JANUARY 2024 - VOL.8 - NO.1

lectio socialis

E-ISSN:2602-2443

JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

lectio socialis

EDITOR-in-CHIEF **Emrah Konuralp**

EDITORS
Igor Torbakov, Dr. at University of Uppsala, Sweden
Michalis N. Michael, Associate Professor at University of Cyprus, Cyprus
Nilüfer Narlı, Professor at Bahçeşehir University, Istanbul, Türkiye
Sue L. T. McGregor, Professor Emerita at Mount Saint Vincent University, Canada

BOARD
Andrzej Piotrowski, Assistant Professor at Wyższa Szkoła Bezpieczeństwa, Poland
Bistra Vassileva, Professor at University of Economics - Varna, Bulgaria
Cristoph Giesel, Professor at Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena, Germany
Erhan Aydın, Affiliate Research Fellow at IPAG Business School, France
Ersin Erkan, Professor at Bingöl University, Bingöl, Türkiye
Gülşah Aydın, Associate Professor at Yeditepe University, Istanbul, Türkiye
Olaf Leiße, Professor at Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena, Germany
Pınar Köksal, Professor at Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Türkiye
Reza Yavarian, Professor at Roudehen Islamic Azad University, Iran
Sonat Bayram, Assistant Professor at Trakya University, Edirne, Türkiye
Tülay Yıldırım, Associate Professor at Istanbul Medeniyet University, Istanbul, Türkiye
Zeynep Özkurt Dördüncü, Assistant Professor at Nişantaşı University, Istanbul, Türkiye
Zijad Džafić, Professor at University of Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina

LAYOUT EDITOR **M. Ada Özdil**, Marmara University, Istanbul, Türkiye

LANGUAGE EDITORS
Cüneyt Dişbudak
David Andrew Hilton
Melek Aylin Zoflu, Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary
Süleyman Yıldırım, Durham University, Durham, United Kingdom

Publisher **Emrah Konuralp**
Address **Iğdır Üniversitesi, Şehit Bülent Yurtseven Kampüsü, Merkezi Derslik Binası. İİBF. Iğdır-TÜRKİYE**
e-mail **emrah.konuralp@metu.edu.tr**
Type of Publication **Periodical e-journal**
e-ISSN **2602-2443**

www.dergipark.org.tr/lectio

lectio socialis
is a refereed journal.
Biannually published (January-July).
Manuscripts can be submitted in English or Turkish languages.
The moral and/or legal rights of the author have been asserted.
© The Authors. This is an Open Access journal distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-4.0 License (CC BY 4.0), which permits re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.
Published by Emrah Konuralp.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Research Articles

Unraveling the Nagorno-Karabakh Conundrum: Deciphering Russia's Southern Caucasus Strategy 1
Sait Yılmaz

Paving the Way for Climate Resilience through Sustainable Urbanization: A Comparative Study 17
Selçuk Gürçam

Evaluating the Securitized Migration Policy of the European Union in the Context of Border Security 35
Çılga Altunbaş
Fulya Memişoğlu

Ethnic Tensions and Global Response: Disentangling the Complexities of the Bosnian War 57
Aslıhan Iğdır-Akaras

Lectio Socialis
2024, VOL. 8, NO. 1, pp. 1-16

RESEARCH ARTICLE
DOI: 10.47478/lectio.1347923

Unraveling the Nagorno-Karabakh conundrum: Deciphering Russia's Southern Caucasus strategy

Sait Yılmaz[a]

[a] Istanbul Esenyurt University, Istanbul, TÜRKIYE.

ABSTRACT

Following the Nagorno-Karabakh War, a ceasefire agreement was signed by Azerbaijan and Armenia. However, the path towards a comprehensive peace accord still needs to be solved with some challenges. The unresolved status of Nagorno-Karabakh and the fate of its Armenian inhabitants remain critical points of contention. Additionally, the difficulties of Armenian Prime Minister Nicol Pashinyan in executing provisions related to the proposed transportation corridors outlined in the Ceasefire Pact add another layer of discord. External actors further complicated this situation. Armenia's domestic opposition and Iran's strategic ambitions within the region played significant roles. Conversely, Russia has taken a central role in overseeing peace negotiations and advancing its interests in the Southern Caucasus. This article delves into the entrenched disputes between Azerbaijan and Armenia and examines the potential trajectory of their relations. Moreover, it provides insights into Russia's intricate agenda, which shapes the evolving dynamics of the Southern Caucasus region. In essence, this study analyzes the intricate web of challenges, interests, and influences that intersect in this geopolitical landscape, shedding light on the intricate interplay between internal and external factors.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received: 22.08.2023
Revised: 29.09.2023
Accepted: 01.10.2023

KEYWORDS
Azerbaijan,
Armenia,
Russia,
Nagorno-Karabakh,
Zangezur

Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of the South Caucasus, three relatively small nations – Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan – strive to uphold their national sovereignty and foreign policy orientations while navigating the influence and pressures exerted by major global powers. These nations each possess distinct foreign policy outlooks: Georgia leans towards a pro-American stance, Armenia aligns more closely with Russia, and Azerbaijan maintains friendly ties with Turkey, adopting a more balanced approach among these great powers.

Russia, in particular, remains staunchly opposed to the involvement of external actors in the North Caucasus region, which it considers pivotal to its interests. However, Russia's role in the South Caucasus has evolved into a far more intricate and multifaceted dynamic since November 2020. The region now witnesses a competition for influence between Russia, Turkey, and Western powers within their sphere. A significant turning point transpired from September to November 2020, notably in Nagorno-Karabakh, when the six-week conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia led to a ceasefire agreement brokered by Russia. This accord marked a victory for Azerbaijan, yet it effectively paused hostilities rather than delivering a durable peace – a pattern reminiscent of situations like Cyprus and Korea.

After the 2020 conflict, Azerbaijan and Armenia pursued divergent paths under the European Union's and Russia's guidance, respectively. Azerbaijan aimed to secure lasting peace through negotiations that sought comprehensive solutions under favorable circumstances. Conversely, clashes emerged between the two parties around Nagorno-Karabakh and along the Azerbaijan-

CONTACT Sait Yılmaz syilmaz39@hotmail.com
© The Author(s). Published by *Lectio Socialis*.
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-4.0 License (CC BY 4.0), which permits re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Armenia border in 2022. Approximately a year after the war, in September 2021, the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan convened for peace discussions. Then, in February 2022, Baku presented Yerevan with a five-point proposal centered on mutual recognition of territorial integrity. Armenia initially embraced this proposal, envisioning it as a means to stimulate developmental prospects.

However, two primary issues remained unresolved: the status of Nagorno-Karabakh and the fate of the Armenian population within the region. Additionally, despite the terms of the November 2020 ceasefire agreement, Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan needed to show more support for implementing planned transportation corridors. Within this intricate landscape, adverse influences from external actors, notably Iran, as well as domestic opposition within Armenia, have contributed to adverse developments. In this article, we delve into the impasses plaguing Azerbaijan-Armenia discussions, explore the potential trajectory of their relations, and elucidate Russia's distinct strategic blueprint for the South Caucasus region.

Intractable challenges in Nagorno-Karabakh

Deliberations over the status of Nagorno-Karabakh

Armenians initially looked to the Kosovo model as a potential framework for Nagorno-Karabakh. They aspired for the so-called Arsak (Nagorno-Karabakh) Republic to attain independence, but this parallel needed to be revised. Firstly, the UN General Assembly Resolution 62/243 in 2008 asserted that the region within the Azerbaijani territory was under Armenian occupation. Secondly, the region never held the status of an independent state; instead, the dissolution of the Soviet Union led to the natural establishment of borders between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Thirdly, Armenia's pursuit of self-determination does not inherently warrant the partition of a minority group under international law. Although the inhabitants of Karabakh are ethnically Armenian, they are officially recognized as Azerbaijani citizens. Furthermore, international law does not endorse partial or conditional division (Makili-Aliyev, 2020). Notably, not the Armenian population but the Azerbaijani citizens were displaced from Karabakh.

Armenia's subsequent hope rested on the pre-2008 model of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, where Russian influence loomed over Nagorno-Karabakh (Popescu, 2020). In fact, in 2019, Masis Mayilyan, the Foreign Affairs Minister of the Arsacid region, expressed a willingness to seek recognition from Russia in exchange for recognizing Russia's occupied areas in Ukraine. This endeavor even stirred unease in Georgia when Armenia contemplated visits to the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Russian leader Vladimir Putin articulated in November 2020, "The final status of Karabakh has not been determined. We agreed to maintain the existing status quo. The region's fate will be decided by future leaders who will engage in this process" (Kremlin, 2020).

The diplomatic resolution at the negotiating table will be shaped by the perspectives of key stakeholders both within and outside the region. The UN Security Council, comprising the USA, Russia, China, England, and France, acknowledged that the recent conflicts occurred within the sovereign borders of Azerbaijan and that Armenia was not a victim (Bodner, 2016). With its bases in Armenia and a collective agreement, Russia affirmed that the conflicts did not obligate its involvement. These developments underscore that the only legally consistent solution for Nagorno-Karabakh is to remain Azerbaijani territory.

The ongoing trends between Azerbaijan and Armenia can be summarized as follows:

- Armenia hesitates to fully implement the November 2020 ceasefire agreement, provoking frustration on the Azerbaijani side.
- Both nations are influenced by domestic public sentiment, which exerts pressure during negotiations.
- Armenia, while realigning with Russia post-November 2020, engages with the West tentatively, harboring reservations (Korybko, 2022).

- Azerbaijan maintains proximity to both Russia and Turkey.
- Furthermore, Azerbaijan upholds strong ties with the EU and the USA.

The most pressing point of contention between Azerbaijan and Armenia centers on their differing aims: Azerbaijan seeks recognition of the territorial integrity of both nations, while Armenia strives to keep the status of Karabakh on the negotiating table. Three critical issues persist (Shafiev & Huseynov, 2022): (1) Delimiting borders: Under Armenian control for three decades, the region lacks defined boundaries. (2) Facilitating transportation routes. (3) Addressing humanitarian concerns encompassing landmines, detainees, and missing individuals.

Azerbaijan has assembled a working group to address the terms of the peace agreement. Establishing an international commission for determining the Azerbaijan-Armenia border is under consideration. However, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan of Armenia reintroduced the status of Karabakh into discussions, implying a departure from the notion of territorial integrity for Azerbaijan. Pashinyan also shifted his stance on railroad construction between Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan (Zangezur Corridor). Resolving state borders and their mutual recognition are pivotal in bilateral relations (Konuralp, 2022).

Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Ceyhun Bayramov conveyed that Azerbaijan sent Armenia a document in March 2021 consisting of five articles outlining the normalization of relations. These articles encompass mutual recognition of sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability of international borders, and political independence. Both parties acknowledge the absence of territorial claims and commit to refrain from making such claims in the future (News, 2022a). Despite this, Yerevan contends that accepting these foundational principles is only meaningful with a consensus on Karabakh's status and borders. On the other hand, President Ilham Aliyev asserts that the Karabakh issue is no longer extant.

In November 2021, the European Union (EU) initiated mediation between the two nations. Communication channels were established between their defense ministries. Subsequently, Brussels hosted an inaugural summit between Armenia and Azerbaijan's leaders in December 2021. However, Russia's intervention in Ukraine in February 2022 temporarily halted diplomatic dialogue. Nevertheless, in April 2022, just two months after the Ukrainian conflict, Azerbaijani and Armenian leaders announced their intent to commence peace talks at a meeting facilitated by the EU. These talks proceeded swiftly. A summit organized by the EU in August 2022 resulted in an agreement for the foreign ministers of both nations to draft the text of a peace agreement within a month. The parties pledged to finalize an agreement by the end of 2022.

President Aliyev remarked that the peace process gained momentum, prompting working groups to convene and initiate the composition of a peace text. Simultaneously, Russia is not idle. Russian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova revealed in October 2022 that Moscow had submitted peace proposals to Yerevan and Baku in September. Furthermore, President Putin hosted Pashinyan and Aliyev as part of an informal summit for the Commonwealth of Independent States on October 7, underscoring his role in the region.

In the Czech capital in October 2022, Azerbaijan, Armenia, France, the US and the European Council jointly agreed to recognize borders and territorial integrity as they stood in 1991. In response to Armenia's request, the US civilian observer mission will be stationed on the Armenian side of the border. Despite progress, several on-ground issues still need to be resolved as both parties navigate their unique approaches. An overarching sentiment suggests that Armenians aim to diminish Russian influence in the territories they control, with Yerevan's new pro-Western orientation seeking tangible gains beyond paper agreements. These factors occasionally spur days of conflict. While President Ilham Aliyev typically maintains a measured stance, he becomes resolute when issues of corridors, like Lachin and Zangezur, are raised (Rozanskij, 2022).

The partnership between Aliyev and Erdogan is a barrier to the activation of the Minsk Group, proposed by the US and France. Baku and Ankara view past Minsk Group endeavors as maintaining the status quo, which favored Armenia.

The European Union, concerned about the evolving roles of Turkey and Russia since 2020, presented a new initiative during the Prague talks. A decision emerged from a four-way meeting between French President Emmanuel Macron, European Council President Charles Michel, President Aliyev, and Prime Minister Pashinyan (News, 2022b). The parties reaffirmed their commitment to the UN Charter and 1991 Alma Ata Declaration. Armenia and Azerbaijan mutually recognized territorial integrity and sovereignty. This affirmation serves as the foundation for demarcation commission efforts.

Figure 1. Current status in Nagorno-Karabakh region
Source: RFE/RL (2021)

During the European Political Community summit in Prague, a significant meeting transpired between Turkey and Armenia at the leadership level, marking the first such encounter in 13 years. Turkey's particular interest lies in the Zangezur corridor, connecting Azerbaijan and Nakhichevan, which offers a direct route bridging Central Asia and Anatolia. Although Pashinyan presented some proposals during the meeting, specifics remain undisclosed. Presumably, Pashinyan sought Erdogan's assistance in securing the release of the captured soldiers and delineating the border map. These topics will be addressed in forthcoming discussions involving foreign ministers and designated representatives. Pashinyan's proposal centers on adopting the Soviet map as the basis instead of the 1919-1920 map, which would result in Armenia losing territory. During the meeting, Erdogan reiterated his call for the abandonment of international recognition of the Armenian genocide and the opening of the Zangezur corridor.

In Sochi on October 31, 2022, Putin convened with Aliyev and Pashinyan. Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan proposed a demilitarized zone for Karabakh under international guarantees (RFE/RL, 2022). Presently, a 2,000-strong Russian peacekeeping contingent operates in Karabakh under the framework of the ceasefire agreement (Figure 1). Conversely, Aliyev stated that the Karabakh matter had been resolved two years ago: "We have nothing to discuss on this matter. However, the improvement of Azerbaijan-Armenia relations demands significant steps. We rely on

your proactive personal role and Russia's contribution in achieving these goals" (Sözcü, 2022). Aliyev further emphasized, "Azerbaijan has previously put forward five fundamental principles. Normalizing the relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia should be based on these principles, which adhere to the fundamentals of international law. Upon these principles, relations can be enhanced" (Sözcü, 2022). Putin conveyed that while agreement was not reached on all matters, they had successfully concurred on fundamental aspects and endorsed a joint declaration (Sözcü, 2022).

A mutual commitment to refraining from the use of force and resolving issues based on sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the recognition of inviolable borders has been reported between Azerbaijan and Armenia. On November 7, 2022, the foreign ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia convened in Washington, hosted by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken. Reports suggest that the USA encouraged both parties to take bold strides (Taştekin, 2022a).

While Azerbaijan's victory is acknowledged through the ceasefire agreement, Armenia may be accorded some degree of control within Karabakh. The unresolved issue within this context pertains to the future of Armenians residing in Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijan asserts that Nagorno-Karabakh falls within its internationally recognized borders. Armenia has relinquished its longstanding opposition to this condition but seeks Baku's consent for special security measures and rights for Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians. Baku maintains that residents of Nagorno-Karabakh should have Azerbaijani citizenship rights without special status or privileges and has declined to incorporate this matter into bilateral talks.

Regarding Karabakh, President Aliyev affirms, "Armenians shall have neither status, nor independence, nor special privileges" (Taştekin, 2022a). Pashinyan is inclined toward deferring the status issue as a precondition, considering its resolution after the peace agreement. He might even contemplate minority status over autonomy.

Armenia will de facto oversee some of Nagorno-Karabakh, rendering it more reliant on Russia for on-ground peace assurance. Consequently, Armenia will adhere more closely to Russia's directives in domestic and foreign policy. As Russia reasserts its influence over Armenia, it will exert a more pronounced role over Azerbaijan regarding security and military aspects.

Another substantial issue revolves around the border dispute between the two nations. Disagreements persist regarding which maps to employ as the foundation for demarcating the border. While Azerbaijan advocates using various Soviet-era maps from different periods, Armenia contends that this approach would grant Azerbaijan considerable claims on its existing territory. Although both sides agreed to address this matter during a Russian-mediated meeting in November 2021, little progress has been made since then.

Advancements in corridors and transport networks

Following the Nagorno-Karabakh War in October-November 2020, one of the region's most significant subjects garnering attention revolves around intercontinental infrastructure and transportation initiatives linking Europe and Asia. However, despite these overarching aspirations, relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia remain tenuous post the Nagorno-Karabakh War.

A pivotal development post-2020 was the transfer of Lachin to Azerbaijan in October 2022, accompanied by the establishment of an alternative road as a substitute for the Lachin corridor connecting Karabakh to Armenia. Notably, President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan and Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan of Armenia concurred on reinstating transport links on January 11, 2021, in Moscow, with the mediation of Russian leader Vladimir Putin. Subsequently, on November 26, 2021, the matter was revisited during a trilateral meeting in Sochi.

The significance of opening transportation lines lies in Armenia's perspective: Azerbaijan can access Nakhichevan via Tavuş from the north or Zangezur from the south using existing infrastructure. Conversely, Armenia seeks to utilize the Yerevan-Tbilisi-Baku-Russia railway and the Yerevan-Nakhichevan-Julfa railway or highway to access Iran. Armenia prioritizes the condition of

the routes rather than the route selection (Taştekin, 2022b). Previously, Pashinyan articulated, "Azerbaijan should access Nakhichevan through Armenia's sovereign territory, which we accept. Conversely, Armenia should also gain access to Russia and Iran via Azerbaijan's territory" (Taştekin, 2022b).

To realize their ambitions concerning highway, railway, and energy networks uniting the Caspian basin and Asia, Turkey proposed a series of six forums (3+3) involving Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Turkey, Russia, and Iran. The inaugural session of the 3+3 negotiations for the South Caucasus, intended to begin in 2020, occurred on December 10, 2020, in a 3+2 configuration due to Georgia's non-participation.

Tbilisi's trust in the Kremlin has waned, with divergent paths emerging since 2008 due to the Abkhazia and South Ossetia issues. Analogous to Ukraine, Georgia seeks to balance with NATO against the perceived Russian threat. The Zangezur connection portends that Georgia will lose its privileged status once the borders between Turkey and Armenia open. Furthermore, Armenia turning to Turkish ports instead of Poti and Batumi ports for maritime transport might adversely impact Georgia. While opening the Caucasus highway to the Russian Federation through South Ossetia and the railway to Abkhazia could offer solace to Georgia, these initiatives are ensnared in the "separatism-independence" discourse. For the six-way partnership to materialize, Georgia must mend its frayed relations with Russia stemming from the decision to recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia after the 2008 conflict.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan of Armenia participated in the 3+2 meeting with the precondition that the Karabakh issue (already discussed at other levels) would not be on the agenda. Armenia's primary exports to Russia occur via the historical Georgian Military Road, which connects to Kazbek-Upper Lars in North Ossetia. Pashinyan emphasizes Armenia's interest in regional transportation lines, advocating the necessity for mutual agreement on formulas.

For the Turkey-proposed 3+3 forum to materialize, a comprehensive regional integration perspective encompassing the reestablishment of historical connections is essential. Reconnecting Iran-Russia, Armenia-Russia, Armenia-Iran, Turkey-Armenia, and Armenia-Azerbaijan through the Caucasus is imperative.

Pashinyan underscores that the working groups established in the context of road conditions encompass the Icevan-Kazah, Berd-Tovuz, Angeghakot-Biçenek, Horadiz-Yerask, and Horadiz-Megri-Ordubad-Yerask routes. When the objective is to overcome barriers across all regional transportation lines, the scope extends beyond Zangezur. Pashinyan emphasizes that the Yerask-Ordubad-Megri-Horadiz railway along the southern border line should also be reinstated (Figure 2).

In summary, a simplified table of train lines includes:

- The historical railway between Zangezur and Megri-Horadiz, connecting Nakhichevan to Azerbaijan.
- The Yerevan-Iran railway, situated at the Nakhichevan border.
- The Tbilisi-Sochi railway line on the Abkhazian side, with connections to Baku and Yerevan.
- The railway linking Yerevan to the Baku-Tbilisi train line toward Kazah.
- The Kars-Gyumri railway spans 60 kilometers and intersects the Armenia-Turkey border region while connecting to the main line between Yerevan and Tbilisi (Taştekin, 2022b).

