

## Newsletter Issue 04 / June 2016

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## CASCADe Working Papers & Recent Publications by CASCADe Researchers

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## Editorial

This April, the world received an unwelcome reminder of the instabilities inherent to the South Caucasus, when the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict became violently unfrozen over the course of four days. Reports of casualties on both sides were contradictory; the end result consisted of a limited advance by Azerbaijan's troops in the north-eastern section of the line of contact, and a reinvigoration of the negotiation efforts by the previously long-stagnant Minsk Group.

Reaction in both societies indicated the extent to which previous (admittedly very limited) peace-building efforts had been drops in the ocean; and the ways in which 'Europeanisation' – as envisaged in the European Neighbourhood Policy – has failed to make any meaningful difference to both the elites' and the wider societies' fundamental attitudes towards the conflict. The flaws in the idea that conditionality and socialization would create a 'belt of stability' around the European Union were on full display yet again: after more than 20 years of engagement, both sides' positions had, if anything, hardened, with nationalist narratives now firmly entrenched in both societies.

The South Caucasus is a textbook illustration of Mansfield and Snyder's long-running claims on imperfect democratisation, which, in their view, leads to insecure local elites turning to nationalism as a mobilising mechanism and a source of 'Ersatz' legitimacy. And this has been the case on both sides of the Nagorno-Karabakh confrontation. The tenacity of these nationalist attitudes may also very well indicate that, over the longer term, top-down models of such mobilisation – whereby elites foster and manipulate nationalism instrumentally – are subject to revision. Over longer periods, values and identities become what Wæver has called 'sedimented' – relatively immutable and fixed, and therefore no longer subject to such manipulation; and that may very well have been the case in these two nations' societies.

This makes it much more difficult for elites to escape the strictures of the nationalism they themselves fostered; the

downfall of Armenia's first president, Levon Ter-Petrosyan in 1998, and the sudden about-face by Azerbaijan's Heydar Aliyev following the Key West talks in 2001 – both in view of possible concessions leading to a resolution to the conflict – may well be illustrative of the fact that entrenched attitudes can restrict the freedom of manoeuvre of semi-authoritarian leaders.

The EU has, in fact, failed to fully understand the tenuous nature of the link between security and democracy – as envisaged in Democratic Peace Theory – within partially democratised states. The liberal axioms that guided policymaking in the past – an assumption that a demand for liberal European norms could be taken for granted, and that more democracy would necessarily mean more peace – should now be subject to interrogation. At elite level, there has been at best a selective demand for engagement with the EU in both Armenia and Azerbaijan; moreover, with the demise of the 'transition' paradigm, the idea that these states are somehow evolving into full democracies has been comprehensively refuted: twenty-seven years after the 'End of History', the twilight zone between liberty and autocracy appears more as a permanent condition than an historical anomaly, especially in the former Soviet Union. In case of the Karabakh conflict, this means that the theoretical basis for 'peace through democratisation' is no longer a realistic prospect in the near term, pointing to a fundamental fallacy within the idea of a 'belt of stability' surrounding the EU.

The presence of Russia as a spoiler adds yet another complication to the mix: as elsewhere in the former Soviet Space, the European Union is now engaged in normative competition with a former imperial power that maintains an intensely geopolitical view of its strategic environment. Yet, the path-dependent ENP has, for too long, failed to adapt its assumptions – predicated on the success of the EU's experience in 1990s and early 2000s Eastern Europe, in no small part dependent on Russian acquiescence – to the realities of the former Soviet Union. Like most regional elites, Moscow is simply not interested in democratisation in its near abroad: 'demokratizatsorstvo' is a threat to the power of both over the region's states, societies, and populations. This makes the emerging, more pragmatic approach by the European Union towards the region especially important. ►



**Dr. Kevork Oskanian,**  
Centre for Russian, European and Eurasian Studies  
University of Bir-

Abandoning the 'one-size-fits-all' approach to the neighbourhood in favour of a targeted and flexible adaptation to actor-specific conditions was already long overdue, as was a bi-directional – rather than one-way - engagement with local elites and societies. The resulting shift from the normative to the geopolitical would probably pose the greatest challenge to an actor used to defining itself, at the core, in liberal-internationalist terms. Consequently, managing expectations within the region, and within Europe's own institutions and member states would be an important element in any adaptation of policies to the realities of 2016.

