



**YSU Conference on Politics and
International Affairs**
***Post-Soviet Transformations:
Geopolitics, Nation-building and
Development¹***

October 9-10, 2025, Yerevan State University,
Yerevan, Armenia

Conference Program

October 9

¹ The conference is organized with the financial support of the Higher Education and Science Committee of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia.

Launching the Conference (9:30-10:45)

Location: Hall of Academic Council Sessions (Main building, 5th floor)

9:30-10:00 - Registration of participants

10:00-10:15 – Welcome speech

Tigran Yepremyan, Dean of the Faculty of International Relations,
Yerevan State University

Hovhannes Hovhannisyan, Rector of Yerevan State University

10:15-10:45 – Keynote speech: *Polarization, Transactionalism, and Small States*

Rouben Azizian, Massey University, New Zealand

Panel 1: Security, Order & Disorder: Great Power Rivalry in the Post-Soviet Eurasia (10:45-12:20)

Location: Hall of Academic Council Sessions (Main building, 5th floor)

Moderator: Tigran Yepremyan, Yerevan State University, Armenia

Russia's invasion of Ukraine as a filter and amplifier of the 'soft' power projection and reception: Comparative case of the European Union, China and Russia in Kazakhstan

Fabienne Bossuyt, Ghent University, Belgium

Dis-)Engagement with Europe, Shifting Identities and Foreign Policies in Armenia and Georgia

Laure Delcour, Sorbonne Nouvelle University, France

Small State Strategies for Peaceful Change in a World of Conflict

Anders Wivel, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

The Prospects of Iran-Armenia Strategic Partnership in the New Eurasian Geo-economy

Seyed Hassan Mirfakhraei, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Iran

Coffee Break (12:20-12:40)

Panel 2: Nation-Building, Identity & Narratives (12:40-14:15)

Location: Hall of Academic Council Sessions (Main building, 5th floor)

Moderator: Rouben Azizian, Massey University, New Zealand

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Reconstruction and Modernization of National Identity as Catalysts for Stateness: A Post-Soviet Perspective

Violetta Manukyan, Strategic Development Agency, Armenia

Contested Memories, Defended Identities: Religious Minorities and the Politics of Resistance in Soviet and Post-Soviet Georgia

Alexander Lutz, Georgetown University, United States

A Tale of Two States: Explaining the Divergent Outcomes of EU Soft Power in Albania and Georgia

Adrian Brisku, Charles University, Czechia Ilia State University, Georgia

Authoritarian Storytelling: How Georgia and Belarus Use Strategic Communication to Reshape the Nation

Natalie Arnould and Vita van Dreven, The Hague Research Institute, Netherlands

National Identity, Politics of Memory and Geopolitics: The Foreign Policy Dilemma in Post-Soviet Armenia (1991–2018)

Mikayel Zolyan, Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences, Armenia

Lunch Break (14:15-15:15)

PARALELL SESSIONS

Panel 3: Narratives of Belonging: Identity, Mobility & Memory in the Caucasus (15:15-16:30)

Location: Hall of Academic Council Sessions (Main building, 5th floor)

Moderator: Gor Petrosyan, Yerevan State University, Armenia

Azerbaijanism and Turkism: Ideological Hybridity, Ontological (In)security and Nation-Building in Post-War Azerbaijan

Levon Hovsepyan, National Academy of Sciences, Armenia

Alteration of Ukrainian Geopolitics in the Last Decades

Gréta Hóhn, Ludovika University of Public Service, Hungary

Nation-Building Processes in the Republics of the South Caucasus
(based on analysis of in-depth interviews)

Hovhannes Sargsyan and David Sargsyan, Russian-Armenian University, Armenia

Reconstructing National Identity in Post-War Armenia: Between De- or Remythologization

Norayr Dunamalyan, Russian-Armenian University, Armenia

Panel 4: Curricula of Change: Education as Geopolitical Catalyst (15:15-16:15)

Location: YSU History Museum (Main building, 7th floor)

Moderator: Erik Davtyan, Yerevan State University, Armenia

Geopolitics of Education in Georgia: from “radical Europeanness” to “Georgianness”

Archil Sikharulidze, Sikha Foundation, Georgia

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Ways of Knowing at the American University in Bulgaria: Present at the End of History

Cristofer Scarboro, King's College, Wilkes-Barre, United States

Social Stratification of Georgian in the Period of Transition

Alexander Tsagareli, Tbilisi State University, Georgia

Break (16:30:-16:50)

Panel 5: Society & Resilience in the Post-Socialist Context (16:50-18:25)

Location: Hall of Academic Council Sessions (Main building, 5th floor)

Moderator: Laure Delcour, Sorbonne Nouvelle University, France

“How are all these leaflets going to make Syunik safer?” A feminist exploration of resilience and (in)security along Armenia's borderlands