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev warned that if Armenia does not acquiesce to the opening of the Zangezur Corridor, Azerbaijan will resort to force to reclaim the region taken from them a century ago.

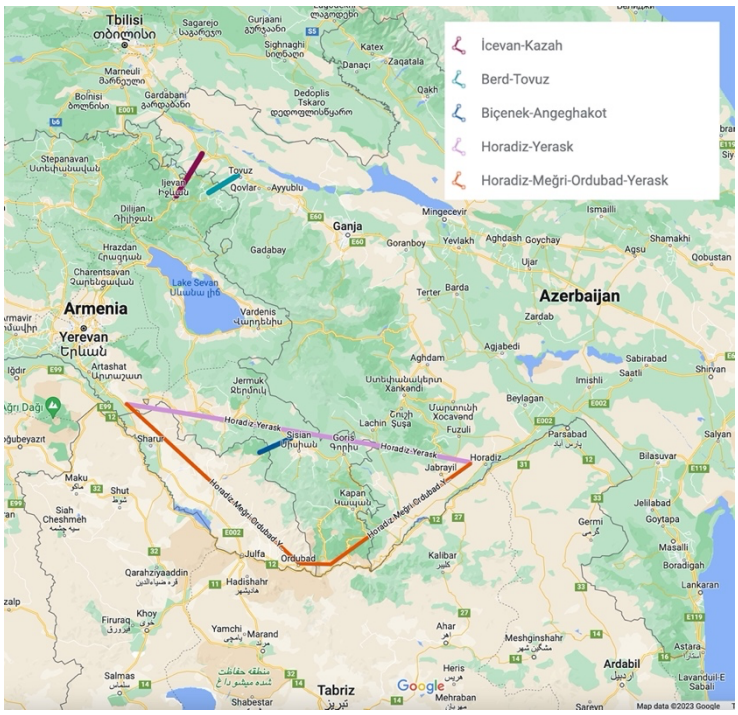

Figure 2. Possible routes between Azerbaijan and Armenia

Source: Created by the author using Google Maps

Notably, Armenia and Azerbaijan hold differing views on the scale of the route. Moreover, their perspectives diverge on matters of transit and customs controls. The responsibility for access management might be assigned to the Russians or, potentially, the Europeans. Azerbaijan tends to trust the Russians, whereas Armenia inclines towards the West. As China's trade routes extend into the region, the Caucasus is set to become a pivotal aspect of the broader global geopolitical arena.

Recognizing the gravity of the situation, Charles Michel, President of the European Council, conducted bilateral discussions with Azerbaijani and Armenian representatives in December 2021. He proposed a plan to grant each nation authority over specific portions of the corridor, aiming to forestall third-party involvement (Blank, 2022).

Significant strides have been taken to enhance the South Caucasus transportation networks in recent years. Among them is the Turkey-Georgia-Azerbaijan railway. Additionally, the Southern Gas Corridor pipeline intends to transport energy from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to Europe via Azerbaijan and the Caspian Sea, despite challenges posed by Russia. The Zangezur Corridor holds promise as the shortest overland route between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans (Blank, 2022). This undertaking also holds considerable advantages for Armenia. For Armenia, whose aspirations lie with the West while its geopolitical reality is tethered to Russia, Zangezur represents a potential avenue for fostering healthier regional relations and integration into the global economy. Should Armenia seek to extricate itself from Russian influence in the medium to long term, the Zangezur Corridor could play a pivotal role in such an endeavor.

The established trade route between Turkey and Turkestan in Central Asia stands poised for transformation. The envisioned corridor in Armenia would notably curtail this traffic. Turkey's ambition to reach Azerbaijan and Central Asia via the Zangezur Corridor hinges on constructing a new railway linking Kars to Nakhichevan.

In conclusion, the ceasefire agreement from November 2020 faces a daunting implementation challenge. Differing interpretations and inferences about its provisions engender conflicting perspectives. While the agreement alludes to opening access routes, Azerbaijan envisions this as a corridor toward Nakhichevan via Zangezur. Conversely, Yerevan perceives the term "corridor" as tantamount to ceding sovereignty and isolating Armenian territory (Taştekin, 2022b), vehemently opposing such an outcome.

International reactions to corridor initiatives

The emergence of corridors and transportation routes in Azerbaijan-Nakhichevan raises significant concerns, with Iran taking a prominent role in this discourse. Over the past three decades, trade between Azerbaijan and Nakhichevan has flowed through Iran, rendering Iran both politically influential over Azerbaijan and economically benefiting from the trade. Notably, Azerbaijan allocated a 15 percent gas commission to Iran to facilitate gas transit to Nakhichevan. However, the potential construction of a gas pipeline directly from Azerbaijan to Turkey through this corridor could lead to substantial gas losses for Iran.

The corridors and transportation lines expanding from Azerbaijan to Nakhichevan have stirred profound apprehension within Iran. Evidencing this concern, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Army executed an extensive exercise on October 17, 2022, along the Azerbaijan border, dubbed the "Strong Iran Exercise." The exercise's incorporation of bridge crossings over the Aras River hints at Iran's strategic intentions. Iran, ever since 2020, has adamantly opposed the Zangezur Corridor, warning against its implementation as it could jeopardize Iran's link with Armenia. Notably, this corridor results from a bilateral agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan, but Iran's resistance is primarily driven by its interests.

Aliyev and Iranian President Ibrahim Reisi convened at the CICA (Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia) meeting in Astana shortly after the military exercise. During this meeting, Aliyev conveyed Azerbaijan's resolve to pursue an independent foreign policy, signaling a shift in its geopolitical stance. Iran reacted by singularly opposing Azerbaijan's presidency in the subsequent CICA summit. Further exacerbating tensions, Iranian officials visited Armenia for the ostensible inauguration of a new consulate on October 20, 2022. Following these discussions, Iran issued a statement asserting that Armenia's security correlated with Iran's security, emphasizing its aversion to geopolitical border alterations in the Caucasus (Huseynov, 2022).

This visit coincided with President Erdogan's participation in the inauguration of the Zangilan airport in Karabakh, where Turkish and Azerbaijani leaders deliberated over fresh projects near the Iranian border. Based on its close partnership with Turkey, Azerbaijan perceives it as an essential safeguard against threats from Armenia and Iran. Iran and Armenia are attempting to ally against the Azerbaijan-Turkey axis and are actively seeking to bring India into their alliance. They hope to gain India's support in countering the influence and cooperation between Azerbaijan and Turkey. Iran has endeavored to obstruct energy corridors from Turkic nations for years, often invoking the Caspian Sea's status as a pretext. It previously hindered Turkmen gas transit across its territory. Presently, even in the absence of territorial occupation, Iran seeks to impede the establishment of a new transportation route between Azerbaijan and Armenia by utilizing threats.

The realization of the Zangezur Corridor could potentially render Iran circumvented by Azerbaijan and Turkey, evoking isolation concerns. Iran, traditionally aligned with Armenia, is positioned in stark contrast to Turkey in this equation. Iran's principal apprehension centers on the Azerbaijani population within its borders rather than Turkey's Central Asian connections. Behind Israel's support for Azerbaijan lies a latent confrontation with Iran rather than purely arms sales or oil supply considerations. The significance of Iran's pipeline to Armenia has waned. The US-backed Trans-Caspian pipeline project might resurface.

Iran's endeavor to influence Azerbaijan's foreign policy also manifests in its interactions with Israel. Following Azerbaijan's procurement of weaponry from Israel during the Second Karabakh War, Iran's leadership labeled Baku "Zionist." Israel's interest in Azerbaijan stems from its enmity towards Iran, transcending arms transactions and extending to oil procurement. The strengthening Azerbaijan-Israel rapport spells trouble for Iran. Turkey's strategic imperative prevents Armenia's alignment with Russia and Iran and fosters rational steps toward regional peace. The pipeline initiative, initially intended to span from Turkmenistan to Turkey via Iran, was halted in 2017 due to financial disputes. Presently, Turkmenistan can redirect this gas to Turkey through Azerbaijan.

At the close of 2022, a fresh crisis materialized along the Lachin corridor, connecting Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh, involving Russian peacekeepers. The Russian contingent denied Azerbaijani officials access to the Kızılbulak gold and copper-molybdenum deposits in Lachin, prompting public unrest. Azerbaijani environmental activists initiated protests along the Shusha-Lachin road, where Russian peacekeepers were stationed, disrupting transportation between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. While Western criticism targeted Azerbaijan over the Lachin road issue, Baku remained resolute, determined to regain full authority over the region.

Third-party involvement and the Russian strategy for Nagorno-Karabakh resolution

Armenia's potential pivot toward the United States

Prime Minister of Armenia, Nikol Pashinyan, is engaged in a multifaceted struggle that extends beyond his country's future and encompasses his political survival. Behind the street protests, notable individuals from the Karabakh conflict era—Robert Kacharian and Serge Sargsyan—are actively involved. However, these figures lack broad support from Armenians, as they are suspected of pursuing policies that could align Armenia more closely with Russia and Belarus. Pashinyan, despite his previous opposition to Russian influence, has adopted a pro-Russian foreign policy. His earlier commitment to improving relations with the West has taken a backseat. In May 2022, he signed the 30 Point Agreement with Russia, promising non-compliance with Western sanctions against Russia. His actions include sending reinforcements to Russian troops in Syria and consistently aligning with Russia's positions at the United Nations. In reality, street protests are being used as a mechanism to exert pressure on Pashinyan and influence his political decisions.

Armenia is grappling with a combination of economic and political challenges, and as a result, social polarization has become increasingly evident. The efforts by Prime Minister Pashinyan to implement economic investments and policy reforms have had mixed results, creating disparities in wealth and living standards among different segments of the population. These economic disparities have sowed discontent and division within society.

Furthermore, the return of strategically vital territories, including the Lachin corridor, Aghdam, and Kelbajar, to Azerbaijan under the November 10 Agreement has added to Armenia's challenges. This change in territorial control has disrupted livelihoods and economic activities, exacerbating economic hardships for some communities.

Kelbajar, in particular, has raised concerns as it previously fulfilled 85% of Armenia's water requirements. The potential loss of this vital water source has heightened fears of resource scarcity, including the risk of contamination affecting Lake Sevan, Armenia's sole remaining water source. Such concerns over essential resources have fueled tensions and social divisions.

Additionally, the political landscape in Armenia has been marked by deep divisions and rivalries among different political factions and ideologies. These political schisms have not only shaped government policies but have also seeped into society, further contributing to social polarization as citizens align with different political leaders and parties.

In summary, social polarization in Armenia has been driven by a combination of economic disparities, territorial changes, resource concerns, and political divisions. These factors have collectively contributed to a fractured and polarized society facing significant challenges on multiple fronts.

A prospect of peace in the Caucasus could normalize relations between Armenia and Turkey. The United States supports the three South Caucasus republics building Western partnerships through Turkey as part of a strategy to encircle Russia. Pashinyan, who rose to power by opposing Russian influence, could opt for a normalization path to reduce Armenia's reliance on Russia. While his post-war electoral victory enhances his potential for peaceful leadership, Pashinyan may struggle

to accommodate Aliyev's conditions for peace. Pashinyan's room for maneuver is limited as negotiations touch upon border demarcations, the Zangezur Corridor, and Karabakh's status. Pashinyan's efforts to remove all regional road obstacles, presented in Prague, were met with no positive response.

Pashinyan's reluctance to accept the summit statement at the end of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) meeting in Yerevan in November 2022 underscores Armenia's dissatisfaction with the agreement. The CSTO, often called Russian NATO, includes Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. Armenia's dependency on Russia for security and economic stability, with 85% of natural gas and 99% of wheat imports from Russia, significantly affects its geopolitical stance (Korteweg, 2018).

Russia closely monitors Armenia's current U.S. policy. Although the United States unilaterally supports Armenia as part of its opposition to Turkey and Azerbaijan, such a stance could negatively impact its position in Central Asia. Armenia's pivot from Moscow to Washington seems improbable, as its options are limited. Potential options include remaining in the CSTO without receiving U.S. military aid, leaving the CSTO but remaining within the Russian sphere, exiting the Russian bloc altogether, or leaving the CSTO and offering a U.S. military base unilaterally.

Armenia's need for military support led it to Russia, as Central Asian countries were unfavorable partners due to strained relations with Turkey and Azerbaijan. Moreover, given the strained relations between Turkey and the West, the CSTO entering a conflict against Azerbaijan with NATO member Turkey in the region is unlikely. The West, particularly the United States, might foster unrealistic expectations in Armenia, leading to miscalculations.

In light of these dynamics, Armenia faces the challenge of charting a new course akin to its departure from the Soviet Union in 1988. The Russians, who have been actively influencing Armenia since 2018, aim to maintain their grip on Armenia by shaping its internal landscape. This Russian influence is geared towards shaping the security landscape of the entire South Caucasus, affecting both Armenia and Azerbaijan, echoing the situation in Ukraine. Armenia's internal opposition, backed by the Armenian diaspora, unwittingly contributes to Armenia's continued entanglement with Russia.

Despite Turkey's efforts to foster peaceful relations, there is a prevailing concern that opening borders within Armenia could lead to the absorption of the weak and uncompetitive Armenian economy by Turkey. This perspective considers the need for Turkey to adjust to increased competition and cheaper export products over time.

Azerbaijan's quest for independence from Russian influence

The deployment of Russian forces in the aftermath of the Second Karabakh War concerns President Aliyev. He is keen on pursuing an independent foreign policy that minimizes reliance on Russia. Meanwhile, the Kremlin aims to maintain its regional presence and influence until at least 2025. Rather than squandering time, Aliyev has opted for pragmatic cooperation with Erdogan, leveraging their longstanding partnership against Russia. However, Aliyev strives to tread cautiously, avoiding offending any party. To maintain a balance, he acknowledged the autonomy of Donbas, signaling alignment with Russia's direction. Still, his growing closeness to Turkey keeps Russian interests on high alert. This transition extends beyond the Caucasus, as Central Asian nations await the outcome of the Ukraine conflict before distancing themselves from Russian influence (Ottaviani, 2022). Presently, Turkey is maneuvering to fill the void left by Russia's diminishing role, with the potential for the Russian landscape to be reshaped following the Ukraine conflict.

The Susha Agreement on June 15, 2021, solidified Turkey and Azerbaijan as defense allies. While Baku and Yerevan engage with the EU and the USA in distinct ways, the West is poised opportunistically to fill the gaps created by Russia. While Russia may bolster its forces in Armenia to safeguard the CSTO, it could come at the expense of reserves needed for Ukraine.

In December 2021, the Azerbaijani leader invited NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg to Brussels, where they met with ambassadors from 30 NATO member countries. Azerbaijan participated in the Worthy Partner 2022 exercise alongside the USA in Georgia, hosted at the NATO-Georgia Joint Training and Evaluation Center in Vaziani.

The Azerbaijani Army's might has grown significantly following the war, gaining supremacy over the Armenian Army. Boosted by the oil and natural gas price surge, Azerbaijan's revenues have risen by about 40 percent since 2020. This financial windfall has enabled the establishment of new commando and special forces units (Ercan, 2023). The country has also fortified its arsenal with cutting-edge weaponry, including long-range surface-to-surface missiles, smart weapon systems, and drones produced in partnership with Turkey and Israel. Simultaneously, joint military exercises between the Turkish and Azerbaijani Armies persist.

In contrast, the Armenian Army has experienced relative and absolute weakening. The Russian-Ukrainian conflict has diverted Russia's attention from Armenia, hampering its capacity as a security ally. Moreover, the 2020 war depleted Armenia's stockpiles of weapons and ammunition, leaving the nation struggling to source new supplies for its troops. Alongside these challenges, Armenia grapples with internal command structure issues and a demoralized military.

In addition to surpassing Armenia's military strength, Azerbaijan gained control over key territories in Armenia through conflicts in September 2022. Critical regions such as Jermuk, Vardenis, and Gegharkunik are now under the Azerbaijan Army's control. These positions enable operations towards Syunik, Kapan, and Nakhichevan, potentially isolating the Zangezur region in southern Armenia. Should hostilities resume, these captured positions could grant Azerbaijan a distinct advantage.

Russia, having bases in Armenia and a commitment to defense, is reluctant to choose between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Putin's approach toward implementing a peace agreement appears measured. Countries in a hurry include Turkey and Azerbaijan, envisioning the opening of energy and transportation corridors that expedite access to the Caspian and Central Asia. While Russia is preoccupied with the Ukraine conflict and embargoes, it is challenging to deter Aliyev's pursuit of alternative energy sources. In February 2022, the Azerbaijan-Russia Cooperation Agreement was signed.

Russia's ambitions in the South Caucasus

Within the context of the South Caucasus, different superpowers hold diverse aspirations. The West is aligned with the notion of routes traversing the region to circumvent Russia and Iran. This is motivated by several factors:

- Europe aims to secure access to gas from Central Asian countries via the Caspian Sea and Azerbaijan, thus diminishing reliance on Russian gas (Gasparyan & Sahiounie, 2022).
- The USA seeks to sell gas to Europe while curbing Iran's oil exports, thus weakening the cards held by Russia and Iran.

Historically, Azerbaijan played a pivotal role during World War II by supplying 80% of the oil that Soviet Russia required. This oil proved crucial for the Red Army's victory against Germany. Today, the US endeavors to safeguard Caspian Sea oil and gas reserves from Russian influence (Quinn, 2022). Russia and Kazakhstan jointly control most of the Caspian Sea reserves, distributed among the five coastal countries under the Caspian Sea Agreement.

Russia envisions establishing a sphere of strategic, security, military, political, and economic influence that spans Central Asia, Ukraine-Black Sea, and the Middle East. The South Caucasus, especially the region's weaker and more sensitive part, is integral to this vision. Comprising Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia, the South Caucasus becomes a contested arena for Russia, Turkey, and Iran, each bordering at least one of these nations. Russia's military presence previously encompassed Armenia, which has now been extended with the Agdam base in Azerbaijan.

Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 has emerged as a significant challenge for the US-NATO alliance and a critical factor in the Ukraine conflict. While the US initially supported Pashinyan, the Russians have now reduced him to a subservient position. Capitalizing on nationalist sentiments in Russia, Putin has further solidified his rule by expanding Russian territory into eastern Ukraine and seizing coastal regions along the Black Sea in 2022, following the 2014 Crimean annexation.

Like Crimea's importance, the Kerch Strait and the port of Novorossiysk on the Russian coast hold vital significance. They established Russia's connection between the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea. In contrast, the US aims to ensure stability in Georgia and Azerbaijan and circumvent Russia by fostering routes through Turkey (such as transporting Azerbaijani oil to Ceyhan).

Amid global disruptions in energy, food, and trade routes due to the Ukraine War, the prospective Zangezur Strait, traversing Nagorno-Karabakh, could emerge as a crucial alternative. Zangezur represents a pivotal juncture for the global trade route between East and West and is paramount to Russia. This corridor not only evades Russian control but also undermines its bargaining power over energy and trade routes for Turkic states. Russia seeks to construct a new Black Sea energy geography centered around Novorossiysk, thereby necessitating its command over the Southern Caucasus geography and the prevention of alternative routes bypassing it.

Before the onset of the Ukraine War on February 24, 2022, Putin and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev signed a comprehensive agreement. Adjacent to the primary oil pipeline between Novorossiysk and Baku, the accord encompasses the nexus of natural gas lines originating from Russia, Kazakhstan, Iran, and Turkmenistan and connecting to China (Figure 3).

The Kerch Strait is located near two significant port cities, Novorossiysk and Sochi. Novorossiysk, which is the largest Russian commercial port on the Black Sea, is strategically positioned at the crossroads of major oil and gas pipelines connecting the Caspian Sea to the Black Sea. Additionally, Russia's control of the Azov Sea has facilitated a vital link between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, which in turn connects to the Baltic Sea and the Northern Sea Route. However, recent developments in the northern region have raised concerns.

Figure 3. Major Caspian oil and gas export routes

Source: US Energy Information Administration (2015)

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is intertwined with Putin's strategic ambitions for the Caucasus (Papian, 2022). Just two days before the outbreak of the war between Azerbaijan and Armenia on September 27, 2020, Russia and Azerbaijan inked a strategic cooperation agreement. This accord, alongside red lines drawn by the Kremlin in Karabakh, positioned Russia to assert control over

Azerbaijan's actions. Pashinyan, influenced by the West, faced pressure against making peace with Azerbaijan. Subsequently, Russia has had a firm grip on Pashinyan, leveraging the prospect of replacing him with opponents like Kocharian or Sarkisian.

Concurrently, a dedicated communication line exists between Russia and Turkey concerning the South Caucasus. While this partnership coerced Armenia into a ceasefire agreement, it invariably placed Russia in control of the situation. This dynamic aligns with Russia's overarching plan for the Caucasus.

The November 10 Agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia represents a realignment in Russia's sphere of influence. Putin redefines the regional landscape and assumes the role of a sole arbiter instead of employing direct force. While Turkey's influence might appear to expand, it operates within the parameters established by Russia. Given the divergent strategic interests of Russia and Turkey, this newly established equilibrium may not be sustainable over the long term. Putin seeks to establish a novel model of relations encompassing Turkey, Iran, and to some extent, China. This model will foster reciprocal exchanges of interests.

