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PERFORMING EUROPEANIZATION: THE CASE OF GEORGIA AND OTHER EAP COUNTRIES

Conference Abstracts

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**‘Constitutional Identity’ in the Context of Europeanization and Regional Integration:
the Case of Armenia**

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The concept of ‘constitutional identity’ is frequently applied in European legal and political discourse. In the context of relations between the EU and its Members, *national* constitutional identity of the Member States is often viewed as a limit of possible ‘Europeanization’. The author poses the question whether the concept of ‘constitutional identity’ can help to explain the dynamics of ‘Europeanization’ and regional integration processes beyond the borders of the EU in the post-Soviet space. The study focuses on the case of Armenia. Regardless its ‘U-turn’ towards the membership in the Russia-led EAEU, Armenia, as one of the participants of the EaP, still aims to preserve the active dialog with the EU, in particular by concluding the new EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA). The author investigates the processes of Europeanization in Armenia through the prism of evolution of national constitutional identity. For the purposes of comparative analysis, the parallels are drawn between Armenia, other EaP countries (in particular, Moldova and Ukraine), and the post-socialist countries – EU Member States.

The author views ‘constitutional identity’ as a construct combining four dimensions: (1) as identity of the constitution; (2) as constitutional identity of the people; (3) as constitutional identity of the society, and (4) as identity of the national constitutional order in its interrelations with other legal orders. While the *orientation* towards specific integration project may, in some cases, be encompassed by the identity of a constitution and that of the political community, the *adaptability* of the national constitutional order to the requirements of an integration project depends on all four dimensions of constitutional identity.

Having integrated this construct into the ‘Europeanization beyond EU’ model (Lavenex, Schimmelfennig, Sedelmeier) and with specific attention to the CEPA Europeanization mechanisms, the author identifies the characteristics of Armenian constitutional identity that determine or potentially can influence the effectiveness of Europeanization.

The study combines the qualitative document analysis (with specific focus on case-law) with socio-legal methods (semi-structured interviews and focus groups). The presentation reflects the preliminary findings of the research project in progress.

Keywords: Europeanization, constitutional identity, constitutional values and culture, regional integration, Armenia, EU-Armenia CEPA

Hybrid War

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After the months of the massive protests in February 2014, Ukraine's president Victor Yanukovich fled Kiev. Following his desertion unrests enveloped the ethnic-Russian enclaves of the country. The events especially escalated on Crimea, where suddenly well-armed, equipped, trained and disciplined military units popped up from nowhere taking control over the peninsula. The events developed rapidly from then, Crimea declared independence and after the hasty referendum joined the Russian Federation.

By that time the West realized that those "little green men" were no one else than Russian Spetznaz, and that Kremlin conducted a covert annexation of the neighbor's territories on the frontiers of Europe, posing threat to the stability and security of the EU by bringing war on its borders. Everybody started talking about the Hybrid War, a new "Wunder-waffe" of president Putin that is so difficult to counter and has become the main challenge to the Eastern Partnership policy.

The article will account for the means and ways that Russia has chosen to achieve its ends in order to understand what does the Hybrid War, which caught the European community by such surprise, represent. It will discuss whether is it some kind of new strategy of Kremlin, just recently invented by some genius and never seen before, or is it just a new development of a long-standing Russian imperialist foreign policy with modern means and technologies. To begin with we will provide the definition of the term itself and then examine the origins of concept of the Hybrid War in academic filed as well as with the practitioners of the both belligerent sides, liberal West and its opposing authoritarian Russia. It is necessary to do so to better understand the threat posed by Russia to the stability and security in Europe and to better anticipate Kremlin's next moves in order to counter them effectively.

Keywords: Politics, Security, Conflict, Hybrid, Russia

**Georgia's Foreign Policy Discourses and Fragmented Political Public Sphere:
A Pro-European Course on a Rocky Terrain?**

