ISSICEU – Intra- and Inter-Societal Sources of Instability in the Caucasus and EU Opportunities to Respond

Information on ISSICEU research projects and partner institutions

St. Gallen, 10.06.2015
ISSICEU – General Information

- Stems from one of two successful bids for the EC call “Security and democracy in the neighbourhood: The case of the Caucasus”
- Started on 1 January 2014
- Duration of 36 months
- Project Coordinator is Prof. Dirk Lehmkuhl from the University of St. Gallen
- Consortium comprises 8 institutions from Switzerland, Germany, the Russian Federation, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey
- Website available at www.issiceu.eu
ISSICEU – Consortium

- University of St. Gallen, Switzerland (Project Coordinator) (http://www.gce.unisg.ch/de)
- University of Fribourg, Switzerland (http://www.unifr.ch/sr/de)
- SWP - German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Germany (http://www.swp-berlin.org/)
- Khazar University Baku, Azerbaijan (http://www.khazar.org/)
- GeoWel Research, Georgia (http://www.geowel.org/)
- Kabardino-Balkarian State University, Russia (http://www.kbsu.ru/)
- Russian State University for the Humanities, Russia (http://rggu.com/)
- Ankara Policy Center, Turkey (http://www.apm.org.tr/Home.aspx)
ISSICEU – Work Packages

- ISSICEU research is clustered into 5 work packages
- WP 1 & 2: Intra-Societal Dimension
  - WP 1: Political Regimes – Communal Governance
  - WP 2: Civil Society
- WP 3 & 4: Inter-Societal Dimension
  - WP 3: Economic Dependencies
  - WP 4: Neighbourhood
- WP 5: The interplay of sources of instability in the Caucases – Scenario Development and Policy Briefs
ISSICEU – Work Packages

**Intra-Societal Dimension**

- **WP 1**
  - Political Regimes: Communal Governance

- **WP 2**
  - Civil Society

**Intra-Societal Dimension**

- **WP 3**
  - Economic Dependencies

- **WP 4**
  - Neighbourhood

**WP 5: The interplay of sources of instability in the Caucasus**

- **Scenario 1**
  - Political Regimes and Civil Society

- **Scenario 2**
  - Economic Developments

- **Scenario 3**
  - Influences from the Neighbourhood

**EU opportunities in the context of intra- and inter-societal (in)stability**

- Considering developments in the field of communal governance
- Opportunities to fuel gradual democratic change
- Considering other players from the wider region in the EU Caucasus policy
- Adjusting the focus to emerging threats of regional (in)stabilities
Work Package 1 - Political Regimes: Communal Governance

• Period: January 2014 to December 2016
• Lead CP: Kabardino-Balkarian State University
• WP leader: Prof. Alexey Gunya
• Research foci:
  • Interplay of adopted democratic and established domestic institutions at macro level
  • Frictions in communal governance
  • Improving EU democracy promotion efforts: considering domestic practices
• Further CPs involved: Uni SG, SWP, Khazar University, GeoWel
Work Package 2 – Civil Society

- Period: January 2014 to December 2016
- Lead CP: Khazar University Baku
- WP leader: Dr. Farda Asadov
- Research foci:
  - Attitudes towards and practices of civic participation
  - Sources of civic participation
  - Regional and extra-regional influences on civic participation
  - Promoting civic participation in EU policies
  - Adequate approaches to strengthening civil society organisations
- Further CPs involved: Uni SG, Uni Fribourg, SWP, APM, GeoWel, KBSU, RSUH
Work Package 3 – Economic Dependencies

• Period: January 2014 to December 2016
• Lead CP: GeoWel Research
• WP leader: Dr. George Welton
• Research foci:
  • Mapping economic dependencies in the Caucasus
  • Economic dependencies and secessionist conflicts
  • Economic dependencies and intra-societal conflicts
  • The EU as an economic actor in the Caucasus: unintended externalities
  • The EU as an energy trade partner of Caucasus states in the context of the secessionist conflicts
• Further CPs involved: SWP, APM, Khazar University, KBSU
Work Package 4 – Neighbourhood

- **Period:** January 2014 to December 2016
- **Lead CP:** Ankara Policy Center
- **WP leader:** Dr. Burcu Punsmann
- **Research foci:**
  - Societal linkages between Turkey and the Caucasus
  - Turkey’s political and economic relations with the Caucasus states and de-facto states
  - Regional influences on the development of civil society, political regimes, and intra-regional cooperation
  - Compatibility of the Caucasus policy of the EU and Turkey
  - Compatibility of EU activities of civil society development with that of other regional players
- **Further CPs involved:** Uni SG, Uni Fribourg, SWP, Khazar University, GeoWel, KBSU
Work Package 5 – The interplay of sources of instability in the Caucasus