Conclusion

The Nagorno-Karabakh issue has posed the greatest obstacle to the South Caucasus' development and stability for nearly three decades. The enduring status quo has perpetuated a drain on Armenia's resources, both human and material. As Azerbaijan reclaims its regained territories, the conflicts remain frozen under the ceasefire agreement. Nevertheless, Turkey could potentially serve as the pivotal force that alleviates Russian pressure on Armenia and the Turkic World States, facilitating their integration into the modern world and democracy. To realize this vision, Armenia must first overcome its biases regarding Turks. However, Armenia's resistance to opening the Zangezur corridor connecting Azerbaijan to Nakhichevan has complicated matters.

Amid these challenges, mediation efforts by both Russia and the EU proceeded on separate tracks. However, by the end of 2022, talks on both channels stopped. The year's end marked the deadline for reaching a comprehensive agreement, which ultimately went unfulfilled. The future trajectory of diplomatic efforts remains to be determined, with existing conflicts and disagreements posing significant hurdles to an imminent peace agreement.

In light of the conflict in September 2022 and the subsequent blockade of the Lachin Corridor, the shadow cast over negotiations has grown larger, augmenting the likelihood of renewed hostilities. Despite the mediators' persistent endeavors to broker a comprehensive peace agreement throughout 2022, the September conflict underscored a trajectory moving away from peace. Approximately two years after the conclusion of the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War, tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan suggest an impending third conflict, making 2023 an arduous year for the region. The ongoing uncertainty in the Russia-Ukraine conflict could spawn fresh conflicts in the South Caucasus. While the specifics of future conflicts in the region are hard to predict, a new clash between Baku and Yerevan appears increasingly probable.

In October 2022, Russia managed to convene the leaders of both countries in Sochi to discuss a peace agreement. However, the talks failed to convince either party to make the concessions necessary for a peaceful resolution. Notably, recent press conferences by Prime Minister Pashinyan on January 11, 2023, and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev on January 12, 2023, have heightened concerns. Pashinyan voiced concerns over the Russian peacekeepers' lack of action on the Lachin road incidents, jeopardizing Armenia's security rather than guaranteeing it. Meanwhile, President Aliyev hinted that 2023 marks the final year for peace negotiations and stated, “We do not need (negotiations) if they (Armenians) are not interested.” These statements underscore the inevitability of a new armed conflict in Karabakh in 2023.

The EU has announced plans to deploy a new surveillance mission to 11 Azerbaijan-Armenia border regions to deter renewed hostilities on January 23, 2023. This mission could serve as a vital

means to prevent further conflict and maintain stability. However, the road to a lasting peace process for Nagorno-Karabakh may be long and extend over decades as Russia takes the lead in shaping the initiative.

Bibliography

Blank, S. (2022, September 20). Armenia must build the Zangezur Corridor. *The National Interest*. https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/armenia-must-build-zangezur-corridor-204894

Bodner, M. (2016). Russia emerges as winner in arms race between Armenia and Azerbaijan. *The Moscow Times*. https://archive.md/20200805210327/https:/www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/11/21/russias-answer-to-nagorno-karabakh-mutually-assured-destruction-a56224#selection-443.0-446.0

Ercan, S. (2023). 2022'de Azerbaycan-Ermenistan barış sürecinde neler yaşandı ve 2023'te neler yaşanacak? *Stratejik Savunma*. https://stratejiksavunma.wordpress.com/2023/02/01/2022de-azerbaycan-ermenistan-baris-surecinde-neler-yasandi-ve-2023de-neler-yasanacak/

Gasparyan, A. & Sahiounie, S. (2022, September 9). Nagorno-Karabakh is not the property of the elected elite to be surrendered, Interview with Abraham Gasparyan. *Global Research*. https://www.globalresearch.ca/nagorno-karabakh-not-property-elected-elite-surrendered-interview-abraham-gasparyan/5793893

Huseynov, V. (2022, October 26). Is Azerbaijan hurtling toward war with Iran and Armenia? *The National Interest*. https://nationalinterest.org/feature/azerbaijan-hurtling-toward-war-iran-and-armenia-205534

Konuralp, E. (2022). *Zengezur Koridoru'nun bölgesel kalkinma ve ekonomik büyümede stratejik önemi çalıştay raporu*. Serhat Kalkınma Ajansı.

Korteweg, R. (2018). *Energy as a tool of foreign policy of authoritarian states, in particular Russia*. Policy Department for External Relations Directorate General for External Policies of the Union.

Korybko, A. (2022, September 15). Analyzing Azerbaijan's "special military operation" against Armenia. *One World*. https://korybko.substack.com/p/analyzing-azerbaijans-special-military

Korybko, A. (2022, September 21). Could Armenia really ditch the CSTO sometime soon? *One World*. https://korybko.substack.com/p/could-armenia-really-ditch-the-csto?utm_source=profile&utm_medium=reader2

Kremlin. (2020). Replies to media questions on developments in Nagorno-Karabakh. *President of Russia*. http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/64431

Makili-Aliyev, K. M. (2020, November 21). The true source of troubles behind the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. *The National Interest*. https://nationalinterest.org/feature/true-source-troubles-behind-nagorno-karabakh-conflict-172949

Martin, W. (2022, December 5). Is Armenia finally turning against Russia? *The National Interest*. https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/armenia-finally-turning-against-russia-205985

News. (2022a). Baku voices its conditions for 'peace' with Armenia. *News.am*. https://news.am/eng/news/691322.html

News. (2022b). Charles Michel: At meeting with Macron, Pashinyan and Aliyev we will discuss promotion of sustainable peace. *News.am*. https://news.am/eng/news/723845.html

Ottaviani, M. (2022, April 4). Azerbaijan to follow Turkey's Ramadan distancing itself from Moscow. *Asia News*. https://www.asianews.it/news-en/Azerbaijan-to-follow-Turkey%E2%80%99s-Ramadan-distancing-tself-from-Moscow-55510.html

Papian, A. (2022, June 6). Armenia's protests mask the reality of Russian influence. *The National Interest*. https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/armenias-protests-mask-reality-russian-influence-202845

Popescu, N. (2020, November 11). Russia's win in Nagorno-Karabakh is EU's loss. *Politico*. https://www.politico.eu/article/russia-win-eu-loss-in-nagorno-karabakh/

Quinn, S. (2022, October 28). "Color revolutions," major power rivalries in Eurasia, battle for strategic supremacy. *Global Research*. https://www.globalresearch.ca/major-power-rivalries-eurasia-battle-strategic-supremacy/5797404

RFE/RL. (2021). Armenian parliament approves changes to electoral system. *Radio Free Europe*. https://www.rferl.org/a/armenian-parliament-approves-electoral-system-changes/31182505.html

RFE/RL. (2022, November 9). Direct dialogue between Armenia, Azerbaijan 'key' to peace, U.S. says. *Radio Free Europe*. https://www.rferl.org/a/armenia-azerbaijan-us-talks/32122422.html

RFE/RL. (2022, November 10). Armenia proposes demilitarized zone around Nagorno-Karabakh. *Radio Free Europe*. https://www.rferl.org/a/armenia-proposes-demilitarized-zone-nagorno-karabakh/32124504.html

Rozanskij, V. (2022, October 13). A new geography of war looms in the Caucasus. *Asia News*. https://www.asianews.it/news-en/A-new-geography-of-war-looms-in-the-Caucasus-56868.html

Shafiyev, F., & Huseynov, V. (2022, September 19). Is the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process dead? *The National Interest*. https://nationalinterest.org/feature/armenia-azerbaijan-peace-process-dead-204845

Sözcü. (2022, October 31). Aliyev'den Putin'e: Zamanı geldi. *Sözcü*. https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2022/dunya/aliyevden-putine-zamani-geldi-7452585/

Taştekin, F. (2022a). Ermenistan'la barış nasıl yapılmaz? *Al-Monitor*. https://www.al-monitor.com/tr/originals/2022/10/turkeys-stance-complicates-potential-peace-between-armenia-azerbaijan

Taştekin, F. (2022b). Barışı beklerken savaşa uyanmak. *Gazete Duvar*. https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/barisi-beklerken-savasa-uyanmak-makale-1581228

US Energy Information Administration. (2015). Caspian Sea. https://www.eia.gov/international/analysis/regions-of-interest/Caspian_Sea

Notes on Contributor

Sait Yılmaz is a professor on the international security, intelligence, and defense matters at Istanbul Esenyurt University. Also, he has great interest on the philosophy and history.

ORCID

Sait Yılmaz https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7443-1856

Disclosure Statement

The author has declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article. The author has received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Lectio Socialis
2024, VOL. 8, NO. 1, pp. 17-34

RESEARCH ARTICLE
DOI: 10.47478/lectio.1396483

Paving the way for climate resilience through sustainable urbanization: A comparative study

Selçuk Gürçam[a]

[a] PhD, Independent Researcher, Ankara, TÜRKIYE.

ABSTRACT

This study explores the crucial role of sustainable urbanization in addressing the climate crisis and fostering socio-economic development. Rapid urban population growth presents cities with unprecedented challenges, including ecological degradation, public health issues, and escalating greenhouse gas emissions. Sustainable urbanization emerges as a pivotal strategy to tackle these challenges by advocating for environmentally responsible practices, enhancing urban resilience, and fostering inclusive economic growth. The article conducts a comparative analysis of sustainable urbanization initiatives in diverse cities, with a focus on their approaches to reducing carbon footprints, enhancing disaster resilience, and improving overall quality of life. Examining case studies from Copenhagen, Curitiba, Singapore, Stockholm, and Melbourne, the research highlights innovative strategies in sustainable transport, renewable energy adoption, waste management, and green space integration. These cities serve as exemplars, showcasing successful solutions such as efficient public transportation systems, robust waste recycling programs, promotion of renewable energy, and prioritization of green spaces. The overarching message of this research underscores the critical need for coordinated, cross-sectoral efforts to unlock the full potential of sustainable urbanization. A holistic approach that integrates environmental, social, and economic dimensions is essential for creating urban environments that are resilient, inclusive, and sustainable. This comprehensive strategy not only addresses the climate crisis but also contributes significantly to achieving global sustainability goals.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received: 27.11.2023
Revised: 27.12.2023
Accepted: 30.12.2023

KEYWORDS
climate crisis,
sustainable urbanization,
urban governance,
urban development strategies,
environmental security

Introduction

Since the advent of the Industrial Revolution, the global urban population has witnessed exponential growth. Urban centers have turned into attractive centers that attract significant numbers of individuals and families in search of employment opportunities, access to education, and improved quality of life (Chan & Chan, 2022; Vardoulakis & Kinney, 2019, p. 1). As a result, the global urban population is growing at an alarming rate. In 2020, the world population increased by 0.98% compared to the previous year, reaching 7.84 billion. This upward trend continues; It will reach a population of 8.045 billion, with an increase of 0.87% in 2021 (reaching 7.909 billion), an increase of 0.83% in 2022 (reaching 7.975 billion), and then an increase of 0.88% in 2023 (Macrotrends, 2023). High-income countries have predominantly urbanized populations, while low-income countries still have a significant proportion living in rural areas, but this landscape is changing rapidly (Ritchie & Roser, 2019).

CONTACT Selçuk Gürçam selcukgrcm@gmail.com
© The Author(s). Published by *Lectio Socialis*.
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-4.0 License (CC BY 4.0), which permits re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

The United Nations (UN) Population Division reports that the percentage of the world's population living in urban areas has been increasing steadily. In 1950, only 29.6% of the population lived in urban areas. However, by the 2020s, this percentage had surpassed 55%, and it is projected to reach 68.5% by the year 2050 (UN, 2018).

In this context, urban population growth poses various challenges such as deforestation, transportation emissions, air pollution, and biodiversity loss, which have negative impacts on both the environment and human health (Al Mamun *et al.*, 2022, p. 1). The reduction of green areas and forests is one of the major contributors to the climate crisis, as it leads to an increase in carbon dioxide emissions and transportation emissions. This problem is predominantly linked to greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution from sectors like road transport, shipping, and aviation (Cerdas *et al.*, 2018, p. 2; Stere *et al.*, 2022, p. 2). Moreover, urbanization destroys natural habitats, which results in a decline in biodiversity. The urban heat island effect, caused by the retention of heat by materials like concrete and asphalt, increases temperatures in cities compared to rural areas. This effect leads to both health problems due to hot air and respiratory problems due to air pollution (S. T. Li *et al.*, 2016, p. 1; Song *et al.*, 2019, p. 7).

In light of the pressing challenges we face, the urgency of addressing sustainable urbanization cannot be overstated. However, the transformation process towards urbanization must be underpinned by a robust institutional framework, incorporating precisely articulated policies, laws, and regulations. This foundational structure is indispensable for crafting urban cities that are not only sustainable but also resilient.

The 2020 World Cities Report underscores the multifaceted advantages of such solid institutions. These encompass the promotion of inclusive prosperity, enhancement of the quality of life, steering of urban development, maximization of benefits for the majority of residents, fostering equity within cities, and acting as a catalyst for sustainable economic growth (UN-Habitat, 2020). Similarly, the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes that cities play a crucial role in achieving sustainable goals. Goal 11, in particular, aims to create cities that are inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

The focus of this study is to examine the role of sustainable urbanization in tackling the climate crisis. In line with the United Nations' goal (Ritchie & Roser, 2019), it addresses the potential of cities in combating climate change and their role in key areas such as urban planning, resource management, sustainable infrastructure, and energy systems.

When we review the relevant literature, we see that as the impacts of the climate crisis intensify, the issue of sustainable urbanization is becoming increasingly important and academic studies in this field are flourishing. In this comprehensive exploration, a diverse range of studies is considered, providing valuable insights into sustainable urbanization practices across various dimensions, from governance and public participation to economic, social, and cultural aspects.

To illustrate, this study draws upon a rich array of sustainable urbanization policies and recommendations from various sources (de Jong, 2019; Garschagen & Romero-Lankao, 2015; Jones, 2017; Keleş, 2021; Ochoa *et al.*, 2018; Shen & Zhou, 2014; Solly *et al.*, 2021; Xu *et al.*, 2019; Yeyouomo & Asongu, 2023; Zhang, 2016; Zhong *et al.*, 2020; J. Zhou *et al.*, 2015). These encompass insights on the pivotal role of local governments and urban case studies (Abubakar & Dano, 2018, 2020; Schindler *et al.*, 2018; Tan *et al.*, 2016, 2017; Q. Zhou, 2014). The examination extends to environmental governance and public participation (Enserink & Koppenjan, 2007; Fay *et al.*, 2014; Xiong *et al.*, 2020), sustainable development (Liu *et al.*, 2013; Roders, 2014), and economic, social, and cultural dimensions (Abdulai *et al.*, 2023; Boucher, 2015; Drakakis-Smith & Dixon, 1997; Lafortezza & Sanesi, 2019; World Bank, 2014).

These and similar studies investigate the feasibility and consequences of sustainable urbanization at national and global scales. However, this study differs from the existing literature by

addressing the potential of sustainable urbanization in combating the climate crisis from a broad perspective and providing policy recommendations.

Methodologically, this study is a comprehensive investigation into urban sustainability and the climate crisis. It examines successful sustainable city examples, namely Copenhagen from Denmark, Curitiba from Brazil, Singapore, Stockholm from Sweden, and Melbourne from Australia, through secondary resources. The study collects data from online databases, including Web of Science and Scopus. By showcasing successful sustainable city examples, the study illuminates the intricacies of sustainable urbanization. It also provides an in-depth analysis and comparison of a diverse array of exemplary practices. The study argues that this approach is essential in identifying key success factors and prevailing trends in the implementation of strategies for sustainable urbanization initiatives.

The cases selected for this study were based on two sources. The first source is the Sustainable Cities Index, an annual report that focuses on the three pillars of sustainability, which was developed through a collaboration between ARCADIS and the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-HABITAT).[1] Its main goal is to establish a comprehensive rating system for the 100 most sustainable cities. Some of the notable cities covered in this study are Copenhagen, Singapore, Stockholm, and Melbourne (Arcadis, 2022). In addition, Curitiba, which was distinguished with the Smart City Award of the Year by the Smart City Expo World Congress in 2023, is recognized for its innovative city strategies, projects, and ideas that are set to impact the lives of citizens and enhance the overall quality of urban living.

In essence, the research not only facilitates a nuanced understanding of sustainable urbanization but also contributes to a collective assessment of a broad spectrum of best practices. The argument put forth suggests that this wealth of information can serve as a valuable tool for recognizing patterns and success indicators in sustainable urbanization cases. Consequently, it is anticipated that this insight will aid in the selection and adaptation of proven strategies to novel contexts, fostering a climate that encourages innovative approaches to sustainable urban development.

Understanding sustainable urbanization

The escalating challenges faced by rapidly urbanizing cities around the world underscore the urgent need for sustainable urbanization. As urban populations burgeon, so too do the environmental pressures, from heightened greenhouse gas emissions to increased strain on natural resources. This surge in urbanization not only intensifies ecological challenges but also presents complex socio-economic issues, including housing shortages, transportation congestion, and public health concerns. It is in this context of growing urban challenges that the need for sustainable urbanization becomes clear. Sustainable urbanization strategies offer a pathway to address these multifaceted problems by promoting environmentally friendly practices, enhancing social inclusivity, and driving economic viability. By transitioning to sustainable urban development models, cities can not only mitigate their environmental impact but also improve the overall quality of life for their inhabitants, creating resilient, livable, and dynamic urban spaces.

In other words, sustainable urbanization is an approach that aims to develop long-term and comprehensive solutions to challenges in cities (Arıcan, 2020, p. 22). This holistic perspective emphasizes an integrated vision and action that combines different aspects of urban development and aims to achieve long-term results. To manage the impacts of urbanization on ecology, human

[1] Sustainability has three main pillars that need to be considered. The Social component includes factors that contribute to the quality of life such as education, work, and health. The Environmental component assesses how environmentally friendly a city is based on factors such as pollution levels, recycling initiatives, and the expansion of green zones. The Economic component is determined by evaluating the city's residents' economic health criteria. A holistic approach is essential as it ensures a comprehensive understanding of a city's sustainability, covering social, environmental, and economic dimensions.

health, and the economy, it is essential to understand the history and dynamics of the urbanization process, particularly land cover and land use changes (Dong *et al.*, 2020, p. 2).

Sustainable urbanization goes beyond green infrastructure and energy-efficient technologies to build resilient and livable cities with high quality of life that can adapt to climate change (M. Li *et al.*, 2020, p. 870). This implies the need to address the complexity of the ecological, health and economic impacts of urbanization.

Understanding the history of urbanization, and in particular changes in land cover and use, is critical for assessing the environmental impacts of urbanization. Urbanization leads to changes in land cover and use patterns in the process of transforming natural landscapes into urban areas. These changes lead to habitat loss, soil degradation, increased air pollution and increased demand for natural resources. Effective urban management, environmental protection, and resource management strategies can be developed by comprehending these impacts (Snieška & Zykiene, 2014, pp. 248–250).

Although sustainable urbanization is increasingly pivotal in our contemporary society, a significant challenge it presents is the risk of eroding cultural and historical heritage in the wake of modernization efforts. Often, the rush to modernize can lead to the neglect of traditional urban layouts and the destruction of areas rich in historical significance (Rodwell, 2008). Consequently, it is essential that sustainable urbanization strategies are thoughtfully designed to preserve and honor the legacy of past generations, as well as to protect the cultural richness cherished by current populations. This approach ensures that progress does not come at the cost of invaluable historical and cultural treasures.

Sustainable urbanization includes a range of strategies and initiatives aimed at creating livable cities that adapt to climate change. Strategies that promote compact and mixed use, improve public transportation systems, implement green infrastructure, and increase the use of renewable energy are the cornerstones of this approach. By implementing these measures, cities can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, support biodiversity and create more equitable communities (C. Li *et al.*, 2022, p. 1; Pozoukidou, 2014, p. 7).

The achievements of sustainable urbanization include a reduction in the necessity for long-distance transportation, thereby lowering carbon emissions through the promotion of compact urban development. Simultaneously, sustainable transportation systems are developed, public transportation is encouraged, pedestrian and bicycle-friendly infrastructures are created, and support for cleaner vehicles is emphasized. Through the implementation of these practices, cities can diminish their carbon footprint, alleviate traffic congestion and air pollution, and foster healthy lifestyles for their residents.

The link between sustainable urbanization and the climate crisis

Climate change is a global phenomenon affecting every aspect of urban life. Rising temperatures are leading to rising sea levels, extreme weather events of increasing frequency and severity, and the spread of tropical diseases. These impacts have costly and profound effects on cities' infrastructure, services, housing, livelihoods, and public health. Urban activities are also major sources of greenhouse gas emissions, with cities responsible for around 75% of global CO2 emissions, with transportation and buildings being the sectors with the largest shares (UNEP, 2023).