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The paper aims to analyse popular perceptions and acceptance of the pro-European discourse in Georgia. It argues that as Georgia has been the “battle-ground” between pro-Western and pro-Russian foreign policy and cultural orientations since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, this factor has contributed to the fragmentation of the public sphere in Georgia. The pro-Russian camp promotes the idea of orthodox unity, seeing its leader Russia as the key to restoration of country’s territorial integrity; alternatively, the pro-Western camp, referring to the negative past experience of Georgia’s annexation during the Tsarist and Soviet Russia and current occupation of the Georgian territories, considers the Euro-Atlantic integration as a security guarantee of Georgia and a precondition of its return into the European family from cultural and political point of view. Analysing various public opinion polls and policy papers and comparing them with the index of the Russian influence in Georgia, the study will juxtapose Russian soft-power incursion vs. local responses through deconstructing the three main clusters of actions: politics, media and civil society. This will enable to uncover the extent to which the soft-power policy of the EU could be gradually undermined in Georgia through collision of historical-religious and cultural-value driven agendas (Russian Orthodoxy vs. liberal conception of the West) in the Georgian public sphere. Methodologically the paper will juxtapose transformative positions of the political actors in Georgia on the one hand and tools and strategies of Kremlin’s disinformation incursion on the other hand, which leads to fragmentation of the public sphere. The research employs methods of qualitative analysis and refers to the discourse historical approach and process tracing, in its causal inference line, to reconstruct the changing political tendencies. Theoretically paper refers to Habermas’s elaborations on public sphere in general and to the concept of political public sphere in particular.

Key-Words: Georgia, Pro-Western and Pro-Russian Discourse, Public Sphere

The Bologna Process: Europeanization or De-Europeanization of the University Autonomy

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According to the critics of the Bologna Process, the reforms under this umbrella diminished the notion and the essence of university autonomy by implementing transnational standardization processes. This is perceived as De-Europeanization of the university autonomy, which was regarded as a purely European phenomenon spreading outside Europe for many decades. In case of post-Soviet countries like Georgia, whole Bologna process is part of the country's Europeanization process. However, considering the formality of the reforms implemented, the Europeanization of the HE system remains to be implemented on the normative level. Moreover, limiting autonomy to the HEIs on almost all levels as opposed to the Bologna Process requirements and recommendations can be discussed as De-Europeanization of the university autonomy.

Keywords: University Autonomy, Bologna Process, Europeanization of Higher Education

**EU Induced Institutional Reforms and Trade Facilitation:
Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova Compared**

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Trade is conducted in specific institutional settings and involves numerous formal and informal rules, behaviors and institutions. Trade-related institutional environment may involve political, economic, business, administrative, technical and technological, as well as financial aspects. Therefore when analyzing trade facilitation issues differences in institutional environments come to the forefront. Kuncic (2012) has shown that distance in economic institutions has significant negative effects on trade and countries which are more similar in terms of economic institutions, trade more with each other.

The goal of the paper is to study the link between institutional approximation and trade facilitation between EU and three EaP countries _ Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova. To evaluate the degree of approximation, we measured the three EaP country institutional distances with separate EU countries using Institutions Pillar indicators of the World Economic Forum, which comprise both public and private institutions. The calculations are made using modified Kogut & Singh (1988) index and statistical analysis tools are applied to study the links between trade flow dynamics and institutional distance through 2006-2016. The evolution of institutional distance for the mentioned time span shows reduction between almost all EU and the three EaP countries. The study reveals that it has had positive effect on fostering trade of the three countries with EU. However, it has not affected significantly on EU-Georgia's trade patterns, while Ukraine's trade was also strongly influenced by economic and non-economic shocks.

Keywords: Institutional distance, trade, EaP countries

Internationalization of Higher Education in the Context of Europeanization

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Internationalization of Higher Education in Georgia will be discussed not only in the context of academic collaboration with European partners and as a tool for quality enhancement of education and research, but also in the political and cultural context - how (young) people with international experience can change the country (focusing on changes at universities) after coming back.

Keywords: Internationalization of Higher Education, Europeanization of Higher Education

Higher Education and State Building

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The paper examines how effective higher education and its reform have been in generating a system that serves the needs of Georgia's transition to democratic statehood in the 21st century. The key point here is the role of higher education in generating professional elites and competent civil servants able to protect and promote a democratic culture in Georgia. The analysis includes a discussion of the evolution of higher education policy and practice, as well as the resistance to change. It examines the financing of education (how much money is invested in higher education, what it is spent on, and how the amount compares to other transitional states), and Georgia's interaction with international standards (the Bologna Process).

Keywords: Bologna Process, Higher Education, Democratic Development

**Nostalgia, Societal Cleavages and the Modernization Project:
Georgians' Attitudes towards the European Union**

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This paper presentation looks at the attitudes of Georgians towards the country's integration to the European Union. We argue that the binary opposition between pro- and anti-Western stances among the Georgian public reflects deeper societal division among ideological cleavages.