The European Union has so far very much remained largely irrelevant to the resolution of the Karabakh conflict; but such a redefinition would, over the longer term, open the way to a more direct and effective role in the resolution of the Caucasus region's most intractable and potentially destructive confrontation. ■

## CASCADE Working Papers and Recent Publications by CASCADE Researchers

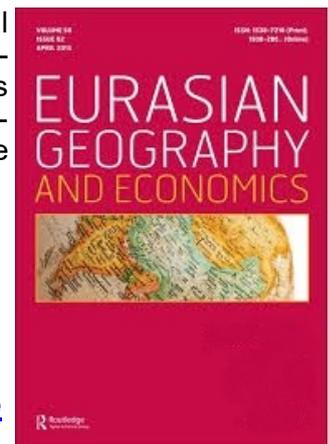
**Special issue coordinated by Esther Ademmer, [Laure Delcour](#) and [Kataryna Wolczuk](#) [Eurasian Geography and Economics \(57\)1, 2016](#)**

While the geopolitical rivalry between the European Union and Russia over their common neighborhood has increasingly attracted academic and public attention, relatively little is known of its actual influence on domestic institutions and policies. This special issue coordinated by two CASCADE researchers, Dr. Laure Delcour and Dr. Kataryna Wolczuk, together with Dr. Esther Ademmer, aims to address this deficit by investigating the joint impact of the EU and Russia on the domestic dynamics of sectoral reform in neighboring countries – a key declared goal of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and the Eastern Partnership (EaP) – in the areas of trade, natural resources, and migration and mobility. It examines the nature of the instruments deployed by the EU and Russia to change domestic reform processes and their impact on domestic actors in the Caucasus and Eastern Europe. The special issue highlights a strong disconnect between participation in the EU's or Russia's macro-frameworks for regional integration and domestic sectoral reforms. De-

spite the increasing external competition over the post-Soviet space, domestic actors remain the key agents to account for the pattern of change in the contested neighborhood.

**Articles by Laure Delcour in this issue:**

**["Multiple external influences and domestic change in the contested neighborhood: the case of food safety"](#)**



Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS) are a cornerstone of the Deep and Comprehensive Free-Trade Areas (DCFTAs) negotiated between the European Union (EU) and Eastern European Neighborhood Countries (NCs) under the Eastern Partnership. These are expected to eliminate quotas as well as both tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade, thus improving the existing export opportunities for food and feed products from Ukraine, Moldova, and South Caucasus countries. However, NCs face multifaceted challenges in meeting the stringent EU regulatory and administrative requirements in the SPS area. Domestically, in light of Soviet legacies (including a food safety system which deeply differed from WTO-compliant standards), approximation with EU SPS standards requires massive reforms and involve high costs for partner countries – to be borne not only by state authorities but also private businesses. Yet reforms to comply with EU demands are also closely intertwined with regional interdependencies and Russia's bilateral and multilateral policies. The article scrutinizes the interplay between domestic preferences, EU demands for reform and Russia's policies. It points to a complex and multifaceted relationship between engagement into a macro-level regional framework and shifting sectoral compliance patterns. The paper highlights disjunctures between sector-specific compliance processes with EU demands, on the one hand, and macro-level relations between these countries and the EU and Russia on the other. As the article argues, this is because external actors' policies are filtered by domestic interests, preferences, and practices. Ultimately, these shape the adoption and application of external templates.

**(with Esther Ademmer) ["With a little help from Russia? The European Union and visa liberalization with post-Soviet states"](#)**

Secure and well-managed migration and mobility figure prominently in the European Union's (EU) relations with its Eastern neigh-

