



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Home Affairs  
State Secretariat for Education and Research SER



## **Service agreement**

between the

### **Swiss Confederation**

represented by the

**State Secretariat for Education and Research (SER)**

and the

**Center for Governance and Culture in Europe (GCE)**

**University of St. Gallen**

on the promotion of cooperation in the humanities and social sciences  
between Switzerland and the countries of the Black Sea region

On the basis of the Federal Decree concerning Funding for Scientific Cooperation in Education and Research in Europe and Worldwide for the Period 2008–2011, as amended on 14 June 2011, the SER and the GCE have concluded the following agreement:

### **1. Background**

With the collapse of the Communist system in Eastern Europe over 20 years ago, promising new perspectives also opened up for the humanities in the Western world. It became possible to conduct research in fields which form an integral part of European history and culture, but which had previously been scarcely accessible to researchers. As a result, there has been a fundamental change in discourse on Europe: the almost automatic equating of Europe with "Western Europe" has given way to a more nuanced conception. However, with the Eastern enlargement of the European Union, there is a risk of a new "Iron Curtain" descending between the EU countries and the more easterly member states of the Council of Europe. The EU is already endeavouring to avoid new divisions arising: for the period 2007–2013, a budget of EUR 12 billion is available for European Neighbourhood Policy to support cooperation between the EU and its neighbours. To prevent the creation of new boundaries within Europe, one should therefore not think exclusively in terms of political units, but of larger cultural areas, such as the Black Sea region. Of particular importance in this respect are Romania and Bulgaria – countries which are both EU member states and traditionally part of the Black Sea region.

In Western Europe and specifically also in Switzerland, the new potential for research in Eastern Europe continues to be inadequately exploited. The reasons for this are as follows:

- Eastern European research focuses on Russia (Romanian, Bulgarian and Ukrainian studies are wholly unrepresented at the institutional level in the Swiss higher education sector),
- there is a lack of critical mass in Switzerland,
- involvement in national and international networks remains inadequate,
- compared with other disciplines, the position of Eastern European studies in universities tends to be rather weak.

Switzerland is well-placed to pursue new opportunities for establishing and developing high-quality academic cooperation with the countries of the Black Sea region<sup>1</sup>:

- Cooperation already exists with the following high-level academic institutions: the New Europe College in Bucharest and the Centre for Advanced Study in Sofia (both of these institutions receive support from the *Wissenschaftskolleg* in Berlin), the *Center for Urban History of East Central Europe*, the Petro Jacyk Program for the Study of Ukraine in Toronto, and the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute.
- Work in this field should now be commenced (similar centres have already been or are currently being established in other Western and Central European countries).
- New cooperation and funding possibilities arise from the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership.

## 2. Purpose

The GCE activities specified in this agreement should help to develop or expand academic cooperation between Switzerland and the Black Sea region in the humanities and social sciences, according to the criterion of academic excellence. The focus is on international exchanges of people and ideas.

## 3. Medium- and long-term development plan

From the perspective of various disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, the Center for Governance and Culture in Europe (GCE) at the University of St. Gallen intends to investigate how governance, political culture and social dynamics interact. Particular attention will be paid to the Eastern periphery of the EU and to the Black Sea countries. Within Switzerland, the Center will seek to ensure that Swiss Eastern European studies are coordinated and networked with academic research institutions in the Black Sea region.

The Center also sees itself as a centre of excellence in Ukrainian studies, which are not currently embedded at the institutional level in Swiss higher education – even though, in aca-

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<sup>1</sup> The pursuit of new possibilities for high-quality academic cooperation is part of Switzerland's policy for the promotion of education, research and innovation. Cf. the Federal Council's Dispatch of 3 December 2010 on the Promotion of Education, Research and Innovation in 2012, and Switzerland's International Strategy for Education, Research and Innovation, SER, Bern 2010 (German version: [www.sbf.admin.ch/bfi-international.pdf](http://www.sbf.admin.ch/bfi-international.pdf)).

demographic terms, this is an extremely promising field of research. A network already exists with outstanding Ukrainian specialists in Germany, Austria, Canada and the US.

The Center will conduct high-quality research and publication projects in the Black Sea region and organize international conferences in cooperation with local research institutions.

For Switzerland, the academic benefits of this cooperation consist in the increased internationalization of Swiss European and Eastern European research, facilitated access to Eastern European institutes for advanced study and an increased presence of the Swiss humanities in an emerging region with considerable academic development potential.

#### **4. Content of the service agreement**

**Goal 1:** The Center for Governance and Culture in Europe at the University of St. Gallen continuously expands its overview of Swiss humanities and social science research activities in the Black Sea region and promotes cooperation in an international network with researchers from Germany, Austria, Canada and the US.

The GCE establishes contacts with academically excellent research institutions in the Black Sea region.

The GCE defines its own communication strategy, which is to be further developed in line with new requirements and continuously implemented.

**Goal 2:** The GCE initiates its own international projects with third-party funding. The GCE assumes responsibility for the conduct of innovative, interdisciplinary projects, taking political science and cultural studies aspects into account, or participates in such projects run by other institutions.