Urban flooding is a result of the soil's reduced ability to absorb rainwater due to expanding cities and urban infrastructure replacing natural landscapes. The increase in extreme weather events associated with climate change increases the risk of frequent and severe urban flooding. In a world where more than half of the population lives in cities and this proportion is expected to increase in the coming decades, cities bear the brunt of natural disasters. The world's largest cities, especially along coastlines, rivers, and floodplains, are most vulnerable when natural disasters occur. Scientific

forecasts predict that climate change will make millions of people more vulnerable to disasters such as floods, landslides, and extreme weather in the coming decades (Kacyira, 2012).

For example, coastal cities in Asia are at risk of coastal flooding, while other cities may face river flooding and flooding. On a continent where around 1.2 billion people face the threat of flooding and inundation, the impact of these threats is even greater, especially in large cities with populations of over 10 million (Inoue, 2022). In the United States, it is estimated that a one meter rise in sea level in cities such as New York could cause major damage to the US economy by inundating coastal areas, as well as affecting subway systems, treatment plants, power plants and factories.

The contribution of urbanization to climate change leads to various negative environmental impacts such as the urban heat island effect, flooding, and air pollution (Pirouz *et al.*, 2020, p. 2). The urban heat island effect occurs when urban areas retain more heat than surrounding rural areas due to the high density of buildings and pavements. This causes temperatures to rise in cities, increasing energy consumption for cooling and generally raising local temperatures. Increased energy demand contributes to greenhouse gas emissions, exacerbating the effects of climate change. The urbanization process also contributes to air pollution from vehicles, industrial activities, and energy consumption. These pollutants contribute to global warming and have negative impacts on air quality, human health, and ecosystems (Walsh *et al.*, 2013).

Comparing major cases of sustainable urbanization

As we delve into the practical application of sustainable urbanization, we turn our focus to a selection of case studies that exemplify diverse and innovative approaches. The cities chosen for this analysis – Copenhagen, Curitiba, Singapore, Stockholm, and Melbourne – have been at the forefront of integrating sustainability into their urban fabric. These cities inherently prioritize the environment by placing a strong emphasis on maximizing green spaces. Consequently, their goal is to offer a sustainable, long-term solution to urban living that can endure changes over time, with careful consideration given to the needs of future generations.

As shown in Table 1, each city has demonstrated leadership in tackling the environmental challenges unique to their geographical and socio-economic contexts. These case studies were selected not only for their successes but also for the variety of their strategies, offering a broad perspective on how different urban environments adapt to the challenges of sustainability. By examining these examples, we aim to highlight the unique initiatives and policies that have made these cities models of sustainable urban development, providing valuable lessons and inspiration for other urban areas worldwide.

A comparative study in the European Union documented that sustainable urbanization strategies implemented in smart cities improve quality of life by facilitating social interaction and access to services and reduce energy consumption through green building designs and energy efficient solutions (Liang *et al.*, 2017; Zaballos *et al.*, 2021).

In Copenhagen, Denmark, the city has implemented several initiatives to reduce carbon emissions and create a greener and more environmentally friendly urban environment through sustainable urbanization practices. First, 98% of all homes in Copenhagen today are connected to a district heating system. Additionally, by 2022, 68% of hotel rooms in Copenhagen will be eco-certified, and 58% of hotels in the capital have certifications such as Green Key, ISO certification, or The Nordic Swan ecolabel.

Secondly, the Municipality of Copenhagen has an extensive network of 546 kilometers of bicycle lanes. An average of 84 million Danish kroner has been invested each year in cycling initiatives in Copenhagen over the last 10 years. In 2021, 35% of Copenhageners chose to cycle to work or school every day. Buses in Copenhagen are increasingly going electric; In 2020, all five port buses will be electric, marking the world's first fully electric water-related public transport project.

Table 1. The most successful sustainable city examples

Copenhagen: A Model for Green Urban Living	**District Heating System:** Copenhagen has connected 98% of its homes to a district heating system, significantly reducing carbon emissions. **Eco-Certified Accommodations:** By 2022, 68% of hotel rooms in Copenhagen are eco-certified, with many holding certifications like Green Key and The Nordic Swan ecolabel. **Cycling Infrastructure:** The city boasts 546 km of bicycle paths, with a substantial annual investment in cycling projects, leading to 35% of residents cycling to work or school. **Electric Public Transport:** Copenhagen has introduced electric buses, including the world's first fully electric water-related public transport project. **Innovative Cooling Systems:** One-third of hotel rooms use water from the Port of Copenhagen for cooling, significantly reducing CO2 emissions.
Curitiba: Sustainable Urban Pioneer	**Revolutionary Public Transport:** Curitiba's bus rapid transit system features express lanes and rapid boarding, enhancing efficiency and lowering emissions. **Green Space Expansion:** The city has planted 1.5 million trees and established numerous parks, using green spaces to combat urban flooding innovatively. **Effective Recycling Programs:** Approximately 70% of Curitiba's trash is recycled, with incentives provided for recycling. **Educational Initiatives:** The University of the Free Environment and other educational programs raise awareness and knowledge about sustainability.
Singapore: Island of Sustainability	**Water Scarcity Solutions:** Singapore has developed a groundbreaking wastewater recycling system, reusing 40% of its water. **Circular Economy Approach:** The city is recycling waste into construction material and reducing landfill waste, supported by an extensive public transport and cycling network. **Sustainable Building Practices:** Singapore aims to green 80% of its buildings by 2030, employing techniques like roof gardens and green walls. **Smart Transportation Policy:** Indeed, it contributes significantly to the establishment of a highly sustainable urban transport system.
Stockholm: Green Urban Leader	**Renewable Public Transport:** Stockholm's public transport system, primarily running on renewable energy, significantly reduces emissions. **Cycling Infrastructure:** Investment in cycling infrastructure and bike-sharing systems supports Stockholm's sustainable transport goals. **Energy Transition:** The city aims to eliminate fossil fuels by 2040, with 70% of energy consumption already from renewable sources. **Waste Management and Green Spaces:** Stockholm excels in recycling and green space maintenance, contributing to its sustainable urban landscape.
Melbourne: Innovator in Sustainability	**Sustainable Transport System:** Melbourne's public transport network is powered by renewable energy, reducing greenhouse gas emissions. **Renewable Energy and Waste Reduction:** The city is transitioning to renewable energy and aims for zero waste to landfills by 2030. **Sustainable Building and Green Spaces:** Policies promoting sustainable buildings and the protection of green spaces highlight Melbourne's commitment to sustainability. **Water Resources Management:** Melbourne adopts the integrated water cycle management method, which effectively coordinates all aspects of the water cycle.

Source: Produced by the author.

Third, a significant environmental impact is achieved thanks to the fact that one-third of Copenhagen's hotel rooms (more than 8,000) are cooled with water from the Port of Copenhagen, resulting in a reduction in CO2 of up to 70% compared to standard air conditioners. Similarly, the Royal Danish Theater (Skuespilhuset) in Copenhagen uses port water and thermoactivated structures to cool or heat the building. This initiative is part of the EU-funded project ECO-Culture, which also includes the Amsterdam Library and the New Opera House in Oslo.

Finally, these initiatives, which include strengthening bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, investments in renewable energy, and the development of sustainable waste management systems, have positioned Copenhagen as a global leader in sustainable urbanization (Co, 2022; Liverino, 2023; Urbanlifecopenhagen, 2023).

Curitiba, the capital of the Brazilian state of Parana, has a significant and diverse history. Originally a cultural and economic center surrounded by farmland in the 19th century, the city transformed over time, particularly in the 1940s with the mechanization of soybean farming. This shift led to a doubling of the city's population within two decades, turning Curitiba into a bustling but polluted municipality. The pivotal moment for positive change occurred in 1972 when Jaime Lerner became the mayor and implemented a sustainable city plan, introducing several innovative solutions for sustainable urbanization.

Curitiba has implemented a revolutionary bus rapid transit system that features express lane roads exclusively for buses, buses designed for rapid boarding, and consistent and affordable ticket prices. This system has contributed significantly to maintaining a fast, economical, and low-emission public transportation system. The effectiveness of this system is complemented by the city's pedestrian-only streets and bicycle paths, which further enhance the overall transportation experience.

Curitiba has been actively pursuing green initiatives since the 1970s, planting 1.5 million trees and establishing 28 public parks. To tackle the problem of flooding that used to haunt the city, Curitiba took an innovative approach by surrounding the urban area with grass fields. This helped to avoid the need for expensive and environmentally damaging dams. Interestingly, instead of using machinery to maintain the fields, the city employed sheep which benefited farmers with fertilizer and wool. This not only saved resources but also reduced reliance on oil.

Curitiba has implemented a highly successful recycling program, with around 70% of its waste being recycled. The program offers incentives such as bus tokens, notebooks, and food in exchange for recyclables. This initiative not only helps with environmental conservation but also supports education, increases access to food, and facilitates transportation for the urban poor.

The University of the Free Environment in Curitiba is an important institution in empowering the city's underprivileged population and educating them about sustainability. Through informative boards and signs installed throughout the city, citizens are made aware of its environmentally-friendly design. This emphasis on education helps create a culture of awareness and pride in sustainability, which in turn contributes to the preservation of Curitiba's green spaces.

To sum up, Curitiba's path towards sustainable urbanization highlights creative answers to public transportation, green space management, recycling, and education. These efforts have not only changed the city's environmental impact but also tackled social and economic issues, making Curitiba an exceptional model of sustainable urban development (Berzins, 2020; Cabral, 2022; Gortázar, 2023; Larbi *et al.*, 2022).

Singapore is a small island nation located at the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula with a population of approximately 6 million people. It has now emerged as one of Asia's leading cities in terms of environmental friendliness. The journey towards sustainable urbanization in Singapore was initially faced with pollution, limited resources, and hygiene issues. Despite these challenges, Singapore has made a remarkable transformation and has become a model of sustainability since gaining independence in 1965. The country has allocated around 46.5% of its compact 719 km² territory to green areas. Below, you can find out how Singapore achieved its sustainability goals.

Singapore has been facing water scarcity due to limited resources and a growing population. To tackle this issue, the city has invested significantly in research, development, and innovation over the past 50 years. Despite being one of the most water-stressed countries globally, Singapore has made remarkable progress in addressing water scarcity. It has effectively managed gas emissions and polluted rivers and implemented a pioneering wastewater recycling system. At present, Singapore residents reuse around 40% of water, which is a significant achievement in overcoming water scarcity.

Singapore's 'Clean and Green' campaign aims to achieve all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 through circular economy initiatives. One of its primary objectives is to recycle waste into civil construction material, with a target to reduce landfill waste by 30% by 2030. The

sustainability of urban areas heavily relies on the presence of an efficient, affordable, and modern public transport system. Despite Singapore's transport network facing limitations in terms of openness to development, the city receives public praise for its commitment to incorporating data in transport planning. This extends from initiatives in electric vehicles to overarching strategies, collectively contributing to the establishment of a highly sustainable urban transport system. Additionally, Singapore has made considerable progress in its use of natural gas and solar energy, making it one of the most carbon-efficient nations worldwide.

Singapore is a densely populated city with many tall buildings, and it aims to make at least 80% of its buildings green by 2030 in line with circular economy principles. To achieve this goal, the city uses various techniques such as installing roof gardens and green walls on all city buildings. Notably, Changi Airport has won the title of the World's Best Airport eight times, which reflects the city's commitment to sustainable building practices.

These points clarify that Singapore has successfully tackled social, economic, and environmental challenges by prioritizing green development. The city-state's commitment to sustainability is evident in its innovative and circular solutions, making it a global example. By encouraging citizens to adopt sustainable practices through biophilic design principles, Singapore has achieved a harmonious balance between human and environmental factors. By keeping sustainability at the forefront, Singapore has not only attained independence, but has also emerged as a global leader in development and environmental responsibility (Curien, 2017; Igini, 2023; Joson, 2022; Singapore Green Plan 2030, 2023; Tavares, 2023; Venkateshwaran, 2021).

Stockholm, the capital of Sweden, has undergone a remarkable transformation towards sustainability in recent years, setting an example for cities worldwide. The city's commitment to environmental responsibility emerged in the 1980s in response to environmental crises, including air and water pollution. Since then, Stockholm has implemented several initiatives to become a green and sustainable city.

Stockholm has made significant investments to reduce emissions and enhance efficiency in its transportation, energy, waste management, and green spaces. Public transport is a key component of this strategy, with the city boasting an extensive metro system, and buses and trains running on renewable energy sources. As a result, public transport now accounts for 80% of all trips taken in the city, significantly reducing traffic congestion and emissions. The city has also prioritized cycling as a sustainable mode of transportation, with investments in dedicated cycling lanes, parking facilities, and bike-sharing systems. These efforts have made cycling a convenient and accessible option for residents.

Stockholm has set an ambitious goal of eliminating fossil fuels from its energy mix by 2040. To achieve this, the city has made substantial investments in renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar power, which currently account for 70% of its energy consumption. The city also promotes sustainable building practices by enforcing strict energy efficiency standards, encouraging the use of eco-friendly materials, and providing financial incentives to building owners to enhance energy efficiency. Green roofs are also encouraged. Stockholm's comprehensive waste management system prioritizes recycling and composting, with a goal to achieve zero waste by 2040. As of 2021, over 99% of the city's waste is recycled. Finally, the city prioritizes green spaces, parks, and nature reserves, providing residents with opportunities to connect with nature and improve overall well-being.

Despite making progress, Stockholm has had to deal with several challenges, including the high cost of sustainable infrastructure and technology. However, the city has successfully tackled these challenges through collaborations between the private and public sectors, seeking funding from international organizations, and offering financial incentives to encourage residents and businesses to adopt sustainable practices. To sum up, Stockholm's approach towards sustainability is holistic, covering transportation, energy, construction, waste management, and urban green spaces. The city's commitment to overcoming challenges and adopting sustainable practices has made it a global leader

in sustainable urban development (Adem Esmail *et al.*, 2022; Anna Hult, Jonathan Metzger, 2013; Brokking *et al.*, 2021; EARTH5r, 2023; Jerlmyr, 2021).

Last but not least, Melbourne, the second-largest city in Australia, has been a pioneer in sustainability efforts for a long time. The city has taken significant steps towards reducing its environmental impact, from promoting sustainable transportation to encouraging the use of renewable energy sources. Here are some of the ways Melbourne is leading the charge in sustainability:

Melbourne boasts one of the world's most sustainable transport systems, which emits 70% fewer greenhouse gas emissions than driving. The city has an extensive public transport network that includes trams, buses, and trains powered by renewable energy sources like wind and solar. Melbourne also offers a robust bike-share program and has dedicated bike lanes, making cycling a viable option for commuters. With a goal of reaching net-zero emissions by 2050, Melbourne has taken decisive steps to transition to renewable energy sources. Over 40% of the city's electricity comes from renewable sources like wind and solar, and Melbourne continues to invest in large-scale renewable energy projects. For instance, Melbourne's iconic Flinders Street Station is powered by a 20kW solar panel. Melbourne has implemented several initiatives to reduce waste, including recycling and composting programs. The city's recycling program is among the world's most comprehensive, with over 80% of waste being recycled or composted. Additionally, Melbourne has introduced a ban on single-use plastics such as straws and plastic bags to combat plastic waste. The city aims to achieve zero waste to landfills by 2030. The city has implemented policies promoting sustainable building practices. New buildings must meet stringent energy efficiency standards, and Melbourne invests in renovating existing structures to enhance energy efficiency. Melbourne City Hall 2 is a notable example of a building that utilizes natural ventilation and a trigeneration system to reduce energy consumption. Melbourne is renowned for its green spaces, and the city has policies to protect and enhance these areas. With over 480 parks and reserves, including the Royal Botanic Gardens with more than 8,500 plant species, Melbourne actively promotes green initiatives such as rooftop gardens and green walls to increase urban green space. Melbourne implements integrated water cycle management, coordinating all aspects of the water cycle such as water consumption, rainwater harvesting, wastewater, and groundwater. This comprehensive approach yields various benefits for the broader basin (Frantzeskaki *et al.*, 2022; James, 2014, pp. 15–17; UN-Habitat, 2022; Urban Water, 2023; Yigitcanlar *et al.*, 2008).

To put it briefly, Melbourne's commitment to sustainable practices has not only enhanced the environment but also created a more livable city for its residents. As other cities aim to reduce their environmental impact, Melbourne's sustainability efforts stand as a model for emulation these and other examples highlight the vital role cities play in mitigating the climate crisis and achieving sustainable development goals.

In our comparative analysis of sustainable urbanization, distinct patterns and strategies emerge from the case studies of Copenhagen, Curitiba, Singapore, Stockholm, and Melbourne. While Copenhagen excels in energy efficiency with its district heating system, Curitiba's bus rapid transit system stands out for its innovative approach to public transportation. Singapore's focus on overcoming water scarcity and its investment in circular economy initiatives demonstrate a strong commitment to resource management, contrasting with Stockholm's extensive investment in renewable energy and public transportation to reduce emissions. Melbourne, on the other hand, showcases a comprehensive approach to waste management and sustainable building practices. These contrasting strategies highlight the cities' adaptation to their specific environmental challenges and resource availabilities. However, a common thread across all these cities is the emphasis on integrating sustainable practices into the urban fabric to improve quality of life while minimizing environmental impact. This comparative analysis underscores that while there is no one-size-fits-all solution to sustainable urbanization, the core principles of resource efficiency, sustainable mobility, green infrastructure, and community involvement are universally applicable. The success of these

cities provides valuable lessons for other urban areas striving to achieve sustainable development in the face of climate challenges.

As a general overview, each city has its strengths and innovative ways of achieving sustainable urbanization, which helps climate resilience and improves quality of life. Even though strategies may differ depending on the local contexts and resources, the fundamental principles of sustainable urbanization, such as resource efficiency, sustainable mobility, green infrastructure, community involvement, and innovative solutions, remain consistent across various urban settings.

Potential challenges and solutions for sustainable urbanization

The exploration of sustainable urbanization practices in cities like Copenhagen, Curitiba, Singapore, Stockholm, and Melbourne not only highlights the current achievements but also opens up avenues for future development in this field. These case studies demonstrate that while significant progress has been made, the journey towards truly sustainable urbanization is ongoing and evolving. Looking ahead, the prospects for sustainable urbanization lie in leveraging technological advancements, fostering community engagement, and enhancing policy frameworks. The future will likely see an increased integration of smart city technologies, which could offer more efficient resource management and better quality of life. Moreover, the role of public participation and grassroots initiatives in shaping urban policies will become increasingly crucial. As we move forward, it is imperative that cities continue to learn from each other, adapting successful strategies to their unique contexts and challenges. The next phase of sustainable urbanization will involve not just the expansion of green infrastructure but also a deeper focus on social equity, economic viability, and resilience to environmental challenges, setting a blueprint for future cities to follow.

Sustainable urbanization holds promise in tackling the climate crisis, but it also brings significant challenges. The inadequacy of existing infrastructure, especially old and inefficient systems such as transportation and building networks, is one of the biggest obstacles to these initiatives. Cities can overcome this challenge by renovating existing structures and adding energy efficiency and environmentally friendly solutions.

However, it can be argued that it is not economically viable, particularly in developing countries. The implementation of sustainable urban development strategies often requires significant financial investment, which may not be feasible or a priority for cities that have limited resources or more pressing needs (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division, 2019). In other words, resource constraints in low- and middle-income countries are another barrier that makes sustainable urbanization difficult. International cooperation and financial support can help these countries overcome these challenges by building their capacities and implementing sustainable practices.

Another barrier is the lack of awareness and understanding of sustainable urbanization among residents and stakeholders. Education and awareness-raising campaigns on the importance of sustainable urbanization can fill this knowledge gap.

Maintaining the balance between economic growth and environmental sustainability is another challenge. Economic growth must be sustained without causing environmental degradation. Effective governance and policy implementation are essential to achieve sustainable urbanization goals. Population growth and urban sprawl, without proper planning and management, can lead to overcrowding, increased pressure on infrastructure and resources, and a decline in quality of life (Yang *et al.*, 2020, p. 2). Explores governance's role in sustainable urbanization is of critical importance. However, political will, corruption, and bureaucratic inefficiencies can impede sustainable urban policy implementation (Anguelovski, 2016, p. 1).

Sustainable urbanization offers an approach that encompasses environmental, social, and economic well-being. Creating inclusive and livable communities, prioritizing affordable housing,

access to health and education, and cultural diversity strengthens social equity and economic prosperity. Promoting green job opportunities, entrepreneurship and investment in clean technologies can build a sustainable economy (Iwan & Poon, 2018).

As a result, sustainable urbanization facilitates the development of resilient, inclusive, and sustainable cities that stand at the intersection of environmental progress, economic growth, and social needs.

Conclusion

This study's examination of various approaches to sustainable urbanization in global cities such as Copenhagen, Curitiba, Singapore, Stockholm, and Melbourne has shed light on diverse strategies and their impact on mitigating climate change. While each city offers unique solutions tailored to its specific challenges, they all share a common goal of enhancing urban resilience and sustainability. Examples ranging from Copenhagen's pioneering district heating systems to Curitiba's innovative public transport underscore the potential of urban areas to act as catalysts for environmental and social transformation.

However, the journey toward sustainable urbanization is fraught with challenges. The delicate balance between economic growth, environmental preservation, and social equity becomes particularly pronounced in developing countries where resources are limited. This necessitates a stronger emphasis on international cooperation, technological transfer, and policy innovation to bolster these regions in their sustainability endeavors.