- **Period:** July 2016 to December 2016
- **Lead CP:** University of St. Gallen
- **WP leader:** Prof. Dirk Lehmkuhl
- **Synthesis of research findings from WPs 1-4, development of scenarios and policy briefs**
- **Research foci:**
  - Sources of instability in the individual Caucasus societies
  - Potential spill-over of destabilising dynamics across the Caucasus entities
  - Dynamics of Instability in the Caucasus: Three Scenarios
  - Strengthened impact of the EU as a player in the Caucasus
- **Further CPs involved:** Uni Fribourg, SWP, APM, Khazar University, GeoWel, KBSU, RSUH
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research topic</th>
<th>Hybridity at the „local level“ and its impact on regime stability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research questions</td>
<td>How does hybridity (interplay between adopted institutions that have been developed and proved in democracies and established domestic institutions) manifests in local governance? Does hybridity challenge or strengthen regime stability? (why and how)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical approach</td>
<td>historical neo-institutionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical cases</td>
<td>Azerbaijan (including NK), Armenia, Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical data</td>
<td>Expert and narrative interviews with residents of the capital and 2 minor communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP contribution</td>
<td>WP1 (patterns of hybridity that characterise the political regimes) WP2 (role of hybridity in intrasocietal conflicts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading researcher</td>
<td>Katharina Hoffmann (<a href="mailto:katharina.hoffmann@unisg.ch">katharina.hoffmann@unisg.ch</a>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research topic</th>
<th>Potential of collaboration and conflict between the Caucasus policies of the EU and Turkey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Research questions | What characterizes the Caucasus policies of the EU and Turkey?  
  • How do the relations between EU and Turkey impact on Turkey's in certain sectors (for example trade)?  
  • Are there standards and norms that both actors promote?  
  • What are the areas of incompatibility and conflict? |
<p>| Empirical data | Legal documents, statistics, expert interviews |
| Leading researcher | Dirk Lehmkuhl (<a href="mailto:dirk.lehmkuhl@unisg.ch">dirk.lehmkuhl@unisg.ch</a>) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research topic</th>
<th>Iranian Influence on Religious Groups in Azerbaijan and Dagestan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research questions</td>
<td>What is the impact of a transnational religious connection on (national/regional) civil society and politics?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical approach</td>
<td>Religion in the public sphere Religions as transnational actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical cases</td>
<td>Azerbaijan, Dagestan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical data</td>
<td>Expert interviews; Case studies (interviews with local religious leaders, internet based networks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP contribution</td>
<td>WP2 (impact on domestic politics) WP4 (role of Iranian influenced groups in civil society)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading researcher</td>
<td>Ansgar Jödicke (<a href="mailto:ansgar.joedicke@unifr.ch">ansgar.joedicke@unifr.ch</a>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Research topic

‘Turkey’ as actor and factor in the political space of the Caucasus

### Research questions

- What are the disaggregated influences from Turkey on the Caucasus, in particular on Abkhazia and Adjara and in the context of the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict
  - What kind of Turkish actors are active in Abkhazia and Ajara; how have their activities developed in the last 20 years?
  - What is the relationship between Turkish societal / economic actors and other external actors (Russian, EU, etc.) active in Abkhazia and Ajara?
  - What impact does Abkhazia’s unrecognized status have on the nature of Turkish economic engagement there as opposed to Turkish business activities in Ajara?
  - What are the (power) relationships and links between these actors; are there any conflicts?

### Theoretical approach

- Transnationalism, combination of approaches from political sociology, IR, and political geography

### Empirical cases

- Turkish religious cooperation on societal level with Ajara; Turkish Diaspora activities in Abkhazia; Turkish businesses and investments in Abkhazia and Ajara, security cooperation of Turkey with Georgia and Azerbaijan

### Empirical data

- Interpretive-qualitative methods, data gathered during field research: interviewing, archival research, etc.

### WP contribution

- WP 2: Transnational ties on societal level between Turkey and the Caucasus
- WP 3: Economic ties between Turkey and the Caucasus on the micro level
- WP 4: State and societal influences from the neighborhood on stability

### Leading researchers

- Franziska Smolnik (Franziska.Smolnik@swp-berlin.org), Andrea Weiss, Yana Zabanova (on maternity leave until 11/2015)
### Research topic

**Societal ties between Turkey and the Caucasus (special comparative focus on Ajaria and Abkhazia)**

| Research questions |  
|--------------------|---
| • What kind of Turkish societal actors are active in Abkhazia and Ajara; how have their activities developed in the last 20 years?  
| • What is the relationship between Turkish societal actors and other external actors (Russian, EU, etc.) active in Abkhazia and Ajara? |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical approach</th>
<th>Transnationalism, combination of approaches from political sociology, IR, and political geography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empirical cases</td>
<td>Micro-level studies of Turkish religious organizations in Ajara and Turkish Diaspora activities in Abkhazia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical data</td>
<td>Interpretive-qualitative methods, data gathered during field research: interviewing, archival research, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| WP contribution      | WP 2: Transnational ties on societal level between Turkey and the Caucasus  
|                      | WP 3: Economic ties between Turkey and the Caucasus on the micro level  
|                      | WP 4: State and societal influences from the neighborhood on stability |
| Leading researchers  | Franziska Smolnik (Franziska.Smolnik@swp-berlin.org), Andrea Weiss, Yana Zabanova (on maternity leave until 11/2015) |

