



KAUKASUSSTUDIEN/  
CAUCASUS STUDIES

FRIEDRICH-SCHILLER-UNIVERSITY  
JENA



Bundesministerium  
für Bildung  
und Forschung



## Second International JENA-CAUC<sup>1</sup> Conference

### South Caucasus after “Zeitenwende”: Dimensions of translocality and societal change

#### *Call for Papers for Conference*

9-10 November 2023

**Friedrich Schiller University of Jena, Jena, Germany**

#### **Description**

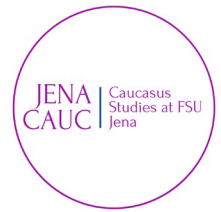
The Russian invasion of Ukraine marked a turning point for the South Caucasus (SC) region. The countries in the region face severe security risks, carry a burden of protracted conflicts, and cope with socio-economic, socio-cultural, and institutional challenges. Long overlooked by the international community, the region has encountered new challenges as well as new opportunities. This conference serves two goals: first, it will aim to unpack the societal, economic, political, and security-related consequences of Russia’s war against Ukraine for the South Caucasus region, and the transformational changes taking place in the region since the war. Second, it will focus on the implications of the German and European “Zeitenwende” regarding the South Caucasus, spanning from the countries in the region considering the EU’s integration perspective, to a more active engagement of the geopolitically awakened EU.

#### **Panel 1: Security, democracy, and political transformation after the Russian invasion of Ukraine**

Russia’s war against Ukraine further cemented linkages between democratization processes and the external environment marked by deteriorated security and security-related risks in the region. Domestic political dynamics and democratization processes in Armenia and Georgia are negatively impacted by the dominance of security-related issues, such as the presence of protracted territorial conflicts or the politicization of relations with external actors. At the same time, Russia’s war against Ukraine has brought forward new possibilities for the countries in the region, such as the EU’s recommendations for policy reform for Georgia, or the increased importance of the region as an emerging transit and energy hub between Europe and Asia. This panel will discuss how the states and societies in the South Caucasus might tackle democratic stagnation, prevent further autocratic backlash, and manage geopolitical and security risks.

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Topics to be discussed can include, but are not limited to:

- Securitization, security, and conflict management
- Changes in bilateral relations and domestic responses from within the region
- Rethinking foreign policy vectors

### **Panel 2: South Caucasus Economies after the Russia-Ukraine War**

Russia's war against Ukraine has had a significant impact on economic processes in the South Caucasus countries. Armenia and Georgia in particular have been a main destination for the influx of the Russian migrants as well as small and medium enterprises trying to escape international sanctions. While the relocation of Russian workers and businesses gave a significant boost to a number of economic sectors in both countries, it also came with a high social cost in societies that are confronted with economic inequality and social stratification. An intensification of economic ties with Russia is also accompanied by increasing security and political risks linked to economic dependency on Russia and, in the case of Georgia, a risk of losing Western support and EU accession prospects.

Topics to be discussed can include, but are not limited to:

- Economic and social impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on the SC
- Socio-economic implications of the influx of Russian migrants
- Impact of international sanctions on Russia and of EU-Russia economic rivalry on the SC

### **Panel 3: Translocality and the mobility and migration of people, ideas, cultures and goods**

The concept of translocality can be understood as "being identified with more than one location" (Greiner & Sakdapolrak, 2013) and describes mobility, migration, and spatial interconnectedness within and in particular across national boundaries. As Greiner & Sakdapolrak (2013: 375) write, "in translocal social fields, which are characterized by uneven power relationships, mobile and immobile actors negotiate and struggle over power and positions through the exchange of various capitals which are valued differently across different scales." For several millennia, the Caucasus has been a place of important translocal mobilities, from Greek settlers in antiquity, until the recent arrivals of thousands of Russians mainly to Georgia and Armenia. This panel will discuss relations between communities in the Caucasus and diasporas outside of the Caucasus, as well as local contact areas in this ethnically, socioculturally, religiously, and linguistically highly diverse region that is characterized, not only by seemingly never-ending ethno-political conflicts and wars, but also by millennia of peaceful exchanges and mutual influences.

Topics to be discussed can include, but are not limited to:

- Interaction, mobility, and communication in local contact areas, e.g. between minorities and majorities



- Links, exchange, and motion between diasporas and 'homelands'
- Negotiating, developing, and adapting fluid and flexible identities
- (A)symmetries and hierarchies of translocal interactions

#### **Panel 4: Environment, extractivism, infrastructure, and energy**

Russia's war against Ukraine significantly boosted the importance of the South Caucasus as an alternative energy and transport corridor - a window to the Middle East and Central and East Asia. At the same time, the region is at the very beginning of a resource-demanding and cost-intensive green transformation process. In this context, an important challenge is to develop new infrastructure projects and organize the resource extraction process in an environmentally-friendly way. Moreover, while eco-activism and other environmental issues have been used as an instrument in regional conflicts, we need to think about how environmental, energy, and infrastructure policies can contribute to regional peace, stability, and development, and be in line with green transformation.

Topics to be discussed can include, but are not limited to:

- Energy, climate, and protracted conflicts
- Developmental perspectives: Between energy extractivism and green transformation
- Energy, transport, and infrastructure projects after the Russian invasion of Ukraine
- Environmental activism, sustainable environmental and energy strategies and policies, cross-border cooperation

#### **Round table: South Caucasus after the "Zeitenwende"**

In addition to the four panels, a round table discussion focusing on the South Caucasus after the "Zeitenwende" will take place.

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To apply to participate, please send your abstract of 300-400 words to [jenacauc@uni-jena.de](mailto:jenacauc@uni-jena.de) with "JENA-CAUC Conference 2023" in the email subject line. Please also indicate your panel preference, and include a short author biography.

Deadline for abstracts: **15 June 2023**