



Borders, Cooperation and Regional Conflict in Post-Soviet Contexts: Between Integration and Disintegration?

Tbilisi, Georgia, 28 April – 1 May 2013

Conference hotel and venue (Tbilisi): Vere-Palace Hotel

Welcome to Tbilisi and this conference!

Recent history has seen fundamental regional changes within the emerging political spaces of the former Soviet Union. State borders have been redefined in terms of national sovereignty, as frames for free and sovereign action, but they have become sites of hardening, closure and, perhaps most seriously, of territorial conflict. We see fragmented visa regimes as well as new migration patterns oriented both towards Russia and the European Union. At the same time, the forces of change that impact on the Caucasus and other Post-Soviet spaces also involve a differentiated exposure to globalization and rapid technological change. Furthermore, an internationalization of the overall regional political context has taken place; Russia, the European Union, NATO, Turkey and other actors have taken an increasing interest in energy-related and other strategic issues that are influenced by (geo)political tensions within the region. The positioning of former Transcaucasian Republics vis á vis this internationalization (e.g. NATO membership) has also been an important factor in conditioning the relations between them.

This conference brings together researchers who study regional issues in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Black Sea. We will therefore discuss a number of issues related to Post-Soviet states and their borders: state-building processes, geopolitical concerns, energy issues, migration, and processes of conflict and cooperation. At this conference we will also debate the role and aims of international actors, including the EU, in promoting cooperation and security.

This conference has been made possible through cooperation between and support from the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA), the University of Eastern Finland – VERA Centre for Russian and Border Studies, the University of Warsaw – Centre for European Regional and Local Studies (Euroreg) and Carleton University - Centre for Governance and Public Management. In addition, support for the conference has been provided by the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development and the EUBORDERREGIONS and EUBORDERSCAPES research projects.

We hope that this meeting in Tbilisi (and the excursion to Javakehti and Akhaltsikhe) will be fruitful for all: intellectually stimulating, thought-provoking and – thanks as well to Tbilisi and Georgia – enjoyable.

SATURDAY 27 APRIL 2013 Arrival in Tbilisi

SUNDAY, 28 APRIL

9:30 – 13:00

9:30: Welcoming addresses by the organizers and hosting organisations

10:00 – 13:00 (with break)

Session 1 – Between Conflict and Cooperation (Part 1)

Chair: GRZEGORZ GORZELAK

ANASTASIA SHESTERININA: From War to Conflict and Back: Borderland Violence in “Post-Conflict” Abkhazia

EV RIM EKEN: Turkish-Russian Energy Cooperation as a Decisive Factor of Eurasian Energy Security: thinking beyond geopolitics

PETER CASNY: Energy Geopolitics in the South Caucasus: EU Strategic Partnership and Integration Towards International Security

JONI VIRKKUNEN: Security, Development and the Everyday in the EU's Central Asian Border Policy

ADAM PLOSZAJ: Cross-border Cooperation at the External Border of the European Union – the Case of Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian Border Area

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch

14:30 – 16:30

Session 2 – Post-Soviet Borders and Geopolitics

Chair: JAMES SCOTT

ILKKA LIIKANEN: The EU and Post-Soviet Borders: Eastern Partnership and Processes of Nation-building and Integration in Post-Soviet Space

RYZNAU NIZHKINAU: EU Transformative Powers in its Eastern Neighbourhood: Europeanization by the Expansion of the Boundaries in EU-Belarus and EU-Ukraine Relations

JUSSI LAINE: Deconstructing Europe: Alternative Visions and their Future Prospects

EDWARD BOYLE: Towards Mapping the Sovereign Border

ZOLTÁN HAJDÚ: The Transformation of Hungary's Geopolitical Position after 1988 (Hungary moves from the “West of East” to the “East of West”)

16:45 – 18:30

Section 3 – Between Conflict and Cooperation (Part 2)

Chair: JUSSI LAINE

MARGIT SÄRE: Civil Society Organizations and Non-State Actors in the Estonian-Russian Border Within the Context of ENP

EKATERINA MIKHAILOVA: Cooperation Between Border City Pairs in Post-Soviet and European Contexts

MAREK KOZAK: Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Identity-Building in the Border Area

IWONA SAGAN: Civil Society Networks as Stabilizers of Cross-Border Cooperation and European Neighborhood Relations

MONDAY, 29 APRIL

9:30 – 13.00

9:00 – 10:30

Section 4 – State and Nation-Building in Post-Soviet Contexts

Chair: ILKKA LIIKANEN

LINA KLYMENKO: Nationalizing History: World War II in Ukrainian School History Textbooks

ABEL POLÉSE: Turkmenistan: building the nation?

TOOMAS ALATALU: Buffer States and Buffered Powers, Including One Experienced One

10:45 -11:00 Break

11:00 – 13:00

Session 5 – State and Nation-Building in Post-Soviet Contexts (Part 2)

Chair: PAUL FRYER

DONNACHA Ó BEACHÁIN: Elections in de facto States: Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh and Transnistria

CHRIS WESTON: Limited Access Order and Georgian Post-Soviet Transition

OLGA FILIPPOVA: Tracking Politics of Identity in Official Discourse: A Case of the Unrecognised Transnistrian State

13:00 -14:30 Lunch

14:30 -16:15

Session 6 – Migration Flows and Politics

CHAIR: JONI VIRKKUNEN

TIINA SOTKASIIRA: European Union and Migration from the Eastern Neighbourhood

PAUL FRYER: Calculating the Risks: the Cultural Embeddedness of Migration in the Ferghana Valley.

NATALIA GOROZHANKINA: Socio-Geographical Analysis of International Intellectual Migration

16:15 -16:30 Break

16:30 – 18:00

Roundtable Discussion: Regional Cooperation in the South Caucasus: The Role of International Actors

With Kornely Kakachia (Tbilisi State University) Oliver Reisner (Delegation of the European Union to Georgia), Timothy Blauvelt (Ilia State University and Country Director for American Councils for International Education); James Scott (UEF), other participants TBC

TUESDAY, 30 APRIL

9:30 – 12.00

30.04.2013 Excursion to Javakehti and Akhaltsikhe

Departure by bus (TBA)

Meeting with local public officials and NGO representatives

Stay at Hotel Lomsia in Akhaltsikhe

WEDNESDAY, 01 MAY

9:30 – 12.00

01.05.2013 Excursion to Gori, late arrival back to Tbilisi

Hotels: Tbilisi Varazi Hotel (if required), Kostava Street 45

THURSDAY, 02 MAY

Departures