

New Sotirov Fellow will research conflict prevention in the Black Sea at LSE IDEAS

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Dr. Neli Kirilova, an expert on power competition in the Black Sea region, has been named the 2024/25 Sotirov Visiting Fellow at LSE IDEAS.

Dr. Kirilova has developed a theoretical framework on conflict prevention, identifying six elements of power that can be used as forms of qualitative assessment.

Exchanging expertise with LSE IDEAS scholars, she will apply her new theory to the case study of Bulgaria.

She aims to identify a potential relationship between power competition and political instability, which could provide a basis for later research conducted in other Balkan countries, thus contributing to conflict prevention in the region.

Dr. Kirilova holds a PhD in International Relations and Security Studies from the Corvinus University of Budapest in collaboration with the European Doctoral School on CSDP/CFSP at the European Security and Defence College, Brussels.

"I am grateful to LSE IDEAS and the Sotirov family for the opportunity to research contemporary Bulgarian foreign policy, examining the possible relation between diplomacy, strategies, external interests, and political stability. I will apply the theoretical framework on conflict prevention which I developed in my PhD research, to a case study country, in a great academic environment. If the logical model proves to be successful, it can later be extrapolated to other countries of the Western Balkans and the Black Sea region. As a result, this research has the potential to bring valuable contribution to regional stability and conflict prevention," she says.

Professor Chris Alden, Director at LSE IDEAS, says:

"We are extremely excited to have Dr Kirilova join us this year as the Sotirov fellow and are excited for the work she will produce. We are ever grateful to the Sotirov family for their generous support over the years and the value that this fellowship has brought to the think-tank."

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For more information, or to speak with Dr. Neli Kirilova, contact Jamie Hose at BlueSky Education on jamie@bluesky-pr.com, or call +44 (0)1582 790 706.