Looking ahead, there is a clear need for further research into the long-term effects of these urbanization strategies. Studies could focus on the scalability of successful initiatives and their adaptability to different socio-economic contexts. Additionally, research into the integration of emerging technologies such as smart city data analytics and artificial intelligence into sustainable urban planning holds promise.

Consequently, despite significant strides in sustainable urbanization, there remains a vast landscape of untapped potential. Future policy formulations should ensure that the path to sustainability is inclusive and equitable, taking into account not only environmental aspects but also socio-economic impacts. As cities continue to grow and evolve, they must be prepared, adaptable, and resilient to the challenges and opportunities of the future in the era of climate change.

The proliferation of sustainable cities is a crucial argument in the fight against the climate crisis. Therefore, the following policy recommendations come to the fore in terms of disseminating sustainable urbanization practices:

Advocacy for Increased International Cooperation: Advocate for increased international cooperation, especially between developed and developing countries, to facilitate the transfer of sustainable urbanization technologies, best practices, and knowledge sharing.

Financial and Technical Support for Developing Countries: Develop policies that provide financial and technical support to developing countries in their sustainable urbanization efforts. This support must address the unique challenges facing these nations, considering the delicate balance between economic growth, environmental protection, and social equity.

Encouraging Policy Innovation: Encourage and support policy innovation at both local and national levels. Governments must create an enabling environment to experiment with new, sustainable urbanization strategies that can solve specific challenges in their regions.

Allocation of Resources for Research: Allocate resources for further research on the long-term impacts of sustainable urbanization strategies. Prioritize studies that examine the scalability of successful initiatives and their adaptability to various socio-economic contexts.

Support for Technology Integration: Support the integration of emerging technologies such as smart city data analytics and artificial intelligence into sustainable urban planning. Invest in research and

development to explore the potential benefits and challenges associated with implementing these technologies.

Emphasis on Inclusive and Equitable Policies: Emphasize the importance of inclusive and equitable policies. Future urbanization strategies should not only focus on environmental aspects but also consider socio-economic impacts, ensuring that the benefits of sustainable urbanization are shared by all segments of the population.

Encouragement of Adaptation and Resilience: Encourage cities to develop and implement strategies that increase adaptation and resilience. This includes preparing for both the challenges and opportunities that may arise in the context of climate change and evolving urban landscapes.

Implementation of Awareness and Education Campaigns: Implement awareness and education campaigns to engage citizens in the sustainable urbanization process. Public support is vital to the success of long-term policies, and informed communities can contribute significantly to achieving sustainability goals.

These policy recommendations aim to address the complexities of sustainable urbanization, recognizing the diversity of challenges faced by different cities and regions around the world. The proposed policies prioritize collaboration, innovation, research, inclusivity, and adaptability to ensure a comprehensive and effective approach to sustainable urban development.

Bibliography

Abdulai, I. A., Kuusaana, E. D. & Ahmed, A. (2023). Toward sustainable urbanization: Understanding the dynamics of urban sprawl and food (in)security of indigenous households in peri-urban Wa, Ghana. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 1–26. DOI: 10.1080/07352166.2023.2224023

Abubakar, I. R. & Dano, U. L. (2018). Socioeconomic challenges and opportunities of urbanization in Nigeria. In Benna, U., & Benna, I. (Eds.), *Urbanization and its impact on socio-economic growth in developing regions*, (pp. 219–240). IGI Global. DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-2659-9.ch011

Abubakar, I. R. & Dano, U. L. (2020). Sustainable urban planning strategies for mitigating climate change in Saudi Arabia. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, *22*(6), 5129–5152. DOI: 10.1007/s10668-019-00417-1

Adem Esmail, B., Cortinovis, C., Suleiman, L., Albert, C., Geneletti, D. & Mörtberg, U. (2022). Greening cities through urban planning: A literature review on the uptake of concepts and methods in Stockholm. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, *72*, 127584. DOI: 10.1016/j.ufug.2022.127584

Al Mamun, A., Hayat, N., Masud, M. M., Makhbul, Z. K. M., Jannat, T. & Salleh, M. F. M. (2022). Modelling the significance of value-belief-norm theory in predicting solid waste management ıntention and behavior. *Frontiers in Environmental Science*, *10*. DOI: 10.3389/fenvs.2022.906002

Anguelovski, I. (2016). From Toxic Sites to Parks as (Green) LULUs? New challenges of ınequity, privilege, gentrification, and exclusion for urban environmental justice. *Journal of Planning Literature*, *31*(1), 23–36. DOI: 10.1177/0885412215610491

Anna Hult, Jonathan Metzger, A. R. O. (2013). *Just how sustainable is Stockholm?* Chinadialogue. https://chinadialogue.net/en/cities/6434-just-how-sustainable-is-stockholm/

Arcadis. (2022). The Arcadis sustainable cities index 2022: Prosperity beyond profit. *Arcadis Website*. https://images.connect.arcadis.com/Web/Arcadis/%7Be08e5cda-768d-46a3-91ce-4efe16cbfc05%7D_The_Arcadis_Sustainable_Cities_Index_2022_Report.pdf

Arıcan, M. (2020). Policies concerning urban safety and urbanization in Istanbul. *Annals of Social Sciences & Management Studies*, *5*(2).
DOI: 10.19080/ASM.2020.05.555657

Berzins, R. (2020). Sustainability In Curitiba, Brazil. *The Borgen Project*. https://borgenproject.org/sustainability-in-curitiba/

Boucher, M. (2015). The political economy of sustainable urbanization. *Journal of Integrated Studies*, *6*(1), 1-14.

Brokking, P., Mörtberg, U. & Balfors, B. (2021). Municipal practices for ıntegrated planning of nature-based solutions in urban development in the Stockholm region. *Sustainability*, *13*(18), 10389.
DOI: 10.3390/su131810389

Cabral, P. (2022). Curitiba, Brazil: A sustainable city. *CGTN America*. https://america.cgtn.com/2022/10/10/curitiba-brazil-a-sustainable-city

Cerdas, F., Titscher, P., Bognar, N., Schmuch, R., Winter, M., Kwade, A. & Herrmann, C. (2018). Exploring the Effect of ıncreased energy density on the environmental ımpacts of traction batteries: A comparison of energy optimized lithium-ıon and lithium-sulfur batteries for mobility applications. *Energies*, *11*(1), 150.
DOI: 10.3390/en11010150

Chan, F. K. S. & Chan, H. K. (2022). Recent research and challenges in sustainable urbanisation. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, *184*, 106346.
DOI: 10.1016/j.resconrec.2022.106346

Co, G. (2022). Green city goals: 8 reasons why Copenhagen ıs the world's greenest city. *8shades*. https://www.8shades.com/green-city-goals-copenhagen-sustainability/

Curien, R. (2017). Singapore, a model for (sustainable?) urban development in China. *China Perspectives*, *2017*(1), 25–35.
DOI: 10.4000/chinaperspectives.7183

de Jong, M. (2019). From eco-civilization to city branding: A neo-marxist perspective of sustainable urbanization in China. *Sustainability*, *11*(20), 5608.
DOI: 10.3390/su11205608

Dong, Y., Ren, Z., Fu, Y., Miao, Z., Yang, R., Sun, Y. & He, X. (2020). Recording urban land dynamic and ıts effects during 2000–2019 at 15-m resolution by cloud computing with landsat series. *Remote Sensing*, *12*(15), 2451.
DOI: 10.3390/rs12152451

Drakakis-Smith, D. & Dixon, C. (1997). Sustainable urbanization in Vietnam. *Geoforum*, *28*(1), 21–38.
DOI: 10.1016/S0016-7185(97)85525-X

EARTH5r. (2023). A Look Inside Stockholm's Path To Sustainable Development. *Earth5r*. https://earth5r.org/a-look-inside-stockholms-path-to-sustainable-development/

Enserink, B. & Koppenjan, J. (2007). Public participation in China: sustainable urbanization and governance. *Management of Environmental Quality: An International Journal*, *18*(4), 459–474.
DOI: 10.1108/14777830710753848

Fay, M., Wang, J., Draugelis, G. & Deichmann, U. (2014). Role of green governance in achieving sustainable urbanization in China. *China & World Economy*, *22*(5), 19–36.
DOI: 10.1111/j.1749-124X.2014.12082.x

Frantzeskaki, N., Oke, C., Barnett, G., Bekessy, S., Bush, J., Fitzsimons, J., Ignatieva, M., Kendal, D., Kingsley, J., Mumaw, L. & Ossola, A. (2022). A transformative mission for prioritising nature in Australian cities. *Ambio*, *51*(6), 1433–1445.
DOI: 10.1007/s13280-022-01725-z

Garschagen, M. & Romero-Lankao, P. (2015). Exploring the relationships between urbanization trends and climate change vulnerability. *Climatic Change*, *133*(1), 37–52.
DOI: 10.1007/s10584-013-0812-6

Gortázar, N. G. (2023). Curitiba: Brazil's sustainable green gem. *Ediciones El País*. https://english.elpais.com/eps/2023-07-02/curitiba-brazils-sustainable-green-gem.html

Igini, M. (2023). How Sustainable cities like Singapore succeed in green urban development. *Earth.org*. https://earth.org/how-sustainable-cities-like-singapore-succeed-in-green-urban-development/

Inoue, K. (2022). Flood risk rises in Asia as cities grow, land sinks. *Nikkei*. https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Datawatch/Flood-risk-rises-in-Asia-as-cities-grow-land-sinks

Iwan, A. & Poon, K. K. Y. (2018). The role of governments and green building councils in cities' transformation to become sustainable: Case studies of Hong Kong (East) and Vancouver (West). *International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning*, *13*(04), 556–570. DOI: 10.2495/SDP-V13-N4-556-570

James, P. (2014). *Urban sustainability in theory and practice: Circles of sustainability*. Routledge. https://www.metropolis.org/sites/default/files/paul_james_urban_sustainability_2015.pdf

Jerlmyr, A. K. (2021). What Stockholm can teach the world about green urban development. *World Economic Forum*. https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/09/stockholm-teach-world-about-green-urban-development/

Jones, P. (2017). Formalizing the informal: Understanding the position of ınformal settlements and slums in sustainable urbanization policies and strategies in Bandung, Indonesia. *Sustainability*, *9*(8), 1436. DOI: 10.3390/su9081436

Joson, J. (2022). How Singapore is pioneering the way to creating a greener urban environment. *Arch Daily*. https://www.archdaily.com/976437/how-singapore-is-pioneering-the-way-to-creating-a-greener-urban-environment

Kacyira, A. K. (2012). Addressing the sustainable urbanization challenge. *United Nations*. https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/addressing-sustainable-urbanization-challenge

Keleş, R. (2021). Sustainable urbanization and its policy implications. The case of Turkey. *Interdependency between Agriculture and Urbanization: Conflicts on Sustainable Use of Soil and Water*, 119–135. https://om.ciheam.org/om/pdf/a44/02001592.pdf

Lafortezza, R. & Sanesi, G. (2019). Nature-based solutions: Settling the issue of sustainable urbanization. *Environmental Research*, *172*, 394–398. DOI: 10.1016/j.envres.2018.12.063

Larbi, M., Kellett, J. & Palazzo, E. (2022). Urban sustainability transitions in the Global South: a case study of Curitiba and Accra. *Urban Forum*, *33*(2), 223–244. DOI: 10.1007/s12132-021-09438-4

Li, C., Zhang, T., Wang, X. & Lian, Z. (2022). Site selection of urban parks based on fuzzy-analytic hierarchy process (F-AHP): A case study of Nanjing, China. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *19*(20), 13159. DOI: 10.3390/ijerph192013159

Li, M., Jie, Z. & Zhu, Y. (2020). Evaluation on the warning-degree of the ecological carrying capacity of Guangzhou city based on the DPSIR model. *WSEAS Transactions On Business And Economics*, *17*, 869–878. DOI: 10.37394/23207.2020.17.85

Li, S. T., Li, J. & Duan, P. (2016). Relationship between urban heat island effect and land use in Taiyuan City, China. *MATEC Web of Conferences*, *63*, 04024. DOI: 10.1051/matecconf/20166304024

Liang, X., Si, D. & Zhang, X. (2017). Regional sustainable development analysis based on information Entropy—Sichuan province as an example. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *14*(10), 1219.
DOI: 10.3390/ijerph14101219

Liu, S., Zhang, P., Jiang, X. & Lo, K. (2013). Measuring sustainable urbanization in China: a case study of the coastal Liaoning area. *Sustainability Science*, *8*(4), 585–594.
DOI: 10.1007/s11625-012-0193-1

Liverino, G. (2023). Sustainability in Copenhagen. *Wonderful Copenhagen*. https://www.wonderfulcopenhagen.com/wonderful-copenhagen/international-press/sustainability-copenhagen

Macrotrends. (2023). World population growth rate 1950-2023. *Macrotrends*. https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/WLD/world/population-growth-rate

Ochoa, J. J., Tan, Y., Qian, Q. K., Shen, L. & Moreno, E. L. (2018). Learning from best practices in sustainable urbanization. *Habitat International*, *78*, 83–95.
DOI: 10.1016/j.habitatint.2018.05.013

Pirouz, B., Arcuri, N., Pirouz, B., Palermo, S. A., Turco, M. & Maiolo, M. (2020). Development of an assessment method for evaluation of sustainable factories. *Sustainability*, *12*(5), 1841. h
DOI: 10.3390/su12051841

Pozoukidou, G. (2014). Land use transport interaction models: Application perspectives for the city of Thessaloniki. *Spatium*, *32*, 7–14.
DOI: 10.2298/SPAT1432007P

Ritchie, H. & Roser, M. (2019). Urbanization. *Our World in Data.* https://ourworldindata.org/urbanization

Roders, A. R. P. (2014). How can urbanization be sustainable? : a reflection on the role of city resources in global sustainable development. *Architectural History and Theory*, *13*(1), 79–90.

Rodwell, D. (2008). *Conservation and sustainability in historic cities*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Schindler, S., Mitlin, D. & Marvin, S. (2018). National urban policy making and its potential for sustainable urbanism. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, *34*, 48–53. h
DOI: 10.1016/j.cosust.2018.11.006

Shen, L. & Zhou, J. (2014). Examining the effectiveness of indicators for guiding sustainable urbanization in China. *Habitat International*, *44*, 111–120.
DOI: 10.1016/j.habitatint.2014.05.009

Singapore Green Plan 2030. (2023). A City of green possibilities. *Greenplan*. https://www.greenplan.gov.sg/

Snieška, V. & Zykiene, I. (2014). The Role of Infrastructure in the Future City: Theoretical Perspective. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *156*, 247–251.
DOI: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.11.183

Solly, A., Berisha, E. & Cotella, G. (2021). Towards Sustainable urbanization: Learning from what's out there. *Land*, *10*(4), 356.
DOI: 10.3390/land10040356

Song, F., Yang, X. & Wu, F. (2019). Suitable pattern of the natural environment of human settlements in the lower reaches of the Yangtze River. *Atmosphere*, *10*(4), 200.
DOI: 10.3390/atmos10040200

Stere, Şerban, Roşca, E., Roşca, M. & Ruscă, F. (2022). Reorganizing students Acces in University Politehnica of Bucharest Campus and influences on car traffic externalities. *Romanian Journal of Transport Infrastructure*, *11*(2), 1–15.
DOI: 10.2478/rjti-2022-0015

Tan, Y., Xu, H., Jiao, L., Ochoa, J. J. & Shen, L. (2017). A study of best practices in promoting sustainable urbanization in China. *Journal of Environmental Management*, *193*, 8–18.
DOI: 10.1016/j.jenvman.2017.01.058

Tan, Y., Xu, H. & Zhang, X. (2016). Sustainable urbanization in China: A comprehensive literature review. *Cities*, *55*, 82–93.
DOI: 10.1016/j.cities.2016.04.002

Tavares, S. (2023). Green city-state: How Singapore is leading the way in sustainable urban development. *Enterinternational.org Website*.
https://www.enterinternational.org/singapore_sustainability/

UN-Habitat. (2020). World cities report 2020: the value of sustainable urbanization. *UN Habitat Website*.

UN-Habitat. (2022). World cities report 2022 envisaging the future of cities. *UN Habitat Website* https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2022/06/wcr_2022.pdf

UN. (2018). World Urbanization Prospects 2018. In *United Nations Population Division*.

UNEP. (2023). Cities and climate change. *UN Environment Program Website*. https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/resource-efficiency/what-we-do/cities/cities-and-climate-change

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division. (2019). *World urbanization prospects: the 2018 revision (ST/ESA/SER.A/420)*.

Urban Water. (2023). *How does urbanisation impact the water cycle?* City of Melbourne.

Urbanlifecopenhagen. (2023). Sustainability. *Urban Design and Planning in Copenhagen*. https://urbanlifecopenhagen.weebly.com/sustainability.html

Vardoulakis, S. & Kinney, P. (2019). Grand challenges in sustainable cities and health. *Frontiers in Sustainable Cities*, *1*.
DOI: 10.3389/frsc.2019.00007

Venkateshwaran, O. (2021). *How Singapore became one of the greenest cities in the world: 5 key reasons*. cities future.
https://citiesfuture.com/how-singapore-became-one-of-the-greenest-cities-in-the-world-5-key-reasons/

Walsh, C. L., Glendinning, S., Dawson, R. J., England, K., Martin, M., Watkins, C. L., Wilson, R., McLoughlin, A., Glenis, V. & Parker, D. (2013). Collaborative platform to facilitate engineering decision-making. *Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers - Engineering Sustainability*, *166*(2), 98–107.
DOI: 10.1680/ensu.12.00033

World Bank. (2014). *Urban China: Toward Efficient, Inclusive, and Sustainable Urbanization*. The World Bank. DOI: 10.1596/978-1-4648-0206-5

Xiong, W., Chen, B., Wang, H. & Zhu, D. (2020). Public–private partnerships as a governance response to sustainable urbanization: Lessons from China. *Habitat International*, *95*, 102095.
DOI: 10.1016/j.habitatint.2019.102095

Xu, Q., Zheng, X. & Zheng, M. (2019). Do urban planning policies meet sustainable urbanization goals? A scenario-based study in Beijing, China. *Science of The Total Environment*, *670*, 498–507.
DOI: 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2019.03.128

Yang, Y., Liu, Z., Chen, H., Wang, Y. & Yuan, G. (2020). Evaluating Regional Eco-Green Cooperative Development Based on a Heterogeneous Multi-Criteria Decision-Making Model: Example of the Yangtze River Delta Region. *Sustainability*, *12*(7), 3029.
DOI: 10.3390/su12073029

Yeyouomo, A. K. & Asongu, S. A. (2023). Sustainable urbanization and vulnerability to climate change in Africa: Accounting for digitalization and institutional quality. *Sustainable Development*.
DOI: 10.1002/sd.2721

Yigitcanlar, T., O'Connor, K. & Westerman, C. (2008). The making of knowledge cities: Melbourne's knowledge-based urban development experience. *Cities*, *25*(2), 63–72.
DOI: 10.1016/j.cities.2008.01.001

Zaballos, I. L., Laurenz, A. & Sádaba, J. (2021). Urban green ınfrastructure as a strategy to address urban energy efficiency and sustainability: A case study of Milagrosa (Pamplona). *Sustainability*, *14*(1), 28.
DOI: 10.3390/su14010028

Zhang, X. (2016). Sustainable urbanization: a bi-dimensional matrix model. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *134*, 425–433.
DOI: 10.1016/j.jclepro.2015.08.036

Zhong, L., Li, X., Law, R. & Sun, S. (2020). Developing sustainable urbanization ındex: Case of China. *Sustainability*, *12*(11), 4585.
DOI: 10.3390/su12114585

Zhou, J., Shen, L., Song, X. & Zhang, X. (2015). Selection and modeling sustainable urbanization indicators: A responsibility-based method. *Ecological Indicators*, *56*, 87–95.
DOI: 10.1016/j.ecolind.2015.03.024

Zhou, Q. (2014). A Review of sustainable urban drainage systems considering the climate change and urbanization ımpacts. *Water*, *6*(4), 976–992.
DOI: 10.3390/w6040976 n

Notes on contributor

Selçuk Gürçam holds a PhD in Political Science and International Relations, conducting academic studies on the climate crisis and sustainable urbanization policies.

ORCID

Selçuk Gürçam https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0426-329X

Disclosure statement

The author has declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article. The author has received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Lectio Socialis RESEARCH ARTICLE
2024, VOL. 8, NO. 1, pp. 35-56 DOI: 10.47478/lectio.1412017

Evaluating the securitized migration policy of the European Union in the context of border security

Çılga Altunbaş*[a]
Fulya Memişoğlu[b]

* Corresponding author.
[a] PhD candidate, Yıldız Technical University, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Istanbul, TÜRKİYE.
[b] Associate Professor, Yıldız Technical University, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Istanbul, TÜRKİYE.