bors. In the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership, the EU relies extensively on policy conditionality as it ties the reward of visa-free travel to the adoption of specific policies by neighboring countries in order to better regulate and manage mobility and migration. However, in the post-Soviet space, migration flows and management are, to a great extent, still shaped by (post-) Soviet legacies and interdependences. As a result, Russian domestic and foreign policies shape the way migration and mobility are perceived and managed by neighborhood countries. In this article, we seek to investigate what effect these historically grown ties and current foreign policy actions exert on compliance with EU requirements for visa liberalization in Armenia, Georgia, and Moldova. In all three countries, we identify patterns of change over time and explain them according to the interplay of partner countries' political preferences with EU policy conditionality and incentives by Russia. Secure and well-managed migration and mobility figure prominently in the European Union's (EU) relations with its Eastern neighbors. In the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership, the EU relies extensively on policy conditionality as it ties the reward of visa-free travel to the adoption of specific policies by neighboring countries in order to better regulate and manage mobility and migration. However, in the post-Soviet space, migration flows and management are, to a great extent, still shaped by (post-) Soviet legacies and interdependences. As a result, Russian domestic and foreign policies shape the way migration and mobility are perceived and managed by neighborhood countries. This article investigates what effect these historically grown ties and current foreign policy actions exert on compliance with EU requirements for visa liberalization in Armenia, Georgia, and Moldova.

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### "Energy security in the South Caucasus: views from the region"

Editors: [Leila Alieva](#) and [Natalia Shapovalova](#) Co-authors: [Vahan Asatryan](#), [Murman Margvelashvili](#) and [Jeyhun Veliyev](#)

The South Caucasus is often depicted as the main doorway to the energy-rich Caspian region in the energy security narratives of the European Union and of

other Western actors in the region. But what are the views from the South Caucasus countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia – concerning their own energy security? This CASCADE working paper seeks to shed light on energy security notions from South Caucasus governments and energy companies, as well as of citizens and consumers. It finds that there are significant differences in the perceptions of the different actors in the energy sector within each South Caucasus country that could lead to political conflicts over energy security strategies. The working paper can be downloaded [here](#).

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### "Security and Democracy in the Caucasus"

By [Kevork Oskanian](#) and [Derek Averre](#), [University of Birmingham](#)



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

How do we understand the security problems of the Caucasus region and their root causes? Why has democratisation in the states and separatist entities in that region proved so difficult to achieve, despite the efforts of the EU to engage with local actors? What is the nature of the causal link between democracy and security, and how do external actors go about formulating policy? On the basis of an investigation into the existing literature on security and democracy, this working paper aims to provide a conceptual framework for understanding intra-state and regional inter-state security challenges in the Caucasus. A key focus will be to conceptualise the link between security and the domestic political practices of decision-makers in the Caucasus states/separatist territories. The full text is available [here](#).

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### "Consequences of Economic and Social Transformation Policies on the North Caucasus"

By Prof. [Vladimir Kolosov](#), Dr. [Olga Vendina](#), Dr. [Anton Gritsenko](#), Dr. [Olga Glezer](#), Dr. [Alexander Panin](#), Dr. [Alexander Sebentsov](#) and Dr. [Maria Zotova](#)

[Institute of Geography of the Russian Academy of Sciences \(IGRAS\)](#)

The North Caucasus is Russia's most unstable region. It is characterized by ethnopolitical and territorial conflicts, economic crises, social turbulence, and growing Islamic influence. Processes that are under way in the North Caucasian republics are described in terms of both "modernization" and "de-modernization". The region's development is a key priority on the agenda of

the federal and regional authorities. At the same time, their opinions on opportunities and ways for development differ significantly. Practically all regional elites emphasize the uniqueness of "their" republics, and the federal authorities, on the contrary, strive to depart from the asymmetry of relations, seeing the solution to the problem in a wider use of unified and politically neutral approaches to development. This working paper attempts to evaluate the results of administrative efforts to develop the regions of the North Caucasian Federal District (NCFD). The authors focus mainly on the analysis of processes that adapt the undertaken reforms to regional specifics and on the symbiosis of the results of self-organization of the population and federal and regional novations. The block of stories related to the administrative policy in the North Caucasus follows a brief analysis of the demographic situation in the region. The latter is viewed as a challenge, which simultaneously creates opportunities for development and amplifies social instability. Read more [here](#).