Laura Luciani, Ghent University, Belgium

Armenia's Domestic Violence Law: A Case Study for Post-Soviet Geopolitics

Lori Pirinjian, University of California, Los Angeles, United States

Gendered Nation-Building in Wartime Ukraine: Between Geopolitical Narratives and Domestic Mobilization

Maryna Shevtsova, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium

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Post-Socialist Legacies in Transnational Family-Making: Gendered Care, Absence, and Kinship Across Borders

Inna Bondarenko, European University Institute, Italy | Centre for European Policy Studies, Belgium

Manufacturing the Enemy: Armenophobia and the Construction of National Identity in Post-Soviet Azerbaijan

Anzhela Mnatsakanyan, Yerevan State University, Armenia

Panel 6: Extra-Regional Partnerships: Politics, Economy and Soft Power (16:50-18:05)

Location: YSU History Museum (Main building, 7th floor)

Moderator: Suren Tadevosyan, Yerevan State University, Armenia

Armenia, Georgia, and the Gulf Arab States: What is Behind the Growing Cooperation?

Mushegh Ghahriyan, Yerevan State University | National Academy of Sciences, Armenia

Cooperation between France and Armenia: From Soft Power to More Pragmatic Diplomacy

Karim Belgacem, ESSCA Lyon, France

Centring the agency of the countries in-between Russia and the European Union: Liminality in times of rupture

Louise Amoris, Sorbonne Nouvelle University, France

Transcaucasia and the Formation of the Geopolitical System in the Post-Soviet Era (Late 20th Century – Early 21st Century)

Jemal Karalidze and Salome Karalidze, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, Georgia

Panel 7: Migration, Public / Local Governance & Public Administration Reform: Analyzing the Post-Soviet Experience (16:50-18:25)

Location: YSU Library, Room 503 (fifth floor)

Moderator: Vahagn Aglyan, Yerevan State University, Armenia

The analysis of local public administration reforms in the Republic of Armenia: gambit or political thrik?

Katerina Altunyan, Yerevan State University, Armenia

The role of artificial intelligence in modern governance: challenges, opportunities and ethical considerations for Armenian context

Narine Asryan, Yerevan State University, Armenia

Quo Vadis? Local Autonomy in Armenia: Progress, Challenges, and Comparisons with European Trends

Arman Gasparyan, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium

Federalism in the post-Soviet space: attempts and abilities

Ilia Logvin, Southern Federal University, Russia

Comparative Analysis of Migration in the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia)

Nune Melkonyan, Yerevan State University, Armenia

The end of the first day of the conference

October 10

Panel 1: Soft-Power Waves Across the Post-Soviet Seas (09:30-10:45)

Location: Balian Conference Hall (Faculty of International Relations, 4th floor)

Moderator: Fabienne Bossuyt, Ghent University, Belgium

Shifting Paradigms: The Evolution of EU-Armenia Cultural Policies from Independence to the Present

Haykuhi Muradyan, Yerevan State University, Armenia

Russian Soft Power Influence Instruments in Georgia

Maia Manchkhashvili and Nino Nishnianidze, Georgian Technical University, Georgia

The Dragon's soft power influence in Central Asia: the Belt Road Initiative

Rosa Marcela Ramos, University of Murcia, Spain

Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy in the Post-Soviet Space: France's Strategic Engagement in the South Caucasus

Mariam Topakyan, Yerevan State University, Armenia

Coffee Break (10:45-11:05)

Panel 2: Diasporic Echoes & Cultural Fortresses: Memory, Faith, and Belonging Across Post-Soviet Landscapes (11:05-12:05)

Location: Balian Conference Hall (Faculty of International Relations, 4th floor)

Moderator: Adrian Brisku, Charles University, Czechia Ilia State University, Georgia

The Armenian Apostolic Church in Post-Soviet Georgia: Relations with the Georgian Orthodox Church and State

Giorgi Pareishishvili, Caucasus International University, Georgia

The Role and Importance of the Armenian Diaspora in Armenia's Domestic and Foreign Policy (With a Focus on the Post-2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War Period)

Hirad Mokhayeri, Islamic Azad University, Iran

Cultural security of the Russian minority in the conditions of the Russian-Ukrainian war. The case of selected post-Soviet countries

Tomasz Szyszlak, University of Wrocław, Poland

Lunch Break (12:05-13:05)

PARALELL SESSIONS

Panel 3: Politics of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: regional and inter-regional dimensions (13:05-14:20)

Location: Balian Conference Hall (Faculty of International Relations, 4th floor)

Moderator: Levon Hovsepyan, National Academy of Sciences, Armenia

Armenia–Azerbaijan relations in the light of Turkish-Iranian regional competitive policy following the 2020 war