ABSTRACT

The securitization theory, formulated by the Copenhagen School, has become one of the most widely used approaches to explain the relationship between migration and security. This study focuses on the reflections of the European Union's (EU) securitized migration policy on the influence of border policies within the framework of securitization theory. In other words, the securitization of migration in the EU has been examined in terms of rising walls and technological developments at the borders of the member states. During the surge in migration flows to the EU, the evolution of border security in countries has been scrutinized. As a result of research, similar practices in border security have been identified in member states. In this study, firstly, it has been revealed that the EU has laid the groundwork for the development of security-focused policies in border security by providing financial and technical assistance, as well as offering training and equipment support to member states. Secondly, the study emphasizes the EU's ability to devise border security strategies that are both productive and enduring. Furthermore, it raises critical questions about the implementation of extraordinary measures under the guise of security and the consequences of securitization on border policies.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received: 29.12.2023
Revised: 21.01.2024
Accepted: 24.01.2024

KEYWORDS
European Union,
Copenhagen School,
securitization,
border security,
migration policy

Introduction

The securitization of the European Union's (EU) migration policy has increasingly positioned border security at the forefront of geopolitical discourse. This study employs the lens of securitization theory to scrutinize how this policy shift impacts countries' border control strategies amidst escalating migrant inflows into the EU. Our analysis unveils a convergence in the border security approaches of these countries, heavily shaped by EU policy directives, highlighting a critical intersection of regional security concerns and international migration dynamics.

CONTACT Çılga Altunbaş cilgadurmus@gmail.com

© The Author(s). Published by *Lectio Socialis*.
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-4.0 License (CC BY 4.0), which permits re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

The research provides a critical analysis of the effect of securitization on border policies and offers insight into the long-term security strategies of the EU. To achieve this, the study examines the process of securitizing migration in the EU using the method of critical discourse analysis. The discourse of political elites and the official documents and press releases of the EU Parliament, Council, and Commission, identified as securitizing actors, were investigated. Through discourse analysis, we reveal that the EU has chosen to include migration in its security agenda. Migration policies in the EU have been developed from a security perspective, as the phenomenon of migration is associated with the concept of security. According to our research, the EU favors strengthening border security in member states, with a focus on security. The EU's support for border security has laid the foundation for security-based policies in these countries.

Our research also indicates that the EU's security-focused policies effectively decrease migration to the EU by influencing the border security of member states, especially those forming the EU's external borders, such as Greece. The study demonstrates this decrease in migration flows with numerical data. While various reasons affect migration flow, strict border security measures in member states have proved effective in reducing migration towards the EU. The following sections provide a detailed examination of how this was reached. Firstly, we investigate the securitization process of migration in the EU and its reasons. Then, we explore how security-focused policies have been reflected in border security through support and projects for member states. The developments in the border security of member states provide us with the most concrete reflections of securitization.

Background: The securitization of the EU's migration policy

The impact of associating the phenomenon of migration with security on border security has been examined within the framework of the securitization theory put forth by the Copenhagen School. Embracing a constructivist viewpoint, the Copenhagen School contends that the understanding of security should extend beyond a state-centric and military-oriented framework, acknowledging that any circumstance jeopardizing the well-being of individuals warrants classification as a security issue (Buzan & Waever, 2003). According to the securitization theory, the use of the term "security" for a subject can transform it into a problem and prioritize it on the political agenda. The existence and scope of the threat are constructed through discourse (Buzan *et al.*,1998). Thus, by creating a sense of urgency, all kinds of measures become legitimate to eliminate the so-called threat (Waever, 2003).

Particularly in the 1990s, the concept of international migration emerged as a crucial policy domain for the European Union. During this period, the progressively politicized phenomenon of migration has assumed an intricate structure for the Union, particularly concerning border control. Prior to the 1993 Maastricht Treaty, the Trevi group, which was initially set up for counter-terrorism cooperation, later incorporated border controls, asylum, and irregular migration into its security agenda at the group's meeting in 1986 (Lodge & Bayburtlu, 2002). Especially during this period, irregular migration and refugees fleeing conflict or persecution began to be perceived as a threat to border security (Genç, 2010). After the Schengen Agreement and Maastricht Treaty, this process has continued to the present day, leading to an increased trend towards ensuring border security, preventing migration, and controlling migration through strict security measures. The securitization

process has impacted intergovernmental political discussions on border security, notably during the Dublin, Tampere, and Seville Summits, following the Schengen Agreement's internal border abolition and external border reinforcement (European Council, 1999; Council of the European Union, 2002).

Apart from legal frameworks, the most compelling reflection of the securitization of migration in the institutional field is the establishment of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX) in 2004. Establishing funding for FRONTEX, an independent body within the EU created to enhance border security through operational cooperation, serves as a notable example of the development of security-focused policies (Özer, 2011). In this regard, the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR) holds significance as it contributes to enhancing physical security measures in border security, aiming to advance the surveillance of the external borders of EU member states (Andersson, 2015). An example of technological developments that have led to the implementation of stricter border security measures is the creation of the Schengen Information System (SIS and SIS II), the Visa Information System (VIS), and the European Asylum Dactyloscopy Database (EURODAC).

Establishing shared databases in EU border security and forming a collaborative network among members are outcomes of the securitization approach (Dumbrava, 2021). SIS II is the most extensive information system for public security in Europe (European Commission, 2022). VIS is a system that demonstrates the crucial role of technology in enhancing and strengthening external borders. The EU has established the Visa Information System, supporting the implementation of the EU Common Visa Policy to improve external border management (EU-Lisa, 2019a). EURODAC functions as a centralized database, collecting and managing the digitized fingerprints of asylum seekers and irregular migrants. It aims to identify the member state responsible for processing an asylum application. EURODAC is used by national asylum authorities to store new fingerprint records of asylum seekers, facilitating the detection of multiple asylum applications (EU-Lisa, 2019b). While efforts are made to enable migration management through these systems, it is also observed that security measures against migration are being intensified. Data sharing within the EU encompasses details about events occurring at the external land and sea borders, the status and whereabouts of patrols and vessels, analytical reports, and intelligence on evolving migration routes or tactics employed by traffickers (Ceyhan & Tsoukala, 2002).

Major EU institutions, including the European Commission, European Council, and European Parliament, influence public perceptions regarding the securitization of migration through official documents, public statements, and media discourses (Huber, 2015). In 2006, the European Parliament called on EU institutions and member states to use the term "irregular/undocumented migrants" instead of the term "illegal" due to its negative connotations (European Council, 2006). However, parliamentary debates have increasingly highlighted migration as a security issue. To cite an example in terms of securitized discourses from the Parliament debates, President of the European Parliament, Antonio Tajani said on October 18, 2018:

> This has to be explained to citizens, and when propaganda is spread by those seeking to fuel fear and discontent with repeated assertions that Europe has done nothing, a firm stand must be taken against it. We need to stress in our political messages that migration has been reduced as a direct result of EU action and the pooling of our resources. (European Parliament, 2018a)

Parliament President Antonio Tajani has delivered positive messages about security, emphasizing that citizens should not feel worried or afraid due to the measures taken by the EU. Although Tajani criticized those who engage in propaganda through migration and security issues, his statement acknowledging that migration is perceived as a problem in the EU and that measures will continue to be taken can be cited as an example of securitizing discourse. In 2015, President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz:

> It is clear that many of our citizens are losing trust that their elected governments are able to manage the crisis. This feeling of powerlessness breeds fear, and fear leads them to the doorstep of the populists. We must break this cycle. We will break it by demonstrating that the Union and its Member States are able not only to make sensible proposals on border management, migration, asylum, and security but also to deliver them. (European Parliament, 2016)

In this speech, Schulz emphasizes the fears and concerns of EU citizens regarding migration, creating a positive perception of the legitimacy of the methods to be used in solving the issues in this field. In the continuation of this speech, he announced the preparation of necessary equipment for border security and the rapid deployment of 1500 border and coastal security personnel. Tajani, in another speech on June 28, 2018, said:

> Against that background, the first thing to do is to halt the constant stream of migrants leaving transit countries and the coast of Africa and ensure that only people genuinely entitled to asylum arrive in Europe and do so safely. Our fellow citizens want a Union that shows solidarity towards people fleeing persecution and war but is resolute in turning away those who do not have the right to enter or remain in Europe. (European Parliament, 2018b)

In his speech, he stated that immigration to the EU should be stopped and emphasized that only those who genuinely need asylum should be accepted. Here, the idea of stopping migration is brought to the fore. David Sassoli, who served as the President of the Parliament between 2019 and 2022, emphasized in a 2021 speech that Afghan refugees in the migration wave towards the EU should be distributed equally and fairly among Union members. However, French President Emmanuel Macron emphasized the need for a plan to address the migration flows from Afghanistan, stating that cooperation should be established with transit and host countries such as Pakistan, Türkiye, and Iran for the harmonization of criteria related to the fight against irregular migration, solidarity, and protection (Herszenhorn & Baume, 2021). Although the President of the European Parliament signals a positive and lenient stance on migration policies, some members emphasize the need for solidarity in combating irregular migration and prioritizing the prevention of migration.

The Commission has incorporated migration into the security agenda by employing discourse that underscores urgency, challenges, and issues. Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos's speech on January 27, 2015, "Migration today is part and parcel of our societies. It is an inherent feature of our globalized world. It brings richness and opportunities, but it also comes with challenges" (European Commission, 2015a, p. 1). Describing the problems brought about by migration as challenges can be cited as an example of securitizing discourses. Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker expressed the need for urgent measures to control migration towards the EU in 2015 (European Commission, 2015b). In 2016, President Juncker stated, "We will defend our borders. We will be very strict in terms of who can cross our borders, and this is something that we are looking to implement by the end of the year" (Macdonald & Baczynska, 2016). President von der Leyen's speech in December 2023:

> Europe is a strong community and capable of finding great answers to great challenges. I welcome the timely political agreement reached by Parliament and Council on the key elements of the New

> Pact on Migration and Asylum. Our goal was to find a fair and pragmatic approach to managing migration together in the EU. It is a crucial step in making sure that Europe has the tools to manage migration. (European Commission, 2023a)

President von der Leyen calls for unity and solidarity in the face of migration, which she defines as a challenge. European Council President Donald Tusk's speech on November 8, 2018:

> The migration crisis has given an impulse to a debate on the identity of European Christian Democracy. From its very beginning I was warning against two threats. First, the powerlessness regarding the wave of illegal migration to effectively control our external border would provoke a crisis of trust of our citizens in the liberal state and the European Union as a whole. Because people value freedom and openness only as long as they feel safe. The second threat is the emergence of the politicians on the main stage who, by taking advantage of the chaos triggered by the new migration period, started to set security and order against openness and freedom… (European Council, 2018)

Tusk used terms emphasizing internal security, such as insecurity and chaos discourse. Thus, migration has been portrayed as a security threat. In the Council meeting in October 2021, government leaders emphasized that the EU needs to take more restrictive measures to ensure effective control of its external borders (European Council, 2021).

At the same time, the documents and official statements from the European Council and the European Parliament offer concrete examples of securitized narratives, especially concerning irregular migration. These instances illustrate that migration is firmly integrated into the security agenda of the EU's primary political institution. In 2013, the Council underscored the interconnectedness of Europe's internal and external security challenges, urging enhanced synergies between the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) and actors in Freedom/Security/Justice to tackle horizontal issues such as illegal migration, organized crime, and terrorism. Migration was depicted as a security threat comparable to the most frequently cited global security problems (European Council, 2013). The CSDP, which constitutes the primary policy pillar of the EU in foreign affairs and security, encompasses issues such as crisis prevention and crisis management within the EU.

Notably, migration is highlighted as a threat element within this policy domain. In brief, due to the perception of migration not merely as human mobility but as a security threat, it has been officially regarded as an area necessitating military measures. Among the committees in the European Parliament, the "Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee (LIBE) has presented reports to the EU members, indicating that migration has become increasingly complex and challenging to manage. In the reports, the terms "complex" and "challenging" are used in conjunction with migration, emphasizing the perception of the need for urgent measures (European Parliament, 2009). Moreover, LIBE is a committee of the European Parliament responsible for safeguarding civil liberties and human rights listed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (European Parliament, 2014). This committee has started using words related to migration with negative connotations in its reports.

Over the past few years, European Union member states have been reintroducing border controls in the Schengen area, and these measures are frequently prolonged. Intending to maintain unrestricted movement while tackling actual security challenges, the Commission presented a proposition in 2021. While trying to regulate security measures, the Commission used terms such as crisis and challenge regarding migration in this proposal. It emphasizes high-security measures in this proposal with sentences like "... It relies on trust among the Member States, efficient controls of the external borders and

alternative measures on the territory of the Member States in order to assure a high level of security within the Schengen area, in the absence of internal border controls" (European Commission, 2021). Besides these documents, in 2016, Frontex received a 75% budget increase. Richards (2018) argued that this, coupled with certain EU member states reintroducing border controls in the Schengen zone, reflected the perception of migration inflows as a "security threat," contributing to the 'negative stereotyping of refugees as a threat to European society.

In general, when evaluated, border security has been emphasized in the statements of political elites and official institutions in the EU by putting forward the different parameters of the consequences of migration. On the other hand, some scholars engage in a more nuanced analysis of the impact of the securitization of migration on the increasing prominence of far-right parties in European politics. "They contend that this causal relationship has become more conspicuous, particularly in the aftermath of what is commonly referred to as the 2015 refugee crisis "(Eris & Oner, 2021, p. 163). "By conducting a comparative analysis of three far-right political parties—France's National Rally, Italy's League, and Germany's Alternative for Germany (AfD)—Eris and Oner (2021, p. 163) illustrate how the anti-immigrant rhetoric employed by these parties played a role in their respective achievements in the 2019 European Parliament elections".

"In 2016, in its party program, the AfD emphasized that Germany should not be a country of immigrants and attempted to garner support with the rhetoric of "you do not belong to our country." In the 2017 election program, it explicitly stated that "AfD's goal is not the self-destruction of our state and nation but its self-preservation" and that "borders need to be closed immediately to prevent unlimited mass migration" (Patton, 2017, p. 164) "As a result, in the German Federal Elections held in September 2017, the AfD emerged as the third-largest party, securing 12.6% of the vote—a feat unprecedented for any far-right political party in Germany in the post-Second World War period" (Çakı & Topbaş, 2018, pp. 64-65). It was exemplified how similar discourses were employed within the framework of security themes by making migration an agenda item in the EU.

The securitization of the EU migration policy and its impact on the border strategies of member states

Increased border controls, new strategies, high-tech tools, barbed wires, and high walls reflect the securitized migration policy when the EU is reassessing its border security policies (Rigby & Crisp, 2021). Within the realm of border security, the extensive adoption of digitization and technology has recently surged in the EU. The oversight of borders is facilitated through advancements in technologies like surveillance cameras, drones, and risk analysis methods. According to Carrera (2007, p. 6), "the EU's operational capacity development is rooted in two primary objectives: firstly, implementing operational measures "to combat illegal immigration," and secondly, collaborating with third parties in the region." Thus, an increasing inclination is observed toward utilizing military apparatus and vehicles in assessing and controlling irregular migration within the EU (Yavaş, 2017).

"Especially after the bomb attacks that occurred in EU countries, the existing fear of migration and immigrants within the Union has intensified even more" (Adamson, 2006, p.166). After the 2004 Madrid and 2005 London attacks, preventing irregular migration through the Mediterranean route became important for the EU (Jordan & Horsburgh, 2006).

Irregular migration from east to west has started to be perceived as a direct threat to security (Jandl, 2007). In the historical process, the increase in physical and technological measures at the borders gained momentum in the 2000s. In the early 1990s, after the dissolution of the USSR, and in the mid-1990s, due to the wars in Yugoslavia, the number of individuals crossing into the EU through legal and illegal means increased. By the 2000s, with the EU's expansion steps, border protection systems and institutional developments in this field came to the forefront. Among the new members, Slovakia's border with Ukraine, which is nearly 100 km, Poland's 1100 km borders with Belarus and Ukraine, and Romania's external borders were considered weak in terms of security compared to other external borders at that time (Beaudouin, 2009). "Already after the 2004 enlargement of the EU, the European Border Agency (FRONTEX) was established to enhance border security" (Neal, 2009, p. 333). In the following years, the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR) was established to increase the monitoring of external borders. Another reason for the institutionalization of border management in the EU gaining momentum is the goal of establishing a certain standard for the diverse practices of member states in border management (European Commission, 2018).

Although there are variations in implementation among member states in the EU, since land, sea, and air border units are consolidated into a single unit, and the units responsible for border security are under civilian authority, there are some similarities in certain aspects. For example, in countries like France, Luxembourg, Denmark, Austria, the Czech Republic, Belgium, and Hungary, the units responsible for border security are consolidated under the police organization. In Germany, federal-level police officers are responsible for border security. Countries like Latvia, Estonia, Finland, and Poland have established border guard units, and these units are deployed nationwide (Sunar, 2018). Throughout the EU, border security services are provided under the police organization or similar units. Therefore, especially in managing migration flows, member states maintain close collaboration by receiving support from the EU in this field. Steps such as tracking technological developments at the borders, using the latest systems in member states, or establishing an extensive network for sharing databases are among the impacts of securitization.

After the internal conflicts arising from the Arab Spring in the Middle East and North Africa since 2011, the EU has been faced with a refugee influx since the beginning of 2015 (Eurostat, 2024). While this influx has become a problem for the EU as a whole, it has been perceived as an even greater challenge for the border countries. Therefore, the EU, in addition to legal measures and new technologies, has quickly developed a solution by increasing physical measures in member states. The rising walls and barbed wires at the borders in the EU are considered the most tangible and rapid impact in the field of border security within the securitization tendency. The following sections will discuss how the new security measures supported by the EU continue to be implemented at the borders of the member states.

The border of Greece: The shield of the EU

Only in the 1980s did Greece, which had been a country of emigration, formulate a national policy on migration. Upon becoming a member of the European Community in 1981, Greece rapidly transformed into a country of immigration in tandem with social and economic developments (Papageorgiou, 2013). As a result, Greece has adopted a stringent stance on migration since the 1990s. In the 2000s, due to the increasing flow of migration, migration has once again become a domestic security issue in Greece (Palagiannis, 2016). As per the

UNHCR data, the annual figures for sea and land crossings into Greece varied between 2014 and 2021. In 2014, the crossings were comparatively lower, with 2,280 irregular migrants entering by land and 41,038 by sea. However, in 2015, Greece witnessed an unprecedented surge in new arrivals, with 4,907 irregular crossing by land and 856,723 by sea. This surge led to the implementation of additional security measures to curb irregular crossings. Since then, the numbers have sharply dropped: 177,234 in 2016, 36,310 in 2017, 50,508 in 2018, 74,613 in 2019, 15,696 in 2020, and 9,157 in 2021 (UNCHR, 2022).

Greece's measures to enhance border security against the increasing migration movements towards the EU through Türkiye began in 2012 by erecting a fence along the border (Baczynska & Ledwith, 2016). In the past few years, the borders shared by Greece and Türkiye, especially the Aegean Sea border and the Evros land/river border, have become significant locations for irregular entry into the EU. In reaction to the migration movements through these borders with Türkiye, Greek, and FRONTEX authorities have strengthened their monitoring capabilities (Topak, 2014). Greece's migration management and border security strategies have progressively hardened in the ensuing period. (Kirişçi, 2004).

Subsequently, Greece has consistently reinforced border security measures and enhanced surveillance capabilities, supported financially by the EU External Borders Fund (Berberakis, 2022). Following Türkiye's decision to open its borders to Europe in February/March 2020, Greece decided to construct a steel wall (Kostopoulos & Mylonas, 2022). FRONTEX personnel have been deployed at the border where the wall was constructed, and the advanced technology control devices installed on the wall are also financed by the EU. In addition, eight observation towers, each five meters high, have been built in the Ferres region. (Kokkinidi, 2021). Greece, in violation of the European Parliament's 1999 ban on the use of weapons that directly affect the functioning of the brain, employed a wall along with high-decibel sound bombs and tear gas against migrants (Stickings, 2021; European Parliament, 2000). Following this incident, Commission President Von der Leyen expressed solidarity by characterizing Greece as "Europe's shield" and announced financial support of 700 million euros for Greece's border security expenses (European Commission, 2020a). The EU providing financial support to Greece for such stringent security measures enhances the securitization trend against migration and paves the way for strict measures in border security.

Meanwhile, as maritime crossings increased due to strict measures at the land border, Greece announced a plan to establish floating "sea barriers" that are 1.1 meters high and 2.7 kilometers long (Smith, 2020). Arrivals to Greece by sea have consistently been higher than arrivals by land, according to UNHCR data. For example, before the construction of the wall in 2019, there were 59,726 entries to Greece by sea and 14,887 entries by land. While these numbers vary by year, there were 9,714 entries by sea and 5,982 entries by land in 2020, and in 2021, they were recorded as 4,331 by sea and 4,826 by land. In 2022, there were 12,758 entries by sea and 6,022 by land (UNCHR, 2022). While various factors influence the decrease and increase in these numbers, the construction of the steel wall and the use of deterrent systems are also seen to have a significant impact. Lastly, in the summer of 2022, specifically in August, the Greek government announced that 25,000 migrants were attempting to cross the Turkish border. In response to this situation, Greece reiterated statements indicating that it was still facing challenges due to migration, emphasizing that the measures taken at the border were legitimate and appropriate (The Brussels Times News, 2022).

