

CREES academic participates in seminar at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Posted on Friday 29th June 2012

Dr Derek Averre participated in a seminar at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, London, on 28 June along with UK and EU officials and representatives of think tanks and academia from across Europe.

The event, held on Thursday 28 June in the India Office Council Chamber at the FCO, was on the topic '**The EU, Russia and the New Eastern Europe**'. The purpose of the event was to examine the objectives, policies and tools that the EU and Russia both bring to bear in Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova and, in the light of this, to consider the implications for UK/EU policy. Participants included UK government and European Union officials, and representatives of think tanks and academia from across Europe.

The seminar considered among other things:

- popular perceptions of the EU and Russia in the region
- the extent to which both EU and Russian levers have traction
- recent backsliding in the region in terms of political freedoms and civil liberties
- greater Russian assertiveness in terms of its own integration projects
- divergent interpretations of the achievements of the Eastern Partnership since its inception in 2009 as either glass half full (among other things, new AAs and DCFTAs, new programmes and projects focused for example on civil society and institution building and new financial resources) or glass half empty (e.g. sluggish reform, democratic backsliding, limited progress on the protracted conflict in Transnistria, lack of EU Member State movement on willingness to acknowledge membership perspectives)
- implications for UK/EU policy