Post-Soviet Transformations: Geopolitics, Nation-building and Development

Veronika Torosyan, National Academy of Sciences, Armenia

The main features of the current phase of Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict: a retrospective analysis

Roman Karapetyan, Yerevan State University, Armenia

The main factors determining the strategic relations between Azerbaijan and Pakistan

Karine Mkrtchyan, “Public Relations and Information Center” SNCO

Armenia–Israel: Points of Divergence and Convergence

Rebecca Hovhannisyan, Yerevan State University, Armenia

Panel 4: Twilight Orders and Emerging Giants: Contesting Power and Security in Post-Soviet Eurasia (13:05-14:05)

Location: YSU History Museum (Main building, 7th floor)

Moderator: Roman Karapetyan, Yerevan State University, Armenia

Reassessing the Security Order in Post-Soviet Eurasia

Majid Abdulla Al-Mualla, Dubai Police Academy, United Arab Emirates

The Post-Soviet World and the Death of the American Dream

Andrea Grant-Friedman, Lehigh Carbon Community College, United States

Hybrid Warfare in the 21st Century: Georgia’s Experience and Implications for Regional Security

Gvantsa Abdaladze, Tbilisi State University, Georgia

Break (14:20-14:40)

**Panel 5: Resilience and Security in Europe and the Caucasus:
Confronting Digital and Hybrid Threats (14:40-15:40)**

Location: YSU History Museum (Main building, 7th floor)

Moderator: Ashot Aleksanyan, Yerevan State University

Resilience against financial hybrid threats: lessons from the European Union's experience

Eva Jančíková, Bratislava University of Economics and Business, Slovakia

Security Council of the Slovak Republic – The Supreme Crisis Management Body

Karol Janas, University of Alexander Dubček in Trenčín, Slovakia
Alexandra Janasová, Bc. City of Považská Bystrica, Slovakia

A Comprehensive Framework for Ensuring the Protection and Resilience of Critical Infrastructure Against Various Threats and Risks

Antonín Korauš, Plenipotentiary of the Minister of the Interior of the Slovak Republic for Development and Projects and Chairman of the Accreditation Council | Academy of the Police Force in Bratislava, Slovakia

[in Russian] Панель 6: Геополитические стратегии и региональные форматы на постсоветском пространстве (14:40-16:15)

Локация: зал им. Палянов (факультет международных отношений, 4-й этаж)

Модератор: Жак Манукян, Ереванский государственный университет, Армения

Концепт соседства между Западом и Востоком: специфика геостратегий на постсоветском пространстве

Оксана Карнаухова, Южный федеральный университет, Россия

Трансформация многовекторной внешней политики Казахстана после 2022 года: от балансирования к активному хеджированию

Фатима Кукеева, Казахский национальный университет имени аль-Фараби, Казахстан

Стратегическая устойчивость Транскаспийского международного транспортного маршрута в условиях геополитической нестабильности и региональной конкуренции держав

Фатима Жанаштай, Казахский национальный университет имени аль-Фараби, Казахстан

Афганский фактор в геополитике Центральной Азии

Омар Мохаммад Нессар, Институт востоковедения РАН, директор Центра изучения современного Афганистана, Россия

Транспорт и логистика как фактор интеграции в международных отношениях: кейс Казахстана

Малик Ауган, Казахский национальный университет имени аль-Фараби, Казахстан

Перерыв (16:15-16:25)

Панель 7. Политика, экономика и международные интересы в Евразии (16:25-18:00)

Локация: зал им. Палянов (факультет международных отношений, 4-й этаж)

Модератор: Оксана Карнаухова, Южный федеральный университет, Россия

Особенности внешней политики Российской Федерации в области экономических отношений в 1990-е годы (кейсы предприятий и общественных организаций) в сравнительной ретроспективе

Мария Пономарева, Южный федеральный университет, Россия

Мир в условиях «цифрового колониализма»: метрополии, колонии, зоны сопротивления

Валентина Комлева, Центр международных стратегических исследований Дипломатической академии МИД РФ | Национальный исследовательский институт развития коммуникаций, Россия

Влияние геополитических противоречий на пространстве Евразии на радикализацию молодежи Центральной Азии

Куралай Байзакова, Казахский национальный университет имени аль-Фараби, Казахстан

Двадцать лет членства Словакии в Европейском Союзе

Людмила Липкова, Университет Александра Дубчека в Тренчине, Словакия

Патрик Йаворчик, Прешовский университет в городе Прешов, Словакия

Абхазия во внешней политике США в XXI в.: влияние контекста и динамика интереса

Радмила Айриян, Южный федеральный университет, Россия

The end of the conference