

Call for Papers for conference on

**“Challenges to democratic governance in new democracies in CEE and the Balkans”<sup>1</sup>**

Organized by  
Center for the Study of Imperfections in Democracy (DISC)  
at Central European University  
([www.ceu.hu/disc](http://www.ceu.hu/disc)),

Freedom House Europe  
([www.freedomhouse.hu](http://www.freedomhouse.hu)),

and Junior Chamber International  
([www.jci.cc](http://www.jci.cc))

EXTENDED APPLICATION DEADLINE—JUNE 15

- Topic:** “Challenges to democratic governance in the new democracies in CEE and the Balkans”
- Location:** Central European University (CEU), Budapest
- Date:** October 10-11, 2008

Although in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the Balkans transitions away from authoritarian rule began more than fifteen years ago, many of the recently (re)emerged regimes still face significant challenges regarding the consolidation and quality of democracy. The current problems that must be addressed related to democratic governance may (or may not) be different than the problems that were confronted in early transition and in different world regions. Therefore there is a need for a thorough and comparative assessment of the current state of democracy in these countries, which can form a basis for future policy decisions to improve the quality of democracy. By evaluating the state of democracy in the countries of CEE and the Balkans, this conference aims to generate theoretically-founded yardsticks for the evaluation and empirical evidence of the quality of democratic governance in the region that will be used for a future Democracy Forum (outlined below).

Using the categories in the framework applied by Freedom House for its ‘Nations in Transit’ (NIT) analysis ([www.freedomhouse.org](http://www.freedomhouse.org)), we welcome papers that make a comparison of at least two countries in this region along any of the following dimension(s):

(1) **National Democratic Governance:** Considers the democratic character and stability of the governmental system; the independence, effectiveness, and accountability of legislative and executive branches; and the democratic oversight of military and security services.

(2) **Electoral Process:** Examines national executive and legislative elections, electoral processes, the development of multiparty systems, and popular participation in the political process.

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<sup>1</sup> The following countries may be included: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine.

(3) **Civil Society:** Assesses the growth of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), their organizational capacity and financial sustainability, and the legal and political environment in which they function; the development of free trade unions; and interest group participation in the policy process.

(4) **Independent Media:** Addresses the current state of press freedom, including libel laws, harassment of journalists, editorial independence, the emergence of a financially viable private press, and Internet access for private citizens.

(5) **Local Democratic Governance:** Considers the decentralization of power; the responsibilities, election, and capacity of local governmental bodies; and the transparency and accountability of local authorities.

(6) **Judicial Framework and Independence:** Highlights constitutional reform, human rights protections, criminal code reform, judicial independence, the status of ethnic minority rights, guarantees of equality before the law, treatment of suspects and prisoners, and compliance with judicial decisions.

(7) **Corruption:** Looks at public perceptions of corruption, the business interests of top policy makers, laws on financial disclosure and conflict of interest, and the efficacy of anticorruption initiatives.

### **Additional Information**

We also welcome papers that reflect on additional methodological considerations that could improve upon the NIT approach to democratization and good governance analysis and could serve as the starting point for a new version of the publication.

The purpose of this conference is to generate a theoretical framework for a Democracy Forum to be held in 2009 with young leaders from the 23 countries in CEE and the Balkans, organized by the Junior Chamber International, Freedom House Europe, and the Center for the Study of Imperfections in Democracy (DISC) at Central European University. Significant findings from this conference will be published as an e-book that will form the academic basis for the Democracy Forum.

The body of fresh and targeted analysis would serve as the starting point for the 2009 Democracy Forum, to be held in Budapest. The forum's program would be comprised of both lectures and presentations as well as training modules on a variety of topics relevant to the demographic group partaking in the forum and their interest in engaging in the political life of their countries in a more effective way as agents of positive change.

### **Selection process:**

- Deadline for submission of title and abstract (max 500 words):
  - o EXTENDED TO June 15, 2008
- Announcement of selected papers:
  - o July 1, 2008
- Submission of papers to be distributed:
  - o September 30, 2008

**Please send your title, abstract, AND 1-PAGE CV to:**

disc@ceu.hu