

Call for Papers

International Workshop

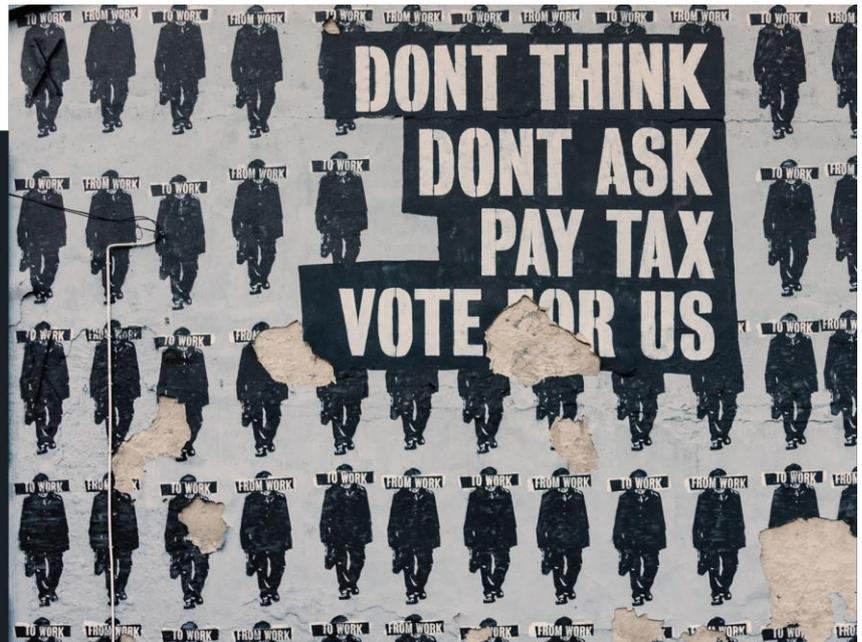
## Electoral Integrity and Malpractice in Russia and Beyond: New Challenges and Responses

October 2021

25-26 OCTOBER

International workshop

ELECTORAL INTEGRITY AND  
MALPRACTICE  
IN RUSSIA AND BEYOND:  
NEW CHALLENGES  
AND RESPONSES



The recent populist turn and rise of ‘fake news’, spiced by the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic in new and old democracies spurred a number of concerns in academic and expert communities. Are existing democratic institutions fool-proof enough to protect societies from undermining citizens’ trust in political institutions and sliding back to more authoritarian political set-ups? Transparent and uncompromised elections still remain the essential feature of any democracy and serve as the major channel of selecting political leadership in established and new democracies. Over the last five years, the Russian government has mastered the art of rigging domestic elections to such an extent that it has recently become a major ‘exporter’ of electoral malpractice. Expanded use of mass media and internet-technologies in the past decade has brought the spread of electoral malpractice to a new level. This phenomenon challenges trust in electoral institutions in Russia and beyond. Electoral integrity has been accosted by not only intentional malpractice but also by unintended technological mishaps and public misperception of electoral processes transmitted by mass media.

We are delighted to announce a call for papers for the upcoming workshop ‘Electoral Integrity and Malpractice in Russia and Beyond: New Challenges and Responses’. The workshop aims to discuss the following questions: does information about compromised electoral integrity affect citizens’ trust in political institutions in post-communist countries? How and why do technologies of electoral malpractice travel from one country to another? For instance, from Russia to neighboring countries, such as Belarus after the large-scale protest in August-September 2020. How does this affect political behaviors such as protesting, voting, or abstention from voting? How can adverse political effects of

electoral malpractice and, more specifically, negative presentations of elections in mass media possibly be prevented?

At the workshop we will have panels where we will be discussing the papers of our participants and lectures by our keynote speakers. The keynote speakers are **Norbert Kersting** (Professor in Comparative Political Science at Local Muenster University), **Ora John Reuter** (Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee), **Inga Saikkonen** (Åbo Akademi University Research Fellow), **Katalin Miklóssy** (Senior Researcher at the Aleksanteri Institute and Lecturer at the University of Helsinki), and **Vladimir Gel'man** (Professor of Russian Politics at Aleksanteri Institute and a Professor at the European University at St.Petersburg).

We look forward to receiving papers from scholars whose research deals with questions of elections, electoral integrity and malpractice, media and internet-technologies in the electoral realm, and electoral behavior. We are primarily interested in the role of Russia as a 'black knight' exporting electoral malpractice to other countries. However, we do not limit authors in terms of geographical scope and or cases. We aim at stimulating high-quality publications in this field via a special journal issue or collective monograph devoted to the topic.

The workshop will take place at the Aleksanteri Institute, the University of Helsinki in a **hybrid format** – offline and online, respecting restrictions imposed in response to COVID-19. We strongly encourage papers from **doctoral students**. Authors of the best proposals will be able to apply for full or partial reimbursement of their travel expenses. Visa support will be provided depending on the regulations related to the local and international pandemic situation.

In order to apply for the workshop, please fill in this **E-lomake** form before June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Any and all queries may be addressed to Elena Gorbacheva, [Elena.Gorbacheva@helsinki.fi](mailto:Elena.Gorbacheva@helsinki.fi), and Dr. Margarita Zavadskaya, [Margarita.Zavadskaya@helsinki.fi](mailto:Margarita.Zavadskaya@helsinki.fi).

To learn more about the ElMarB project, please visit our website at <https://blogs.helsinki.fi/elmarb-project/>.