In its pursuit to safeguard external borders and address irregular migration, the EU has designated Greece with the responsibility of border control in the region. Consequently, the EU perceives Greece to be facing extraordinary pressure in dealing with migration issues and, as a result, has extended the influence of its security-oriented approach through collaboration and proposals for the Greek borders. To enhance technical capabilities and leverage technology in border security, efforts were initiated to curb irregular crossings, exemplified by the Aspida and Xenios Zeus Operations in Greece in 2012 (Booth *et al*., 2013). The Aspida Operation, jointly financed by the EU Commission and Greece, involved deploying 1881 personnel in the initial phase to reinforce physical patrols along the Greek-Turkish land border (Angeli *et al*., 2014). Hence, the security-oriented framework implemented in Greece has not only mirrored the process of securitization with the support of the EU but has also fortified it. Interviews with Greek border guards also show that the perception of immigration in Greece is based on security.

The findings of this study suggest a notable increase in implementation, border management, and migration control in Greece during the 2015 period, compared to preceding years. It is observed that the support of the EU encourages Greece to take strict measures in the field of border security. Over time, the securitized approach of the EU's migration policy has impacted Greece's border security measures, contributing to an enhancement in the EU's overall security. The study's findings support the notion that securitization has led to the increased militarization of Greece's borders. When analyzing the securitization process for the protection of both the EU region's and Greece's national borders, it becomes evident that the EU supports Greece based on the perception that it is under extraordinary pressure in dealing with migration while attempting to safeguard the external borders of the EU. Thus, the study revealed that the security-oriented approach has effects that extend to the borders of this country.

Hungary's border with Serbia and Croatia

Regarded more as a stepping stone to reach other EU members rather than being a target country, Hungary began erecting wire fences along its southern border with Serbia in 2015 to prevent the passage of migrants. In addition to these wire fences, it was announced that the border would be protected with thermal cameras, reflectors, night vision, and an alarm system (Euronews, 2017). In the summer of 2015, the initial section of barbed wire along the 175-kilometer border between Hungary and Serbia was completed. The government even declared a state of emergency in border areas, increasing penalties for irregular crossings (Sanford, 2017). Due to the wire fence erected along the Serbian border, when migrants turned towards Croatia, Hungary also enclosed its border with Croatia with wire fences (Kingsley, 2015).

While taking physical measures at their borders in line with national decisions, members like Hungary are considered successful by the EU in reducing irregular crossings through the construction of wire fences or walls. Indeed, the EU has supported Hungary's policies by providing financial and personnel assistance. Moreover, between 2014 and 2020, Hungary has been allocated slightly over €24.1 million from the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF) and nearly €61.5 million from the Internal Security Fund (ISF) (Pollet & Mouzourakis, 2015). The support provided by the EU for border security and other security measures of its members indicates that the EU has now embraced such actions, acknowledging the significance of physical measures as a crucial component in the Union's border security.

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban stated in 2022, "We are not in a position to manage migration; we need to stop it. We must show them that they cannot cross the borders" (Euronews, 2022a). Thus, Orban is actually emphasizing that migration is a threat to Hungary. Additionally, Orban said that the EU "needs to do its part" for Hungary, just as it did for Italy, Greece, and Bulgaria regarding refugees. However, the spokesperson for the European Commission responded to Orban's statement by saying, "Solidarity is not one-sided." Because Hungary is both requesting support for border security and not implementing the EU's decision to distribute refugees collectively among member states (NTV, 2017), the EU is not inclined to finance the fences on the Hungarian border because Hungary does not comply with the decisions regarding the resettlement of refugees. Apart from these developments, in parallel with the strengthening of borders by the EU, along with other support provided to Hungary, according to monthly data presented by the Hungarian Police in 2015, there has been a significant decrease in the number of irregular migrants since the completion of the fences (Besenyo, 2017).

The support provided by the EU to Hungary has laid the groundwork for stringent measures in border security in Hungary. Indeed, similar to statements in the EU associating migration with security, Orban's statements on migration in Hungary are similar. The study's findings indicate that securitization has led to stringent measures at Hungary's borders. When examining the securitization process aimed at safeguarding both the EU region and Hungary's national borders, Hungary presents itself as if it is making extraordinary efforts in the fight against immigration.

Poland-Belarus border

Migrants from many Middle Eastern countries, such as Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan, who aspire to reach the EU prefer Poland via Belarus (Valcarcel, 2022). However, Poland is experiencing disputes over migration with its bordering country, Belarus, and these disagreements are also affecting Poland's border security. Due to Belarus redirecting migrants to Poland, the Polish government has decided to build a fence along the Belarusian border (Euronews, 2022b). Following this decision, both the EU and Poland faced criticism for the strict security measures. However, due to Belarus using migration as a political tool, the Polish government did not withdraw its reaction; instead, it started implementing even harsher measures. In January 2022, the Polish government started to build the border fence and increased personnel along the Belarus border (Tondo, 2022). The 186-kilometer fence, standing at a height of 5.5 meters, built by Poland, cost 350 million euros, and the EU has fully supported implementing these measures (Özdemir, 2022).

On the other hand, Poland, although receiving support from the EU on border security, withdrew EU support during a period when refugees, including children, were pushed towards the Belarus border and lost their lives due to hunger and cold before starting the construction of the border fence (Sierakowski, 2022). However, as border crossings increased, this reaction of the EU decreased significantly. This situation has also been reflected in the statements of the EU, and the EU Council criticized the Polish government in its official statements for refusing to provide essential assistance to refugees. However, even in recent times, it emphasized the need to maintain strict control at the border. For instance, Tusk said that von der Leyen had indicated that Poland "will be able to count on help, significant help, in strengthening the protection of our eastern border, especially with Belarus" (Ptak, 2023).

Another significant development that has recently led Poland to review its border security policies is the Russia-Ukraine War. The intensity created at the Polish border by those fleeing Ukraine due to the attacks initiated by Russia on February 24 has opened a different perspective on associating migration with security in the EU (European Commission, 2023b). The Ukrainian refugees crossing the Polish border without facing any difficulties have raised questions about Poland's decisions regarding migration and border security. While the EU stated that its doors are open to refugees coming from Ukraine, the continued different treatment by Union members towards refugees from outside Ukraine has demonstrated that the association of migration with security is a matter of preference. Family ties, linguistic similarities, and being a neighbor to Ukraine are thought to be reasons for Poland's different approach to Ukrainian refugees. However, the economic challenges, housing issues, and health problems arising from large-scale migrations can also be experienced due to the Ukrainian refugees (Duszczyk & Kaczmarczyk, 2022). In summary, Poland has associated migration with security, particularly concerning those coming from countries other than Ukraine, and has increased border measures. The EU has supported Poland's decision in this regard.

Border of Latvia and Lithuania with Belarus

Poland's physical strengthening of the Belarus border has led migrants to choose Lithuania and Latvia as transit countries. Faced with unexpected density, Latvia and Lithuania have preferred to increase physical measures at their borders (Forti, 2023). In December 2021, the European Commission announced that it would provide the necessary operational support to Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland to ensure security, a decision supportive of these measures (Gulina, 2022).

The EU supporting these countries for better protection of their borders enhances the relationship between the migration phenomenon and security. FRONTEX officials also provide support to Latvia and Lithuania in border surveillance and other border management functions (FRONTEX, 2021a). Subsequently, these countries declared a state of emergency in their border regions and developed new strategies for migration management in the following days. Thus, the protection of borders has seen an increase in the construction of walls and fences, the deployment of personnel, and the use of advanced technological tools (Mills *et al*., 2021). In short, the EU obviously supported the construction of fences or walls by members at their own discretion.

Bulgaria-Türkiye border

In 2013, Bulgaria started protecting its border with Türkiye by arming border guards and erecting a 30-kilometer barbed wire wall against immigrants. Seismic sensors, night vision cameras, and surveillance drones have all become essential tools for personnel on duty at the border (Lyman, 2015). Meanwhile, Bulgarian government officials have frequently stated that increasing physical measures at the border will significantly reduce irregular crossings. Especially in recent times, pushback incidents of migrants at the Bulgaria-Türkiye border have increased. Bulgaria has argued that it is acting in line with the EU's goals of preventing irregular migration (Brunnersum, 2023). In this context, EU's financial support for combating migration and enhancing border security has directly impacted Bulgaria's border security.

In 2020, the Commission also sanctioned an additional €12.8 million in funding for Bulgaria, providing support for additional border guards involved in operations at its

southern external borders (European Commission, 2020b). Furthermore, the European Commission plans to provide €600 million to significantly aid Member States in enhancing border control and acquiring technological equipment. The primary focus of this funding will be the crucial border between Bulgaria and Türkiye, according to a letter from Commission President Ursula von der Leyen to the European Council (European Commission, 2023c). These aids imply the EU's support to Bulgaria by providing the necessary technological equipment for border surveillance and control, assisting in the training of border security personnel, and supporting infrastructure projects in border areas to enhance physical measures for border security. Therefore, it is among the examples of securitizing migration.

Rising walls on Spain's external borders

The wall erected in 1993 in Ceuta, a territory of Spain in Africa, is known as the first wall on the external borders of the EU. This wall, 8.4 km long, 3 meters high, and consisting of barbed wire fences, had its barbed wires removed in subsequent years after causing the loss of many lives of migrants attempting to cross the border (Carling, 2007). However, in 2005, with the support of €33 million from the EU, the height of the fences was increased to 6 meters, and the length of the wall was extended to 11 km. Additionally, the wall was equipped with cameras and sensors to provide a high level of security (Pinos, 2009). Despite criticisms, the walls in Ceuta and Melilla have become symbols of the EU's border security policies. Strengthening the border due to irregular crossings, unwanted migration, and an increase in asylum applications has turned the walls in Ceuta and Melilla into tangible symbols of the Fortress Europe narrative.

After 2015, the scope of immigration policies in Spain has been expanded, placing greater emphasis on border control. The EU, on the other hand, has continued to shape Spain's border policies through the development of remote-control mechanisms (Jimenez & Caraballo, 2018). With EU funding and infrastructure support, it continues to influence Spain's border security measures throughout the entire migration management process. Particularly, while the EU agency FRONTEX operates in the south of Spain and the Canary Islands, personnel are permanently stationed in Madrid (FRONTEX, 2021b). Although preventive measures with high fences have been in place in Melilla, Ceuta, and the Canary Islands since the 1990s, in recent years, with the support of the EU, borders have been equipped with high-tech systems. Thus, the effects of securitizing migration in the EU have extended to the borders of Spain. In other words, the assistance from the EU encourages Spain, which already implements stringent measures at its borders against migration, to adopt even stricter measures.

Measures taken at the borders of Austria

When the approximately 330-kilometer border between Austria and Slovenia became a transit route for immigrants, Austria began construction of a 4-kilometer-long and 2.5-meter-high wall in this region in 2015 (Murphy, 2015). Although the Austrian Interior Minister Johanna Mikl-Leitner stated that the purpose of the wall built on the Slovenian border is not to close the borders, such measures are now deemed necessary by the Austrian government (Ayed, 2019). In fact, in 2016, Austria erected a fence along its border with Italy, particularly to prevent the increasing migration from the African continent. Additionally, despite the Schengen Agreement, Austria has started conducting passport controls at these mentioned borders (Pınar, 2016). Despite the operational and personnel support from the

EU on issues such as irregular migration and migrant smuggling, the rising walls at Austria's borders stem from the perception of migration as a significant threat. The EU, in collaboration with the Austrian Criminal Intelligence Service Joint Operations Office and EUROPOL, provides support in combating irregular migration. Additionally, a 24/7 rapid international information exchange network has been established among the members, personnel numbers have been increased for border controls, and assistance has been provided to Austria for the development of technological infrastructure (Josipovic & Reeger, 2019).

Recently, Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer said, "It was important to show that Schengen does not work and that stricter rules are needed at the external borders." (Liboreiro, 2023). However, the EU has always hesitated to implement stricter rules, emphasizing the role of FRONTEX, the EU's border patrol agency, which member states can enlist for support. The hesitant stance of the EU towards physical measures for border security does not prevent member states from constructing walls or erecting wire fences at their borders. Even sanctions decisions against these measures do not dissuade members from their chosen course of action. As the EU consistently supports its member states in all possible ways, it also keeps highlighting migration as a significant challenge. Despite the Schengen Area, increasing physical measures are considered the optimum level for securitizing migration in the EU. While controlling the influx of refugees is set as the goal, the decisions member states make about their borders within the framework of national choices are considered a reflection of the concerns arising from migration movements.

Concluding remarks

This study aims to evaluate the impact of the securitization of the EU migration policy on border security measures. Moreover, the impacts of the securitized migration policy on border security have been examined through developments at the borders of some member states. In this context, our findings suggest that the EU's provision of financial support to member states for enhancing border security, organizing joint operations with institutions like FRONTEX and EUROPOL, and strengthening communication networks among member states stem from perceiving migration as a threat. According to the research, similar effects of securitizing migration in the EU were observed in the member states we examined. While the EU does not finance measures such as walls or fences in these countries, providing support to member states through FRONTEX teams with personnel and training, financing technological equipment, and conducting joint operations, contribute to the EU's own security. These actions stand as concrete examples of the securitization trend. In other words, our findings suggest that the EU has reframed migration from a form of human mobility to a security issue and is augmenting its security by supporting the border security of member states. The discourse analyses conducted in the initial section provide evidence that the EU is attempting to portray migration as a threat in the eyes of member states. EU representatives and official institutions contribute to the escalation of member states' concerns about migration by framing discourse that associates migration with security. As a result, based on the research findings, member states exhibit similar practices in border security. The study highlights that the EU has initiated the formulation of security-oriented border policies by offering financial and technical aid, along with providing training and equipment support to member states.

As the nature of threats evolves with increased investment in border security, trained member states may choose to strengthen their borders further in the upcoming period. Furthermore, it is evident that the securitization of migration in the EU leads to continuous renewal and increased control over border security in member states. Despite ongoing efforts in this regard, as long as migration remains at the forefront of security discussions, concerns related to security will persist.

The study reveals how border security in the examined member states is shaped in line with the EU's securitization trend. At the end of the study, it is evident that migration is perceived as a security threat in the EU. It is instrumentalized, and efforts are made to find solutions to these issues through the developments in the border security of member states. Accordingly, considering the similar developments at the borders of member states, it is possible that the EU may adopt a border policy that supports physical measures in the future. Currently, the EU is already assisting member states in establishing a digital barrier at borders through the technological and operational support it provides. In short, the EU justified the implementation of extraordinary measures at the borders of member states by citing security needs and providing support in various forms.

Bibliography

Adamson, F. B. (2006). Crossing Borders: International Migration and National Security. *MIT Press*, *31*(1), 165-199. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4137542

Andersson, R. (2015). Hardwiring the frontier? The politics of security technology in Europe's 'fight against illegal migration. *Security Dialogue, 47*(1), 22-39. DOI: 10.1177/0967010615606044

Angeli, D., Triandafyllidou, A. & Dimitriadi, A. (2014, October). Assessing the cost-effectiveness of irregular migration control policies in Greece. *MIDAS Report*. https://www.eliamep.gr/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/MIDAS-Policy-Paper-EN.pdf

Ayed, N. (2019, January 18). Walled world: Lessons from Europe's border barriers. *CBCNews*. https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/longform/a-world-of-walls-europes-lessons-in-border-barriers/

Baczynska, G. & Ledwith, S. (2016, April 4). How Europe built fences to keep people out. *Reuters Europe News*. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-fences-insight-idUSKCN0X10U7

Beaudouin, C. (2009). Immigration policy: From loss of sovereignty to loss of identity? In K. Heeger, K. Lorant (Eds.), *The EU from a critical perspective: A Selection of articles from EU Watch* (pp.274-283). European Parliament.

Berberakis, S. (2022, May 31). Yunanistan, Türkiye sınırındaki çelik duvarı üç misline çıkarmakta kararlı. *BBC News*. https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-dunya-61647455

Besenyo, J. (2017). Fences and border protection: The question of establishing technical barriers in Europe. *Academic and Applied Research in Military and Public Management Science, 16*(16), 77-87. DOI: 10.32565/aarms.2017.1.7

Booth, K., Dardiry, S., Grant, L., & Others. (2013). Yunanistan ve Türkiye arasında Frontex: Geri çevrilme sınırı. *Uluslararası İnsan Hakları Federasyonu*. https://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/rapport_tu_web-sommr-tu-ok.pdf

Brunnersum, S. (2023, August 21). Bulgaria migrant pushbacks: What's behind the rise in violence at the Bulgarian-Turkish border? *Infomigrants*. https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/51197/bulgaria-migrant-pushbacks-whats-behind-the-rise-in-violence-at-the-bulgarianturkish-border-14

Buzan, B., Waever, O. & Wilde, J. de. (1998). *Security: A new framework for analysis*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Buzan, B. & Waever, O. (2003). *Regions and powers*. Cambridge University Press.

Carling, J. (2007). Migration control and migrant fatalities at the Spanish-African borders. *The International Migration Review*, *41*(2), 316-343. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27645668

Carrera, S. (2007). The EU border management strategy: Frontex and the challenges of irregular immigration in the Canary Islands. *CEPS Working Documents*, No. 261. DOI: 10.2139/ssrn.1338019

Ceyhan, A. (2008): Technologization of security: Management of uncertainty and risk in the age of biometrics. *Surveillance & Society*, *5*(2),102-123. DOI: 10.24908/ss.v5i2.3430

Council of the European Union. (2002). Seville European Council. *Council of the European Union Website*. https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/20928/72638.pdf

Çakı, C. & Topbaş, H. (2018). Almanya İçin Alternatif Partisi'nin göçmen karşıtı propaganda faaliyetlerini 2017 Alman Federal Seçimleri üzerinden okumak. *Erciyes İletişim Dergisi, 5*(4), 59-74. DOI: 10.17680/erciyesiletisim.391632

Duszczyk, M. & Kaczmaczyk, P. (2022). The war in Ukraine and migration to Poland: Outlook and challenges. *Intereconomics, Review of European Economic Policy, (57)*3. 164-170. DOI: 10.1007/s10272-022-1053-6

Dumbrava, C. (2021). Artificial intelligence at EU borders: Overview of applications and key issues. *European Parliamentary Research Service*. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2021/690706/EPRS_IDA(2021)690706_EN.pdf

Eris Unal, O. & Oner, S. (2021). Securitization of migration and the rising influence of populist radical right parties in European politics. *Ankara Avrupa Çalışmaları Dergisi, 20*(1), 161–193. DOI: 10.32450/aacd.995924

Euronews. (2017, April 28). Macaristan, Sırbistan sınırına 'akıllı tel örgü' çekti. *Euronews.* https://tr.euronews.com/2017/04/28/macaristan-sirbistan-sinirina-akilli-tel-orgu-cekti

Euronews. (2022a, November 17). AB'yi göçle mücadelede yetersiz bulan Avusturya, Macaristan ve Sırbistan pakt kurdu. *Euronews.* https://tr.euronews.com/2022/11/17/abyi-gocle-mucadelede-yetersiz-bulan-avusturya-macaristan-ve-sirbistan-pakt-kurdu

Euronews. (2022b, January 26). Poland starts construction of €350 million border fence with Belarus.

https://www.euronews.com/2022/01/26/poland-starts-construction-of-350-million-border-fence-with-belarus

European Commission. (2015a). Keynote speech of Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos at the first European Migration Forum. *Euronews.* https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_15_3781

European Commission. (2015b). Managing migration better in all aspects: A European agenda on migration. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_15_4956

European Commission. (2018). Report From the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, on the evaluation of the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR). https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/docs_autres_institutions/commission_europeenne/com/2018/0632/COM_COM(2018)0632_EN.pdf

European Commission. (2020a). Remarks by President von der Leyen at the joint press conference with Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Prime Minister of Greece, Andrej Plenkovic, Prime Minister of Croatia, President Sassoli and President Michel. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_20_380

European Commission. (2020b). Border management: Commission approves extra funding to Greece and Bulgaria. *European Commission Website*. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/mex_20_1696

European Commission. (2021). Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) 2016/399 on a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52021PC0891

European Commission. (2022). SIS II - Second generation Schengen Information System. https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/dataset/ds00009_en

European Commission. (2023a). Commission welcomes the major progress achieved by Parliament and Council on the New Pact on Migration and Asylum. *European Commission Website*. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_23_6708

European Commission. (2023b). Commission staff working document, Ukraine 2023 report. https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-11/SWD_2023_699 Ukraine report.pdf

European Commission. (2023c). Letter from Ursula von der Leyen to the European Council. https://www.statewatch.org/media/3785/eu-com-von-der-leyen-letter-migration-borders-progress-20-3-23.pdf

European Council. (1999). Tampere European Council presidency conclusions. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/tam_en.htm

European Council. (2006). Parliamentary Assembly, Resolution 1509 (2006) on the human rights of irregular migrants. http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=17456&lang=EN

European Council. (2013). European Council 19/20 December 2013. *European Council Website.* https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/140214.pdf

European Council. (2018). Speech by President Donald Tusk at the EPP Helsinki summit 2018. *European Council Website.* https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/11/08/speech-by-president-donald-tusk-at-the-epp-helsinki-summit-2018/

European Council. (2021). European Council meeting (21 and 22 October 2021)-Conclusions. *European Council Website.* https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/european-council/2021/10/21-22/

EU-Lisa. (2019a). Exchanging visa data between Schengen states. https://www.eulisa.europa.eu/Publications/Information%20Material/Leaflet%20VIS.pdf

EU-Lisa. (2019b). Information on European Asylum Applications. https://www.eulisa.europa.eu/Publications/Information%20Material/Leaflet%20Eurodac.pdf

European Parliament. (2000). Crowd control technologies. *European Parliament Directorate General for Research Directorate A The STOA Programme, STOA Panel*. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/stoa/2000/168394/DG-4-STOA_ET(2000)168394_EN(PAR02).pdf

European Parliament. (2009). Draft report on the proposal for adoption of a Council regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1104/2008 on migration from the Schengen Information System (SIS 1+) to the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II) (COM(2009)0508 – C7-0244/2009 – 2009/0136(CNS). https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/LIBE-PR-430541_EN.pdf

European Parliament. (2014). Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/lastrules/RESP-LIBE_EN.html

European Parliament. (2016). Speech at the European Council by Martin Schulz. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/former_ep_presidents/president-schulz-2014-2016/en/press-room/speech_at_the_european_council_by_martin_schulz.html

European Parliament. (2018a). Speech by the President of the European Parliament, Antonio Tajani, at the European Council. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/former_ep_presidents/president-tajani/en/newsroom/speech-by-the-president-of-the-european-parliament-antonio-tajani-at-the-european-council.html.