### Research topic

**Economic ties between Turkey and the Caucasus (special comparative focus on Ajaria and Abkhazia)**

| Research questions |  
|--------------------|---
| • What are the major Turkish economic actors active in Abkhazia and Ajara?  
| • What impact does Abkhazia’s unrecognized status have on the nature of Turkish economic engagement there as opposed to Turkish business activities in Ajara?  
| • What are the relationships and links between these actors; are there any conflicts? |

| Empirical cases | Micro-level studies of Turkish businesses and investments in Abkhazia and Ajara |
## Research topic

### Resource Dependencies in the South Caucasus and their impact on political decision making

### Research questions

- How can we understand the resource interdependencies within the South Caucasus? To what extent and how do resource dependencies in the South Caucasus influence political decision making? Specifically:
  - To what extent and how is Georgian policy dictated by the country’s dependency on ODA? And to what extent did that impact on the policy immediately before the war in 2008?
  - How do diaspora communities in Russia and the US exert influence in politics in Armenia?
  - How does the oil wealth of Azerbaijan effect decision making vis-à-vis Nagorno Karabakh?

### Theoretical approach

Rational choice, social economic and neo-institutional

### Empirical cases

Armenia, Azerbaijan (including Nagorno Karabakh) and Georgia (including Abkhazia)

### Empirical data

Economic analysis, reprocessing of primary economic data, expert interviews with political decision makers, donors, NGOs, processing of attitudinal data and media analysis

### WP contribution

WP1 WP lead – providing overview – particularly focused on national resource interdependencies and their impact on decision making and society. Analysis of EU policy in this area.

WP2 support in the form of macro-analysis of resource flows from outside the region. Analysis of EU policy in this area.

### Leading researcher

George Welton (george.welton@gmail.com)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research topic</th>
<th>Forms of civic activism and its impact on stability and democratic change in the South Caucasus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research questions</td>
<td>How major political actors and general constituencies in the South Caucasus comprehend and conceptualize civic participation? What used to be forms of civic participation experienced in Azerbaijan and Georgia? How civil society organizations are perceived in public opinion and by political actors?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical approach</td>
<td>Concept of civil society as vehicle of stability, sustainable development and democratic change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical cases</td>
<td>Azerbaijan (with references to Georgian practice and data)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical data</td>
<td>Public opinion survey in Azerbaijan (capital and rural areas based on demographic sampling) Expert and Stakeholder interviews with NGO leaders, government official, civil society activists and academia, media reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP contribution</td>
<td>WP 1 (aspirations and motivations for civic activism on communal level) WP 2 (civil society as factor of stability challenges and societal transformation WP 5 (civil society in EU policy in the South Caucasus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading researcher</td>
<td>Farda Asadov (<a href="mailto:asadovfm@hotmail.com">asadovfm@hotmail.com</a>; <a href="mailto:fasadov@khazar.org">fasadov@khazar.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research topic</td>
<td>Sources of civic participation and potential of civic activism as a source of reformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research questions</td>
<td>NGO funding sources in light of independence and transparency connotations? Secular and religious civic agendas: overlapping and distinguishing features? Motivations for civic activism? Coordination and cooperation with international civil society?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical data</td>
<td>Legal documents, public opinion survey, statistics, expert interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading researcher</td>
<td>Farda Asadov (<a href="mailto:asadovfm@hotmail.com">asadovfm@hotmail.com</a>; <a href="mailto:fasadov@khazar.org">fasadov@khazar.org</a>)</td>
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</tbody>
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### CP: Kabardino-Balkarian State University I/II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research topic</th>
<th>Interplay of adopted democratic and established domestic institutions at macro level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research questions</td>
<td>What are the adopted (democratic) rules and organisations related to communal governance? How deep is their embeddedness in the political regimes at macro-level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical approach</td>
<td>Institution centred analyses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical cases</td>
<td>North Caucasus (Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachay-Cherkessia, Chechnya, Dagestan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical data</td>
<td>Expert's narrative interviews, document analysis, in-depth interviews, content analysis of media and process tracing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP contribution</td>
<td>WP1: the contribution of local institutions to the stability of political regimes WP2: typifying institutional interactions (in order to understand institutional hybridization process)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading researcher</td>
<td>Prof. Alexey Gunya (<a href="mailto:gunyaa@yahoo.com">gunyaa@yahoo.com</a>)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research topic</th>
<th>Frictions in communal governance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research questions</td>
<td>What are the frictions between state agencies and society in communal governance? What actors and mechanisms fuel or mitigate conflicts?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical data</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews, focus groups, statistics and sociological surveys, reconstructive content analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading researcher</td>
<td>Dr. Murat Shogenov (<a href="mailto:mshogenov@gmail.com">mshogenov@gmail.com</a>)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Research topic
Improving EU democracy promotion efforts: considering domestic practices

### Research question
What are the effects of democratisation policies on the regime stability? Which established domestic practices that alter democratisation efforts should be considered in the export of communal governance practices?