The declared foreign policy preferences of the mainstream Georgian political elite may be characterized with the catchphrase coined by the late Georgian prime minister Zurab Zhvania: "I am Georgian and therefore I am European". However, the public opinion data suggests that Georgians' attitudes towards the country's Western aspirations are not uniform. Public opinion survey data from April 2017 CRRC/National Democratic Institute polls show that the Georgian society is polarized when it comes to the attitudes towards the country's European integration. Moreover, the poll numbers fluctuate significantly through ethnic and geographic lines. Differences arise among the representatives of various age, educational, and socio-economic groups. Apart from the demographic attributes, opinions towards the West vary along attitudinal variables such as the respondents' feelings towards Russia, and one's nostalgia towards the Soviet Union.

Based on the societal cleavage theory of S.M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan we argue that the respondents' attitudes to closer integration with the West mirror the ideological cleavages in the society. Based on CRRC/NDI survey data, we hypothesize that the prevalence of these cleavages may be predicted by the attitudes towards 'modernization' and 'anti-modernization' discourses in Georgian society. We follow Diez Medrano's (2003, 2010) approach to measuring pro- and anti-modernization attitudes and argue that this proxy in Georgian context may be operationalized using the respondent's nostalgic attitudes towards the Soviet Union and the positive feelings towards Russia.

Keywords: *Societal Cleavages, Modernization, Soviet Nostalgia, Ideology, European Union*

Impact of Europeanization on national public spheres: the case of Azerbaijan

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The “Europeanization” as a term is widely understood in Azerbaijan in the framework of the normative transformation of the country in accordance with the European Union’s legislative and technical standards. Hence, this term is mostly used in reference to structural modernization within the government, as well as cultural and educational integration into a well-functioning EU-based education system. At a political level this process implies eradication of the Soviet inheritance and initiation of a comprehensive reform policy, including a wide range of spheres from structural changes to free movement of goods, services and people. In fact, “Europeanisation” represents one of the dimensions of Azerbaijan’s transition from “Sovietisation” to an independent state-building process since country gained its independence in 1991. Ultimately, this process is seen as a pledge of positive structural change in the economy leading to the well-being of the population; improvement of the competitiveness of the economy, bringing social stability and justice.

The European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument which replaced the TACIS in 2007, is a key financial instrument with a broader mandate and scope to implement the ENP Action Plans. The ENPI has three strategic aims: the promotion of democracy and human rights, the facilitation of access into market economy; the promotion of sustainable growth and the development of cooperation in the mutual interest areas.

In the framework of the ENP, Azerbaijan received the technical-financial assistance of the EU to conduct numerous economic, political and judicial reforms. The economic and political cooperation between the EU and Azerbaijan in the framework of ENP enabled Azerbaijan to access the EU’s domestic market, as well as the free movement of human resources, goods and services, to combat illegal immigration, drug trafficking and organized crime.

Keywords: Azerbaijan, European Union, ENP, structural modernization, judicial reforms, human rights

Gender Aspect of DCFTA Implementation of the Trade Policy in Georgia

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The paper deals with the transformation of economic processes in the context of AA/ DCFTA with EU, demonstrates the opportunities and challenges of implementation of agreements commitments regarding international trade in the country. Application of EU standards impacts on Georgian consumers that would have to come into conformity to stricter regulations. Despite the fact, that foreign trade, particularly increase last years, the trade balance is still negative. The main reason why Georgian products have not exported widely to the EU is that they cannot offer an attractive product meeting the quality and safety standards of the European market. Other barriers for would include: the poor quality of their merchandise, difficulties in penetrating foreign markets and their lack of credit marketing skills. That is of the major priorities for development of Georgia's export. It's important to analyse the role of integration of gender aspects in the trade policy in Georgia. Women could have concrete benefits from exports of Georgia to the EU markets. Potential trade-and-gender beneficial effects could be: good export and investment prospects niche segment of agro production, textiles/clothing, metal, machinery and electrical equipment, chemicals and services. Women constitute a large percentage of employees in promising areas. One of the most important challenges for increasing women's role in the agricultural value chain is the facilitation of a shift from the supply of production inputs to the retail of products. There is an urgent need to have women and men in the international market with the innovative professional capabilities.

Keywords: Foreign Trade, Export, Gender, International Market, EU standards