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### **"The Balance Strikes Back: Power, Perceptions, and Ideology in Georgian Foreign Policy, 1992–2014"**

Article by Dr. [Kevork Oskanian](#), Foreign Policy Analysis, DOI: [10.1093/fpa/orw010](#)

Tbilisi's recent foreign policy presents analysts working from a balance-of-power perspective with something of a puzzle: with Russia very much the regionally dominant power, against the predictions of structural-systemic theories, small state Georgia has ended up balancing against, rather than bandwagoning with, great power Moscow. As a result, domestic, ideological explanations that implausibly ignore or minimize interstate considerations of power have predominated in analyses of Tbilisi's foreign policy. In response, this essay examines Georgia's post-Soviet foreign policies from a neoclassical realist theoretical viewpoint, combining systemic, balance-of-power and domestic ideological factors: throughout the period under review, Tbilisi's policies were thus due to ideologically conditioned perceptions of shifting power-political realities in its

neighborhood, with an ideological adherence to liberal norms playing a particularly important role in distorting these perceptions during the Saakashvili administration. Through this combination of power and ideology, neoclassical realism ends up providing a more comprehensive and continuous account of Tbilisi's shifting policies since 1992 than either domestic or alternative realist frameworks, like balance-of-threat theory, or omnibalancing; as an important implication, Georgia's, and other former Soviet states' continued pro-Western orientation will depend as much on their perceptions of the West's continued commitment to regional power projection as on domestic ideological preferences. The full version is available at <http://bit.ly/25JZQxJ>.

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### **"Russia and energy security in the South Caucasus"**

By [Konstantin Golub](#), Institute of Geography of the Russian Academy of Sciences

For Russia, as for many other energy-exporting countries, energy security is mainly analyzed in terms of security of demand and security of transit points.

In this context, the paper examines the role of the South Caucasus for Russia's energy security (in terms of either threats or opportunities). It also analyses the way in which Russia views its contribution to in the South Caucasus. Read a full working paper [here](#).

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Dr. [Florian Mühlfried](#) ([Friedrich Schiller University Jena](#)) recent publications:

**"Von versteckten Schätzen in den Bergen und einem Staat, der kommt und geht,"** In: Reineck, Natia and Ute Rieger (ed.): *Kaukasiologie heute-schrift für Heinz Fähnrich*. Greiz: Buchverlag König: 249-265;

**"Religion, Reinheit und Radikalisierung in Georgien – Vom Ende des Alaverdobafestes in Georgien,"** In: *Osteuropa* 9-11/2015: 587-598;

(with Tsypylma Darieva) **"Kontaktraum Kaukasus – Sprachen, Religionen, Völker und Kulturen,"** In: *Osteuropa* 9-11/2015: 95-117;

(with Raschid Alikajew) **"Unheimliche Bedrohungen und heimliche Widerstände-Zur religiösen Situation in Kabardino-Balkarien."** *Georgica* 37: 95-117.

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Dr. [Neil Melvin](#), "[Middle East conflict risks overspill into the Caucasus](#)", [SIPRI WritePeace Blog](#), 4 March 2016: There is a concern that after five years of war in Syria, regional instability and violence risks spreading into the fragile security environment of the Caucasus. At the heart of this concern is the rapid deterioration in the relationship between Russia and Turkey.

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### Blog post "The EU, Russia and the 'Contested Neighborhood': Moving Beyond Rival Region-Building Projects?"

In this [blog post](#) for The Europe-Russia series/Dahrendorf forum/London School of Economics, [Laure Delcour](#) analyzes the various economic alliances within the "contested neighborhood" of EU and Russia.

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"How war in Nagorno-Karabakh could spread – and become a major problem for Europe," [article](#) by [Kevork Oskanian](#) in The Conversation.

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[Giulia Prez Oltramonti](#)'s ([WP7/WP9](#)) latest publication: "[Securing disenfranchisement through violence and isolation: the case of Georgians/Mingrelians in the district of Gali.](#)" Conflict, Security and Development. Vol. 16, Issue 3, 2016. The article is available [here](#).

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Dr. [Neil Melvin](#), [Ekaterina Klimenko](#), "[Shifting conflict and security dynamics in the Caucasus: The role of regional powers](#)," [SIPRI WritePeace Blog](#), 1 June 2016:

The problem of Nagorno-Karabakh is arguably the most acute issue in the Caucasus today. The onset of a full-fledged war between Armenia and Azerbaijan will be much more destructive than the original conflict in the 1990s. Over the last 5 years Armenia and Azerbaijan have heavily militarized the border areas and built up substantial arsenals. In the event of a major conflict, the war would take on a regional dimension with the possible involvement of Russia

and Turkey. Georgia, too, would likely be drawn into the conflict due to its large Armenian and Azerbaijani minorities. The region's shifting security dynamics and the role of regional powers, particularly Russia, Iran, Turkey, the EU and the USA, deserve close examination as possible alternatives are explored. Read a full publication [here](#).