### Leading researcher
Prof. Alexey Gunya (gunyaa@yahoo.com)

### Empirical data
Data analysis from research topics 1 and 2s
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research topic</th>
<th>Sources and dynamic of civic participation in Armenia and Georgia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research questions</td>
<td>What are main sources of civic participation? What is the level of it? What are main hindances and alternative attitudes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical approach</td>
<td>Theory of social capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical cases</td>
<td>Armenia, Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical data</td>
<td>Quantitative data; statistics; public and academic debate; legislation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP contribution</td>
<td>WP2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading researcher</td>
<td>Alexander Agadjanian (<a href="mailto:grandrecit@gmail.com">grandrecit@gmail.com</a>)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research topic</th>
<th>Religious networks and civic participation in Armenia and Georgia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research questions</td>
<td>How do religious institutions, religious networks relate to the development of civil society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical data</td>
<td>Quantitative data; case studies of particular communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading researcher</td>
<td>Alexander Agadjanian (<a href="mailto:grandrecit@gmail.com">grandrecit@gmail.com</a>)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Research topic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research topic</th>
<th>Inter-societal flows between Turkey and the Caucasus &amp; Caucasian diasporas in the Turkish context</th>
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</thead>
</table>

### Research questions

- How the Caucasian identities are being redefined in the current socio-political context / If/how they impact on the national identity in Turkey
- Inter-societal flows between Turkey and the Caucasus and their impact on the communities in the Caucasus
- If/how these interactions impact on political participation and civil society in the Caucasus

### Theoretical approach

Political sociology, network politics, transnationalism, historical analysis

### Empirical cases

- Mapping of Caucasus originated ethnic diaporas in Turkish (Cerkes, Georgian, Laz, Ahiska, Armenian, Azeri), case studies on flows in Istanbul, Antalya, and the Eastern Black Sea coast

### Empirical data

- Interviews, focus group meetings, statistical data on trade, migration and investments, logistics

### WP contribution

WP 3 – WP4 – WP2

### Leading researchers

Hasan Kanbolat (hasankanbolat@apm.org.tr), Hulya Demirdirek (hulyademirdirek@apm.org.tr)
## Research topic
Drivers of the formulation and conduct of Turkish policy towards the Caucasus & Analysis of the impact of Turkey on stability and security in the Caucasus

## Research questions
- To what extent the Turkish foreign policy is being shaped by geopolitical considerations, neighbourhood and border management imperatives and domestic concerns?
- To what extent non state actors are affected Turkish foreign policy (diaspora CSOs, interest groups and private sector)
- How the Turkish-Armenian dispute and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict have become interlinked

## Empirical data
Qualitative interviews, discourse analysis in Turkey, on the borderland

## Leading researcher
Burcu Gultekin Punsmann (burcupunsmann@apm.org.tr)
# Overview of ISSICEU Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Host</th>
<th>Type of Event</th>
<th>Topic / Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 2015</td>
<td>Baku, Azerbaijan</td>
<td>Khazar University</td>
<td>Public Panel</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2016</td>
<td>Berlin, Germany</td>
<td>SWP Berlin</td>
<td>Public Panel</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2016</td>
<td>Kabardino-Balkaria, Russia</td>
<td>Kabardino-Balkarian State University</td>
<td>Public Panel</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2016</td>
<td>Moscow, Russia</td>
<td>Russian State University for the Humanities</td>
<td>Public Panel</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2016</td>
<td>Brussels or Caucasus</td>
<td>ISSICEU</td>
<td>Expert Workshop</td>
<td>Political Regimes and Civil Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2016</td>
<td>Brussels or Caucasus</td>
<td>ISSICEU</td>
<td>Expert Workshop</td>
<td>Economic dependencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2016</td>
<td>Brussels or Caucasus</td>
<td>ISSICEU</td>
<td>Expert Workshop</td>
<td>Neighbourhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2016</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>University of St. Gallen &amp; University of Fribourg</td>
<td>Public Panel</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2016</td>
<td>Brussels</td>
<td>ISSICEU</td>
<td>Expert Workshop</td>
<td>Scenarios and stability and security dynamics</td>
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</table>