The GCE evaluates and supervises individual research projects and enhances their visibility.

The GCE submits its own proposals to research funding bodies and strengthens the capacity for successful project submissions to national and international funding bodies.

**Goal 3:** The GCE intensifies the cooperation of the Swiss humanities with Ukraine.

The GCE supports measures to disseminate research findings in Ukraine.

The GCE supports the academic culture through cooperation with academic journals.

The GCE promotes exchanges of lecturers, postgraduates and students between Switzerland and Ukraine and also within Switzerland, thereby helping to assure the critical mass which is currently lacking (cf. point 1).

#### **Goal 4:**

- The GCE promotes exchanges between the humanities and social sciences in Switzerland and the institutes for advanced study in Romania and Bulgaria – the New Europe College (NEC) in Bucharest and the Centre for Advanced Study (CAS) in Sofia.
- The GCE transfers the SER funds allocated to the NEC and CAS to these institutions (cf. point 5 below and Annex 1) and reviews their deployment (cf. point 5 below and Annex 2).
- For this purpose, the GCE serves as a member of the relevant boards of the NEC (Administrative Board) and the CAS (Board of Trustees) and performs the associated duties and responsibilities.

#### **5. Resources (CHF)<sup>2</sup>**

NEC:	300,000
CAS:	100,000
Black Sea region:	230,000
GCE overheads:	70,000 (organization and conduct of projects; performance of the duties vis-à-vis the NEC and CAS specified in point 4, Content of the service agreement, Goal 4) <sup>3</sup>
Total:	700,000

The SER funds allocated to support the NEC and CAS are to be used to help cover the two institutions' general operating costs.

The disbursement and repayment modalities are specified in Annex 1, which is an integral part of this service agreement. If the service agreement is extended, Annex 1 will be updated.

The amount is to be drawn from Credit A 2310.443 (Bilateral academic cooperation in Europe).

#### **6. Reporting and evaluation**

##### *Reporting*

By 30 November 2013, the GCE is to prepare a report on the attainment of goals (cf. point 4 above) and the deployment of resources (cf. point 5 above). The reporting modalities are specified in Annex 2, which is an integral part of this service agreement. If the service agreement is extended, Annex 2 will be updated.

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<sup>2</sup> Subject to the approval of the Swiss Parliament.

<sup>3</sup> Any employment-law obligations undertaken for this purpose are exclusively the responsibility of the GCE and not of the SER. Travel costs and expenses incurred by GCE staff are to be borne exclusively by the GCE.

## *Evaluation*

At the request of the SER, the GCE may be externally evaluated. The GCE is to be notified in writing of such an evaluation 6 months before the start of implementation. The evaluation costs are to be borne by the SER.

## **7. Duty of notification**

If any of the conditions specified in this agreement cannot be fulfilled by the GCE or can only be partly fulfilled, the GCE must notify the SER without delay.

## **8. Legal venue**

Any disputes arising from the agreement are to be dealt with in accordance with Article 35 letter a of the Federal Act of 17 June 2005 on the Federal Administrative Court (SR 173.32).

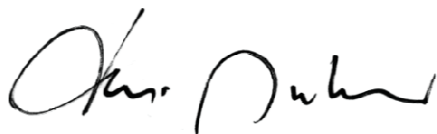
## **9. Entry into force and term of the agreement:**

This agreement will enter into force on 1 January 2012 and terminate on 31 December 2012. It may be extended with the consent of both parties. A request for extension of the agreement is to be submitted in writing to the SER by the GCE no later than three months before the expiry of the agreement.

Termination of the contractual relationship does not release the GCE from its reporting obligations (cf. point 6 above).

Bern, 18 October 2011

State Secretariat for Education and Research



Mauro Dell'Ambrogio  
State Secretary

St. Gallen, 18 October 2011



Professor U. Schmid  
Head of the Center for Governance and Culture in Europe, University of St. Gallen

## **Disbursement and repayment modalities**

### 1) Disbursement (SER to GCE)

The funding granted to the GCE is to be disbursed in 4 tranches on submission of invoices by the GCE to the SER (tranche a: Ukraine; tranche b: NEC; tranche c: CAS; tranche d: overheads).

### 2) Repayment (GCE to SER)

The GCE is accountable to the SER for the appropriate deployment of the funding granted. If funds are deployed in a manner contrary to the terms of the agreement or in the event of a serious breach of the terms of this agreement, the SER may partly or wholly revoke the entitlement to funding. Funds already disbursed are to be repaid to the SER in line with the extent to which the entitlement has been revoked.

### 3) Transfer of funds (GCE to NEC and CAS)

The SER funds allocated to the NEC and CAS are to be transferred by the GCE on submission of invoices by the NEC and CAS to the GCE.

If the budget for 2012 and the annual accounts for 2011 are not approved, or approval is granted without the agreement of the SER, the funds allocated to the NEC and CAS are not to be transferred.

### **Reporting**

The GCE shall report to the SER, by 30 November 2013, on

- a) the attainment of goals (cf. point 4 above)
- b) the deployment of funding (tranches a–d, cf. Annex 1)

Funds not used are to be repaid to the SER by 16 December 2013.