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Dr. [Neil Melvin](#), [Ekaterina Klimenko](#), "[Decreasing violence in the North Caucasus: Is an end to the regional conflict in sight?](#)," [SIPRI WritePeace Blog](#), 15 June 2016:

From 2014 to 2015 the level of violence in the North Caucasus significantly decreased. In 2012 the number of casualties across the North Caucasian Federal District accounted to 700 people in 2015 it is 206. The violence dropped by 50% between 2013 and 2015. In Dagestan it decreased by 43% in 2015, in Kabardino-Balkaria by 25%, in Chechnya by 81%. The significant factor of this decrease is related to growing number of fighters leaving the North Caucasus for Syria, and to a lesser degree to the success of Russian security forces in disrupting insurgent networks and killing leading figures in the Caucasian Emirate. See more [here](#).



## Conferences & Workshops

### "The South Caucasus and the EU: Quo Vadis?"

**CASCADE seminar, Brussels, Belgium, March 3, 2016**

The seminar "The South Caucasus and the European Union: Quo Vadis?", organised as a closed event as part of CASCADE [WP9](#), took place on 3 March in Brussels. The seminar was opened by Anne Nielsen, CASCADE's project officer at DG Research of the European Commission. During the seminar, CASCADE researchers presented their findings on how the EU and its policies are perceived in the three Caucasus countries and break-away regions.

They also delivered policy recommendations on how EU policies can be improved across the region.

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**CASCADE [SIPRI/GFSIS](#) Workshop: "Shifting conflict and security dynamics in the Caucasus: the role of regional powers," Tbilisi, Georgia, April 29, 2016**

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) together with the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies (GFSIS) organized a workshop 'Shifting Conflict and Security Dynamics in the Caucasus:

The Role of Regional Powers' bringing together leading regional and international experts to identify recent conflict and security trends in the Caucasus. Specifically, the workshop participants examined the thinking and policies of leading regional actors toward security and conflict issues in the Caucasus and the main drivers of their engagement. A particular theme of the discussions



was the impact on regional stability of the intensification of confrontation between Russia, the Euro-Atlantic community and other regional powers in the Caucasus. See more [here](#).

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**IV Kant and Bakhtin International Seminar "Imaginary and real worlds and their borders" [Murmansk Arctic State University](#), Murmansk, Russia, March 15-17, 2016**

[Sophie Hohmann](#) (La Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme / the University of Jena, [WP3](#)) was invited by the Rector Andrej Sergeev to participate in the International Seminar on the Imaginary and Real Worlds and their Borders and to give a lecture. The seminar was organized by the Murmansk Branch of the Russian Philosophical Society, Murmansk Arctic State University and Nord University (Bodo, Norway). Mrs. Hohmann met colleagues working in sociology, anthropology and philosophy on the issue of border and migration within a program between the University of Murmansk and the University of Bodø, Norway and the Kola North Arctic program. The title of her presentation performed with Alexandra Burtseva was "Migration and Media: the problem of formation of public opinion."

**CASCADE Panel at the 21th Annual World Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities**

[Harriman Institute](#), Columbia University, April 15, 2016

The annual convention of the [ASN](#) has been for many years a must-go for scholars and PhD students working on the post-Soviet space. A CASCADE panel on "The Security-democracy nexus

in the Caucasus" gathering researchers from [WP3](#), [WP4](#) and [WP7](#) took place on Friday 15th April. Read a full report [here](#).

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17 April 2016, Dr. [Neil Melvin](#) presented Russia as a conflict actor in the conflicts of the Caucasus, the University of Brussels, Brussels.

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18 April 2016, Dr. [Neil Melvin](#), spoke at the European Policy Center on the recent fighting over Karabakh, Eastern Promises Policy Dialogue "The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: what next?", Brussels.

