

Policy Discussion

Winning hearts and minds abroad:

Public diplomacy talk

(in English)

Date: June 26, 2022 16:45 – 18:00

Venue: OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Conference Hall on the 3rd floor

Registration: <https://forms.gle/ZX5pZx4AaRb7oq6F9>

Language: English

Organizers: OSCE Academy, Kyrgyzstan

Description

The contemporary international politics is a continuously changing environment with an unprecedented variety of foreign policy actors. This unique environment offers countries a chance to tap into the wealth of opportunities offered by digital and public dimensions of diplomacy and use it for their foreign policy dimensions. Public diplomacy, also known as second-track diplomacy, has acquired a new level of importance in the increasingly globalized world. The ability of states to win the hearts and minds of foreign publics has become an important factor of their foreign policies.

This public discussion features two foreign policy experts: Professor Erman Akilli, Kırşehir Ahi Evran University, and Dr. Aijan Sharshenova, Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, who will discuss theory and practice of public diplomacy. The discussion will focus on the implementation of public diplomacy in Eurasia and explore public diplomacy as a foreign policy and nation-branding instrument. The discussion will be followed with a question and answer session.

Agenda

15:30 - 16:00 Public diplomacy discussion with Prof. Erman Akilli and Dr. Aijan Sharshenova

16:00 - 16:30 Q&A Session

16:30 - 17:00 Coffee-break

Speakers and organizers

The roundtable is held in the framework of the Postdoctoral Fellowship Program "Institutional Change and Social Practice. Research on the Political System, Economy and Society in Central Asia and Caucasus". The Postdoctoral Fellowship Program is a 3-year project jointly run by Bielefeld University and TU Dortmund University and supported by Volkswagen-Foundation. In addition to supporting eleven fellows and their research projects, the project runs an academic and professionalization program to accompany the individual projects. All this has been designed to provide a solid foundation for future cooperation and partnerships between universities and other institutions in Central Asia and the Caucasus as well as in Germany and Europe.



Dr. Aijan Sharshenova is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, funded by Volkswagen Foundation in cooperation with Bielefeld University. Dr. Sharshenova holds a PhD in Politics awarded at the University of Leeds, UK. Prior to joining the OSCE Academy, Dr. Sharshenova has worked at the UN and UNDP country offices in the Middle East. Dr. Sharshenova's current research project is on Russia's soft power and public diplomacy in Central Asia. Other research interests include democratization, democracy promotion, autocratic diffusion and international development with the regional focus on Russia and Central Asia.



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erman Akilli is a faculty member at Kırşehir Ahi Evran University specializing in international relations, focusing on foreign policy, Soft Power, and Public Diplomacy. He has authored numerous publications, including peer-reviewed articles and books published by esteemed publishers such as Routledge. Prof. Akilli holds the position of chief editor at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, and serves as the Book Review Editor for the journal Insight Turkey. In addition to his role at Kırşehir Ahi Evran University, he has been teaching graduate courses on Turkish foreign policy at the Khoja Akhmet Yassawi International Kazakh-Turkish University in Kazakhstan since 2017. Prof. AKILLI is actively

involved in contributing to and delivering speeches at prestigious institutions and state bodies, including the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Strategic Research Centre and the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye Directorate of Communications.

OSCE Academy in Bishkek (<https://www.osce-academy.net/>) is a public foundation, established in 2002 between the Kyrgyz Government and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The Academy promotes the principles and values of the OSCE through post-graduate education, professional training and intellectual exchange. Moreover, the Academy hosts Research Fellowships, as well as publishes articles, policy briefs, and research papers on questions relevant to the Academy's mission.

Bielefeld University (<https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/uni/profil/>) was founded in 1969 with an explicit research assignment and a mission to provide high-quality research-oriented teaching. With around 25,000 students, the University currently encompasses 14 faculties. As a 'Volluniversitaet' (full university), it offers a differentiated range of disciplines in the humanities, natural sciences, technology as well as in medicine.

The Volkswagen Foundation (<https://www.volkswagenstiftung.de>) is an independent foundation incorporated under private law with a registered office in Hanover. Since 1962, the Volkswagen Foundation has allocated more than 5.5 billion euros in support of over 33,000 projects. It is thereby one of the largest common benefit foundations under private law in all of Germany. The Volkswagen Foundation perceives a special mission in providing support for junior researchers and fostering cooperation between researchers across the borders of disciplines, cultures, and national states.