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## Nordic Russian and Eastern European Studies Conference Intentions, Interactions and Paradoxes in Post-Socialist Space 24-25 May 2013 in Helsinki, Finland

### Abstracts

#### Modernization, Civil Society and Corruption

Chair: **Ann-Mari Sätre** (UCRS, Uppsala University, Sweden)

**Gudrun Persson** (Swedish Defence Research Institute, Sweden): *Modernizing Russia - the art of building a nation*

**Silvana Malle** (Verona University, Italy): *Modernization from above - why, where and how*

**Susanne Oxenstierna** (Swedish Defence Research Institute, Sweden): *The role of "voice" of civil society in Russian economic development*

**Mi Lennhag** (Lund University, Sweden): *Corruption, citizens, and the state - Russian citizens' attitudes towards post-Soviet everyday corruption*

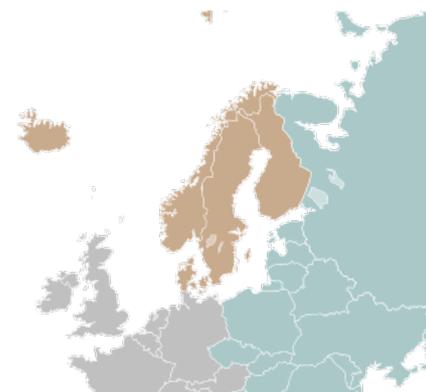
Since the 1990s processes of modernization have characterised Russian social and economic development. Apart from the economic reforms that resulted in establishing a market economy by the mid-2000s, Russia follows the tradition of modernization from above with a persistent involvement of a dominating state. The panel addresses questions such as: What is most important? Becoming a strong national state or a global economic power and strong international player? How far can Russia develop socially and economically with the state dominating the modernization process, without a fully-fledged civil society that may voice its interests without fear of repression? Is a cooperative model of interaction a solution for Russia? What are people's attitudes towards corruption and how can it be fought without effective civil society control over authorities?

The first paper of the panel Modernizing Russia - the art of building a nation explores the apparent paradox of parallel developments - one that echoes of a 19th century national state with a strong federal centre, powerful armed forces, and a strong Russian orthodox church; and, one that points towards attempts of innovation and modernization in a globalized world.

The second paper Modernization from above - why, where and how argues that modernization from above is difficult but not impossible. However, it demands cooperative interaction with society since deep restructuring is likely to meet resistance from workers and management. So far businesses have remained among the audience rather than competing for driving the change and it appears that true modernization requires that businesses must be given a true voice in these processes.

The third paper The role of "voice" of civil society in Russian economic development applies the theory of "Exit, Voice and Loyalty" of Albert O. Hirschman (1970) to a study of economic modernisation in Russia since the mid-2000 with special stress on the situation since 2012. The paper argues that the insufficient "voice" of specific parts of civil society - especially business associations, scientific community and trade unions - have led to inefficient outcomes in the modernization process.

The fourth paper Corruption, citizens, and the state - Russian citizens' attitudes towards post-Soviet everyday corruption elaborates on how citizens in contemporary Russia describe and motivate the ongoing presence of widespread corruption. The point of departure is a survey of anonymous in-depth interviews conducted in Kaliningrad oblast. These interviews from Russia constitute one of five cases in a scientific study that includes Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania and Poland.



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