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[Silvia Serrano](#) participated in the following conferences:

**"Religion as a source of stability/instability in the Caucasus"** organized by Alexandre Agadjanian (ISSICEU), Moscow (Russia), 25 May 2016;

Lecture **"Religion and Politics in Georgia: Orthodoxy as a populism"** organized by Centre d'Etudes franco-russe, Moscow (Russia), 26 May 2016;

**"French studies on Georgia - Area, History, Geopolitics"** organized by l'Institut français in Georgia, Tbilisi (Georgia) 7-8 June 2016.



Typical Soviet Style Utilitarian Architecture of Murmansk © Sophie Hohmann

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27 May 2016, [Aude Merlin](#) participated in the colloquium **"Vingt ans après la première guerre tchéchène. La politique de l'État russe dans le Nord-Caucase"** organised by Sciences Po-CERI. She made a presentation "La Tchétchénie après Khassav Iourt: l'improbable traduction politique d'une fragile victoire militaire."

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## Past fieldwork

In January 2016, [Laure Delcour](#) and [Kataryna Wolczuk](#) conducted fieldwork in Georgia as part of CASCADE [WP9](#). They conducted interviews with government officials and focus groups with representatives of civil society and businesses.

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In March 2016, Dr. [Florian Mühlfried](#) (Friedrich Schiller University Jena) visited the Armenian community in Tabriz, Iran, as to learn about inter-religious cohabitation (sharing/non-sharing) among Armenians and Azeris in the diaspora for one week ([WP 6](#)).

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[Sophie Hohmann](#) conducted [a fieldwork in Azerbaijan](#) in January 2015 on issues of social security and poverty. After that in March 2016 she carried out research fieldwork in Russia (Murmansk region). The mission's objective was to conduct multiple interviews with labour migrants from Caucasus, particularly with Azeris using ageven method and to perform an observation of different economic groups. The mission's approach was to study migrants' trajectories through the perspective of different generations. Find more photos from the fieldwork in our [Photo Gallery](#).

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In April 2016, Dr. [Neil Melvin](#) visited Tbilisi, Geor-

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In May 2016, Dr. [Neil Melvin](#) visited Yerevan Armenia senior officials and experts to discuss the recent developments around the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, security situation in the region and the role of regional powers.

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[Taline Papazian](#) and [Aude Merlin](#) ([WP7](#)) conducted a research trip in Armenia from 31 May to 7 June 2016 to study the issue of trajectories of the Karabakh conflict veterans and their reintegration into civilian life after the war. They met many veterans, as well as members of associations of assistance to veterans, officials, and managed to collect some materials on the "Four-Day War," which took place from 2 to 6 April 2016 and they saw many veterans of the Karabakh conflict reach the front line. Watch 1TV Armenia interview with Aude Merlin [here](#). ■

## Upcoming events

**"Conference Russia's Arctic Cities Sustainable Development and Challenges", Session 7 "Arctic Cities and Multiculturality Issues"**

**Lenin Icebreaker, Murmansk, Russia, June 27-28, 2016**

[Sophie Hohmann](#) ([WP3](#)) will make a presentation on her findings: "Murmansk on the move. Trajectories of Migrants from South Caucasus and their Representations."

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**Mountain Forum - International scientific-practical conference "Effective development of mountain areas of Russia"**

**The Republic of Dagestan, Russia, July 26-29, 2016**

The conference will bring together academic scientists, federal, regional and municipal authorities, business organizations, non-governmental organizations and the media. A round table **"Contradictions of Dagestan development: modernization and counter-modernization challenges"** will be organized as a part of the scientific seminar "Consequences of economic and social transformation policies in the North Caucasus" on the 29 of July. It will focus on the following important issues: 1) Local initiatives aimed at the development (rural and urban small businesses); 2) Ethno-cultural pluralism of society versus the common development interests; 3) The religious revival and intergenerational misunderstandings; 4) Desired



Azeri's dancing. Holiday Navruz

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gia to meet with local experts, government officials and representatives of diplomatic community and international organizations to discuss security dynamics in the region, the role of regional actors and future trends of conflict developments.

future model for different social groups of inhabitants of Dagestan.

