

## Call For Papers

### Workshop: Minorities in a Fractured World

13th European Workshop in International Studies (EWIS), 1-3 July 2026, Izmir University of Economics (Izmir, Turkey)

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The past two decades have witnessed profound political, social, and geopolitical transformations that have unsettled long-standing norms, alliances, and institutional arrangements across the Middle East and beyond. Globally, the era of uncontested U.S. dominance has faded. Regionally, Europe's commitment to democratic norms and humanitarian obligations has been strained by successive waves of refugees and migrants. Across the broader Middle East—the primary source of these migratory flows—once-stable authoritarian regimes have collapsed or weakened dramatically.

These developments have generated new rivalries and unexpected partnerships, exposing the limitations of traditional political structures in managing rapidly changing realities. As old orders crumble, new actors, alliances, and forms of political agency have emerged. In Syria, for example, Turkey and Israel—once strategic partners—now find themselves in open rivalry, defying decades of cooperation. The Alawites, long dominant within the Syrian state, have increasingly become a vulnerable and targeted minority. The Druze, historically neutral and strong supporters of Syrian Arab nationalism, now seek external protection amid uncertainty surrounding a potential post-Assad political order. The Kurds, long marginalized in Syria, have become key partners of the United States and potential political kingmakers in any future settlement.

Beyond Syria, Turkey has positioned itself as a leading global advocate of the Palestinian cause, displacing traditional Arab supporters. At the same time, some of the most consequential and sustained criticism of Israeli policies has come not from the Middle East or the broader Muslim world, but from countries such as Ireland and South Africa—states whose own historical experiences of colonialism, discrimination, and struggle shape their contemporary political stances.

Against this backdrop, this workshop asks how minorities navigate a world marked by shifting alliances, contested norms, and unstable power balances. It seeks to move beyond portrayals of minorities as passive victims and instead examine their strategic choices, political agency, and cross-group interactions in periods of profound uncertainty.

Key questions include, but are not limited to:

- How are minorities adapting to rapidly changing political and geopolitical landscapes?
- How do minorities perceive and engage with one another amid shifting alliances and rivalries?
- Under what conditions are minorities able to capitalize on emerging opportunities, and when are they more likely to become targets or casualties of broader transformations?
- How do external actors—states, international organizations, and transnational movements—reshape minority politics and inter-minority relations?

The workshop welcomes theoretically informed and empirically grounded papers from a wide range of methodological approaches, including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods research. While the Middle East is a central focus, contributions examining minorities in comparative or global perspective are strongly encouraged.