abazovic (Deputy Prime Minister of Montenegro); Albin Kurti (Prime Minister of Kosovo); Zef Mazi (Albania’s Chief Negotiator with The European Union); Bujar Osmani (Minister of Foreign Affairs, North Macedonia)
Chairs: Othon Anastasakis (St Antony’s College, Oxford); Belina Budini (European University of Tirana)

Hilary 2022 (January-March)

What’s in a name? The classical Greek and Jewish diasporas and implications for the present
Speakers: Robin Cohen (International Migration Institute, University of Oxford); Manolis Pratsinakis (Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS))
Chair: Renee Hirschon (St Peter’s College, Oxford)

Reforms that changed Greece
Speakers: Jens Bastian (ELIAMEP); Calliope Spanou (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens)
Chair: Othon Anastasakis (St Antony’s College, Oxford)

Venizelos: Crete to Athens, Great War and Schism. Peace conference and after
Speaker: Michael Llewellyn Smith (St Antony’s College, Oxford; Kings College London)
Discussants: Othon Anastasakis (St Antony’s College, Oxford); Marilena Anastasopoulou (Worcester College, Oxford); Helen Katsiadakis (Academy of Athens)
Chair: David Madden (St Antony’s College, Oxford)
On the occasion of the publication of Venizelos: The Making of a Greek Statesman 1864-1914 (Hurst & Co 6469), and the re-issue of Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor 1919 - 1922 (Hurst & Co new edition 2022)

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Has the international community lost interest?
Jelena Dzankic (European University Institute, Florence); Jasmin Hasic (Humanity in Action (BiH)); Nebojsa Vladisavljevic (University of Belgrade)
Chair: Jessie Barton Hronesova (UNC Chapel Hill)

Turkey Under Erdogan: How a Country Turned from Democracy and the West
Speaker: Dimitar Bechev (Oxford School of Global and Area Studies (OSGA))
Discussant: Mehmet Karlı (St Antony’s College, Oxford)
Chair: Ezgi Basaran (St Antony’s College, Oxford)

Trinity 2022 (April-June)

The future of European security after the war in Ukraine
Lord Robertson of Port Ellen (Former NATO Secretary General)
Chair: Othon Anastasakis (SEESOX)

In association with the ESC
The EU as a State-builder in International Affairs: The Case of Kosovo
Labinot Greiçevci (University for Business and Technology, Pristina)
Chair: Richard Caplan (DPIR)
Co-convened with Richard Caplan

Getting older: Demographic challenges in South East Europe
Speakers: Arjan Gjonça (LSE); Branimir Jovanovic (Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies); Vladimir Nikitovic (Institute of Social Sciences, Belgrade); Dijana Spasenoska (LSE)
Chair: Kristijan Fidanovski (Department of Social Policy and Intervention, Oxford)

South East Europe in the Shadow of the War in Ukraine
Panel 1: The relationship between the EU and the countries of the region. The prospects for enlargement
Panellists: Jens Bastian (German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP); Michael Emerson (Centre for European Policy Studies); Kristijan Fidanovski (Department of Social Policy and Intervention, Oxford); Eli Gateva (DPIR); Kalypso Nicolaidis (EUI, Florence); Jonathan Scheele (SEESOX)
Chair: David Madden (SEESOX)
Panel 2: Security challenges within the region
Panellists: Othon Anastasakis (SEESOX); Dimitar Bechev (Oxford School of Global and Area Studies (OSGA)); Milos Damjanovic (Balkan Investigative Reporting Network, Belgrade); Adis Merdzanovic (Zurich University of Applied Sciences); Kerem Öktem (Università Ca’ Foscari, Venice); Marilena Simiti (University of Piraeus)
Chair: Kalypso Nicolaidis (EUI, Florence)

Free: Coming of Age at the end of History
Lea Ypi (London School of Economics)
Discussants: Othon Anastasakis and Paul Bettis (St Antony’s College, Oxford)
Chair: Ezgi Basaran (St Antony’s College, Oxford)
About SEESOX …

South East European Studies at Oxford (SEESOX) is part of the European Studies Centre at St Antony’s College, Oxford. It focuses on the interdisciplinary study of the relationship between European integration and the politics, economics and societies of the Balkans, Greece, Turkey and Cyprus. Drawing on the academic excellence of the University and an international network of associates, it conducts policy relevant research on the multifaceted transformations of the region in the 21st century. It follows closely conflict and post-conflict situations and analyses the historical and intellectual influences which have shaped perceptions and actions in the region.

In Oxford’s best tradition, the SEESOX team is committed to understanding the present through the longue durée and reflecting on the future through high quality scholarship.

SEESOX has the following objectives:

- To support high-quality teaching and research on South East Europe;
- To organise conferences, workshops and research seminars;
- To develop research projects and regional initiatives;
- To promote the multi-disciplinary study of the region within the University of Oxford (e.g. politics, international relations, anthropology, sociology, economics) working in collaboration with other Centres and Programmes within the University, including student societies;
- To spearhead intellectual exchanges and debate on these issues among networks of individuals and institutions beyond Oxford;
- To foster cooperation between the academic and the policy making communities.