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### "Mistrust, Mobilities, Insecurities Conference"

[Friedrich Schiller University Jena](#), Germany, November 16-17, 2016



This international conference will be organized as part of the EU-FP7 CASCADE project by the working group dedicated to issues of migration, mobilities and poverty in the Caucasus. The central notion to be explored during the conference is mistrust. In contrast to the notion of trust, which has become popular as a social phenomenon in the social sciences of late, the notion of mistrust is mostly overlooked. If at all, mistrust is investigated as the flip side of trust, as an annoying absence and a societal failure. In this vein, post-Soviet citizens such as those from the Caucasus are depicted as notoriously deficient: alienated from the state due to the Soviet past they are still haunted by, incapable of creating a genuine civil society, unwilling to follow the rule of law, relying on personal networks and relations rather than the state apparatus, predisposed to corruption. The most pressing question thus seems to be how to restore trust in the state, and how to foster trust in civil agents and free markets.

With this conference, we intend to take a step back and explore what people actually do when they mistrust. Particular attention will be paid to how mistrust relates to poverty, insecurity and (voluntary as well as involuntary) forms of mobility as widespread experiences in the post-Soviet Caucasus and beyond. We also ask for the constructive potential of practices of mistrust. Can we identify communities of mistrust? May mistrust be culturally coded? If so, what is particular about these codes? Does the sharing of mistrust create new forms of legitimacy? See more details on the conference [here](#).

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### "Migration, Mobile Goods and Trade Networks in the Caucasus"

[Friedrich Schiller University Jena](#), Germany, November 18-19, 2016



Migration is one of the most popular strategies of coping with poverty among citizens from the Caucasus. In addition to economic factors, migration forms a set of practices aimed at securing social security and personal development. Political changes and economic crises within host countries affect migration patterns and the circulation of goods. At the same time, migration dynamics have an impact on changes in border policy, attitude towards migrants and labour market regulations.

For those involved, human mobility creates translocal and transnational ties (or networks) that pave the way for the circulation of goods and enable or facilitate movement of immobile people. For people in the Caucasus, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union, social networks in their multiple localities play a crucial role in establishing livelihood strategies and ways of operating in domestic economies. Social networks affect not only migration flows from the Caucasus but also influence the kind of survival tactics migrants employ while abroad. In this light, we are interested in how migration chains and communities are built and how they function. The circulation of goods is embedded in social activities as a way of bridging and not bridging networks.

Within this framework, we would like to address the following questions during the conference: What kind of impact does migration and the circulation of mobile goods have on mobile and immobile people from the Caucasus? How does this impact effect the relations between South Caucasian states and societies and external entities such as the Russian Federation and the EU? See more details on the conference [here](#). ■

## Forthcoming publications

**Hohmann S., Laruelle M., Burtseva A., "Murmansk. Biography of a City and its Population Movements,"** in Laruelle M. (Eds.), *New Mobilities and Social Changes in Russia's Arctic Regions*, Londres, Routledge, July 2016.

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**Neil Melvin, "Prisoners of the Mountains: The Regionalisation of Conflict in the Caucasus Region,"** SIPRI Policy Paper, October 2016 ■

## Forthcoming research trips

In summer 2016, [Weronika Zmiejewski](#) will stay in Georgia for several months to study the home communities of Georgian female labour migrants to Thessaloniki (Greece).

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In September 2016, Dr. [Florian Mühlfried](#) will stay in Abkhazia for three weeks to study religious pluralism and the relationships of the state to institutionalized religious groups ([WP 6](#)). ■

## Announcements

### CASCADE's website is now available in Russian language

You can find it [here](#) or just switch it on directly on the website:

LANGUAGES

 Русский

### New Communications and Project Managers: Irina Lamour and Myriam Morcel

Welcome to our CASCADE Project Team !



**Irina Lamour,**  
CASCADE Project Communi-  
cation and Dissemination  
Manager, WP10



**Myriam Morcel,**  
CASCADE Project Manager,  
WP1



#### Project Coordinator:

Dr. Laure Delcour,

[ldelcour@msh-paris.fr](mailto:ldelcour@msh-paris.fr)

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⇒ You can find previous issues of the  
**CASCADE's Newsletter** [here](#)

This project has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no. 613354.

**CASCADE** is an international EU-funded research project led by [the Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme](#).

CASCADE was selected under the EU FP7 call for proposal "Security and democracy in the neighbourhood: The case of the Caucasus." The duration is 3 years (2014-2017).