European Parliament. (2018b). Speech by the President of the European Parliament to the European Council meeting on June 28, 2018. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/former_ep_presidents/president-tajani/en/newsroom/speech-by-the-president-of-the-european-parliament-to-the-european-council-meeting-on-28-june-2018.html.

Eurostat. (2024). Asylum and first-time asylum applicants by citizenship, age and sex Annual aggregated data (rounded). *Eurostat*. DOI: 10.15166/2499-8249/648

Forti, M. (2023). Belarus-sponsored migration movements and the response by Lithuania, Latvia, and Poland: A Critical Appraisal. *European Papers, 8*(1), 227-238. https://www.europeanpapers.eu/en/europeanforum/belarus-sponsored-migration-movements-and-response-by-lithuania-latvia-and-poland

FRONTEX. (2021a, July 01). Frontex provides support for Lithuania, Latvia at their borders with Belarus. *FRONTEX News*. https://www.frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news/news-release/frontex-provides-support-for-lithuania-latvia-at-their-borders-with-belarus-hqTC5M

FRONTEX. (2021b, January 29). Frontex continues its support for Spain. *FRONTEX News*. https://www.frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news/news-release/frontex-continues-its-support-for-spain-nOvbKi

Genç, D. (2010). A paradox in EU migration management. *Journal for Labour and Social Affairs in Eastern Europe, 13*(2), 181-192. DOI: 10.5771/9783845279398-237

Gulina, O. (2022). Fences on the border can't be Europe's future. *IPS Journal.* https://www.ips-journal.eu/topics/foreign-and-security-policy/fences-on-the-border-cant-be-europes-future-5622

Herszenhorn, M. D. & Baume, M. (2021, August 18). Afghan refugees should be shared 'equally, 'says EU Parliament president. *Politico*. https://www.politico.eu/article/afghanistan-refugees-eu-parliament-president-david-sassoli/

Huber, K. (2015). The European Parliament as an actor in EU border policies: Its role, relations with other EU institutions, and impact. *European Security, 24*(3), 420-437. DOI: 10.1080/09662839.2015.1028188

Jandl, M. (2007). Irregular Migration, Human Smuggling and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union. *Center for Migration Studies of New York, 41(*2), 291-315. DOI:10.1111/j.1747-7379.2007.00069.x

Jimenez, P. G. & Caraballo, S. (2018). Immigration and integration management in Spain. F*riedrich Ebert Stıftung*. https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/madrid/17649.pdf

Jordan, J. & Horsburgh, N. (2006). Spain and Islamist terrorism: Analysis of the threat and response 1995 – 2005. *Mediterranean Politics*, *11*(2), 209-229. DOI:10.1080/13629390600682933

Josipovic, I. & Reeger, U. (2019). Border management and migration controls in Austria, country report. http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1330169/FULLTEXT01.pdf

Kingsley, P. (2015, September 16). Refugees enter Croatia from Serbia after Hungary blocks border. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/16/refugees-enter-croatia-from-serbia-after-hungary-blocks-border

Kirişçi, K. (2004, October 12-12). Turkey's pre-accession and immigration issues. [Paper presentation]. *Conference on Population Challenges, International Migration and Reproductive Health in Turkey and the European Union: Issues and Policy Implications*. Istanbul.

Kokkinidi, T. (2021, August 22). Greece completes 40-km fence at border with Turkey. *Greek Reporter*. https://greekreporter.com/2021/08/22/greece-completes-40-km-fence-at-border-with-turkey/

Kostopoulos, C. & Mylonas, Y. (2022). Framing migration in the Greek press; An analysis of the 'Evros events 'in left, liberal, and far-right newspapers. *Journalism*, *25*(1), 158-179. DOI: 10.1177/14648849221134000

Liboreiro, J. (2023, June 06). Von der Leyen and Michel praise new EU deal on migration while Viktor Orban calls it 'unacceptable'. *Euronews*. https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2023/06/09/von-der-leyen-and-michel-praise-new-eu-deal-on-migration-while-viktor-orban-calls-it-unacc

Lodge, J. & Bayburtlu, M. (2002). *Avrupa Birliği'nin adalet ve içişleri alanındaki müktesebatı ve Türkiye'nin uyumu*. İKV Yayınları.

Lyman, R. (2015, April 05). Bulgaria puts up a new wall, but this one keeps people out. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/06/world/europe/bulgaria-puts-up-a-new-wall-but-this-one-keeps-people-out.html

Macdonald, A., & Baczynska, G. (2016, September 14). EU's Juncker promises tougher controls on external borders. *Reuters Europe News*. https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-eu-juncker-migration-idUKKCN11K1ZR/

Mills, C. Stefano, F., Philip, L. & Butchard, P. (2021, November 26). Belarus/EU migrant crisis. *Commons Library Research Briefing*. https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9389/CBP-9389.pdf

Murphy, F. (2015, November 13). Austria plans border fence to manage migrant flow. *Reuters Europe News*. https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSKCN0T21HL/

Neal, W. A. (2009). Securitization and Risk at the EU Border: The Origins of FRONTEX. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *47*(2). 333-356. DOI: 10.1111/j.1468-5965.2009.00807.x

NTV. (2017). Macaristan sınıra ördüğü çitin parasını AB'den istedi. *NTV*. https://www.ntv.com.tr/dunya/macaristan-sinira-ordugu-citin-parasini-abden-istedi,-L0CvQchFEKRBuET5AXh5w#

Özdemir, Y. (2022). "Avrupa Kalesi"ne sığınmak mı? T*eori ve Eylem, Sosyalist Teori ve Politika Dergisi*, (57). https://teoriveeylem.net/tr/2022/11/08/avrupa-kalesine-siginmak-mi/

Özer Yeşer, Y. (2011). Yasadışı göçün kontrolünde destekleyici düzenlemelerin rolü: AB ve Türkiye örnekleri. In Demir, O. Ö., & Sever, M. (Eds.), *Örgütlü suçlar ve yeni trendler* (pp. 197-2016). Polis Akademisi Yayınları.

Palagiannis, V. (2016). *Europeanization and de-Europeanization of migration policies in times of crisis: The case of Greece* [Master's thesis, Universiteit Leiden]. https://studenttheses.universiteitleiden.nl/handle/1887/54276

Papageorgiou, I. (2013). The Europeanization of immigration and asylum in Greece (1990–2012). *International Journal of Sociology, 43*(3), 72-90. DOI: 10.2753/IJS0020-7659430304

Patton, F. D. (2017). The Alternative for Germany's radicalization in historical-comparative perspective. *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe*, *25*(2), 163-180. DOI: 10.1080/25739638.2017.1399512

Pınar, Ö. (2016, April 27). İtalya ve Avusturya arasında sınır gerginliği. *BBC News*. https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2016/04/160427_italya_avusturya_sinir

Pinos, C. J. (2009). Building Fortress Europe? Schengen and the cases of Ceuta and Melilla. *Centre for International Border Research*, 1-29. https://www.academia.edu/5854202/Building_Fortress_Europe_Schengen_and_the_Cases_of_Ceuta_and_Melilla

Pollet, K & Mouzourakis, M. (2015). Crossing boundaries: The new asylum procedure at the border and restrictions to accessing protection in Hungary. *European Council on Refugees and Exiles*. https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/crossing_boundaries_october_2015.pdf

Presidency of Strategy and Budget of the Republic of Turkey. (2021). *2022 yılı Cumhurbaşkanlığı Yıllık Programı*. https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/2022-Yili-Cumhurbaskanligi-Yillik-Programi-26102021.pdf

Ptak, A. (2023, October 25). Tusk meets von der Leyen in Brussels, pledging to restore rule of law and unblock frozen EU funds. *Notes From Poland.* https://notesfrompoland.com/2023/10/25/tusk-meets-von-der-leyen-in-brussels-pledging-to-restore-rule-of-law-and-unblock-frozen-eu-funds/

Rigby, J. & Crisp, J. (2021). Fortress Europe. *Telegraph Media Group*. https://www.telegraph.co.uk/global-health/fortress-europe-borders-wall-fence-controls-eu-countries-migrants-crisis/

Sandford, A. (2017). Hungary says it has finished building a second fence on the border with Serbia to keep migrants out. https://www.euronews.com/2017/04/28/hungary-completes-new-anti-migrant-border-fence-with-serbia

Sierakowski, S. (2022, March 22). Poland's refugee crisis in waiting. *The Jordan Times.* https://www.jordantimes.com/opinion/sławomir-sierakowski/polands-refugee-crisis-waiting

Smith, H. (2020, January 30). Greece plans to build sea barrier off Lesbos to deter migrants. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/30/greece-plans-to-build-sea-barrier-off-lesbos-to-deter-migrants

Stickings, T. (2021, June 9). Greece defends use of 'sound cannon 'to deter migrants. *The National News*. https://www.thenationalnews.com/world/europe/greece-defends-use-of-sound-cannon-to-deter-migrants-1.1237990

Sunar, F. (2018). Avrupa Birliği ülkelerinde sınır yönetimi. *İdarecinin sesi Dergisi*, (185), 37-42. http://tid.web.tr/kurumlar/tid.web.tr/tid/İdarecinin Sesi/185/fatih_sunar.pdf

The Brussels Times News. (2022, August 24). Greece decides to tighten up its border with Turkey. *The Brussels Times News.* https://www.brusselstimes.com/277877/greece-decides-to-tighten-up-its-border-with-turkey

Tondo, L. (2022, January 27). Poland starts building wall through protected forest at Belarus border. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/27/poland-starts-building-wall-through-protected-forest-at-belarus-border

Topak, E. Ö. (2014). The biopolitical border in practice: Surveillance and death at the Greece–Turkey borderzones. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 32*(5), 815-833. DOI: 10.1068/d13031p

UNHCR. (2022). Operational data portal Greece sea and land arrivals. https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179

Valcarcel, A. (2022, June 01). Out of Sight – Refugees and migrants at the Belarus-Poland border. *Jesuit Refugee Service*. https://jrs.net/en/news/out-of-sight-refugees-and-migrants-at-the-belarus-poland-border/

Yavaş, G. (2017). Border management of the European Union: The case of the Arab uprisings. *Marmara Journal of European Studies, 25*(2), 82–83.

Waever, O. (2003). Securitisation: Taking stock of a research programme in security studies. *Unpublished manuscript*, Chicago PIPES.

Acknowledgments

This article is based on a PhD dissertation titled "Implications of the Securitization of European Union Migration Policy on Border Security Policies: The Case of Turkey and Greece." The thesis was written as part of the Political Science and International Relations PhD Program at Yildiz Technical University.

Notes on contributors

Fulya Memişoğlu is an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Istanbul Yıldız Technical University. She has an MA in International Relations from the University of Warwick and a PhD in Politics from the University of Nottingham. Previously, she worked as a postdoctoral researcher at the Refugee Studies Centre at the University of Oxford and the European University Institute. Her research focuses on migration politics, refugee studies, securitization of migration, and comparative politics, with a particular emphasis on the interaction among international, regional, and national policymaking processes in the area of human rights.

Çılga Altunbaş is currently pursuing her PhD in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Istanbul Yıldız Technical University. She has already earned an MA degree from Manisa Celal Bayar University. Her research interests are mainly focused on the politics of the European Union, security issues related to migration, external relations and regional politics of the EU, and migration policies.

ORCID

Çılga Altunbaş https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3756-8508

Fulya Memişoğlu https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8113-813X

Author contributions

Conceptualization: Fulya Memişoğlu
Data curation: Çılga Altunbaş
Methodology: Fulya Memişoğlu
Supervision: Fulya Memişoğlu
Writing – Original Draft: Çılga Altunbaş
Writing – Review & Editing: Fulya Memişoğlu

Disclosure statement

The authors have declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and publication of this article. The authors have received no financial support for the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

Lectio Socialis
2024, VOL. 8, NO. 1, pp. 57-71

RESEARCH ARTICLE
DOI: 10.47478/lectio.1378450

Ethnic tensions and global response: Disentangling the complexities of the Bosnian War

Aslıhan Iğdır-Akaras[a]

[a] Assistant Professor, Iğdır University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Iğdır, TÜRKİYE.

ABSTRACT

This article critically examines the Bosnian War within the broader framework of international law, with a specific focus on understanding its role in managing ethnic conflicts. The aim is to analyze the effectiveness of international law in addressing the complex dynamics of ethnic strife, particularly in the context of post-Cold War Yugoslavia. The key hypothesis guiding this research posits that international legal mechanisms, while crucial, faced significant challenges and limitations in effectively resolving the ethnic conflicts that characterized the Bosnian War. The study delves into the historical and socio-political factors fueling ethnic tensions in Yugoslavia, highlighting how nationalism and ethnic separatism culminated in widespread violence. The article critically evaluates the international response to the conflict, including the effectiveness of UN Peacekeeping Forces and the Dayton Peace Agreement, and discusses the broader implications for global peace and security. Furthermore, the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) is explored as a key development in international law. The study assesses the impact of the ICTY on promoting accountability and justice, and its role in facilitating reconciliation efforts post-conflict. The findings of this study have significant relevance for contemporary international law, offering insights into its potential in preventing and resolving ethnic conflicts in a rapidly changing global landscape.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received: 19.10.2023
Revised: 25.12.2023
Accepted: 31.12.2023

KEYWORDS
Bosnian War,
ethnic conflicts,
genocide,
Yugoslavia,
international law

Introduction

The dissolution of Yugoslavia in the post-Cold War era marked the beginning of a series of escalating ethnic conflicts. In the early 1990s, the world witnessed a massive political upheaval in Yugoslavia, resulting in one of the darkest chapters in European history since World War II. The United Nations responded to this crisis by passing a series of resolutions and engaging in diplomatic efforts to mitigate the conflict. For example, with Resolution 713, the UN Security Council implemented an arms embargo against Yugoslavia, recognizing the escalating tensions and aiming to reduce violence (Moor, 1994, p. 871; Qureshi *et al.*, 1994, p. 6; United Nations, 1991). This embargo was part of the international community's early efforts to address the crisis through non-military means (Heffes, 2022). However, the effectiveness of these initial efforts was later scrutinized as the conflict continued to escalate, eventually necessitating more direct intervention.

CONTACT Aslıhan Iğdır-Akaras aslihan.igdir@igdir.edu.tr

© The Author(s). Published by *Lectio Socialis*.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-4.0 License (CC BY 4.0), which permits re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Bosnia, in particular, emerged as a pivotal case study of ethnic violence and its aftermath. Various regions within the country experienced differing degrees of violence and displacement (Hall *et al.*, 2017). Bosnians endured varying forms of violence, with certain areas witnessing limited strife while others became targets of extensive ethnic cleansing campaigns. The genocide in Srebrenica serves as a heart-wrenching exemplar of the latter.

The establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in 1993 marked a profound turning point in addressing the human rights violations committed during the Bosnian War (Malešević, 2020), while also upholding international law in response to the ethnic conflicts that unfolded within Yugoslavia (Tepšić & Džuverović, 2018). This shift in focus redirected attention from macro-level geopolitical analyses to the prosecution of individuals responsible for serious breaches of international humanitarian law.

In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the initial international response to the atrocities was modest, primarily involving an arms embargo. However, there was a prevailing consensus among the international community that the Bosnian War was primarily driven by deep-seated ethnic animosity and historical enmity (Bolton & Jeffrey, 2008). During the Bosnian War, the international community's reaction to the escalating violence and human rights violations was notably sluggish. The initial attribution of the conflict to "ancient ethnic hatreds" served as a rationale for inaction (Mulaj, 2008). Simultaneously, Serbian nationalism surged, aligning with Slobodan Milošević's vision of preserving Serbian unity. The declaration of independence by Bosnia and Herzegovina pushed these conflicts to a new pinnacle, ultimately culminating in full-scale warfare (Anholt, 2016, p. 2). These tumultuous years between 1992 and 1995 witnessed egregious crimes against humanity, including genocide, with Bosniaks bearing the brunt of the violence. The Bosnian War etched its name in history as one of the most significant global atrocities since World War II.

Significantly, the conflict was characterized by belated international intervention, which exacted a staggering human toll, with over 300,000 lives lost to Serbian aggression (Vomlela, 2016). Peacekeeping efforts and negotiations often faltered, extending the suffering. Ultimately, the Dayton Agreement of December 14, 1995, brought an end to the war, albeit introducing a precarious political landscape in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In this context, this article seeks to analyze the Bosnian War not only as a historical event but also through the prism of international law, examining its role and effectiveness in managing and resolving ethnic conflicts. The research is guided by the hypothesis that while international legal mechanisms played a crucial role during the Bosnian War, they also encountered significant challenges and limitations.

This study adopts a historical-analytical approach, utilizing a combination of qualitative and documentary analysis to examine the Bosnian War and its interaction with international law. The methodology is structured in three key phases:

(1) Historical Contextualization: The research begins with a comprehensive review of the historical background of Yugoslavia post-Cold War, focusing on the emergence and escalation of ethnic conflicts leading to the Bosnian War (e.g., Ramet, 2006). This phase involves analyzing historical documents, academic texts, and archival materials to construct a detailed narrative of the events.

(2) Legal Analysis: The core of the study involves an in-depth analysis of international legal responses to the Bosnian War (e.g., Cassese, 2005). This includes examining the

formation, mandates, and outcomes of institutions like the ICTY. Legal documents, tribunal proceedings, academic critiques, and international law journals serve as primary sources for this phase. The analysis aims to assess the effectiveness and limitations of international legal mechanisms in addressing the complexities of ethnic conflicts.

(3) Comparative Analysis: To contextualize the findings within a broader framework, the study also incorporates a comparative analysis. This involves comparing the Bosnian War's case with other similar instances of ethnic conflicts and international law interventions. The purpose is to identify patterns, differences, and lessons that can be applied to understand the role of international law in contemporary ethnic conflicts.

Throughout the research, a critical approach is maintained, questioning prevailing narratives and examining the multidimensional impacts of legal interventions. The study also considers the socio-political implications of international legal responses, including their effect on peacekeeping, justice, reconciliation, and governance structures post-conflict. Also, ethical considerations, particularly regarding the sensitive nature of the subject matter, are adhered to throughout the research process (Israel & Hay, 2006). Primary and secondary sources are meticulously referenced, ensuring academic rigor and integrity. By employing this multifaceted methodology, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Bosnian War in the context of international law, contributing valuable insights to the field and informing future policy and legal frameworks.

Considering the Bosnian conflict, this article delves into several key themes: the role of international law in addressing ethnic conflicts in Yugoslavia, the establishment of the ICTY, and the intricate challenges of balancing peace and justice in post-conflict societies.

Exploring the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the resurgence of ethnic nationalism

The disintegration of Yugoslavia, which resulted in the ethnic conflicts of the 1990s, had deeper historical and political roots. The book *The Three Yugoslavias: State-Building and Legitimation*, 1918–2005 by Sabrina P. Ramet (2006), meticulously studies the Yugoslav states across different eras, revealing a recurring theme of political illegitimacy that explains the genesis of the Bosnian War. As discussed by Ramet, the Yugoslav states' failures in 1941, 1991, and 2003 underline a chronic instability caused by inadequate political structures that failed to create a sense of national unity (Ramet, 2006, p. 13).[1] This led to a fragmented society where ethnic nationalism thrived. This context is crucial to analyzing the emergence of the Bosnian War and the challenges faced by international law in addressing such a deeply rooted conflict.

[1] In 1941, the state's collapse under the pressure of World War II highlighted its fragility and internal divisions. The year 1991 marked the onset of Yugoslavia's disintegration, as ethnic and nationalist tensions escalated into armed conflict, underscoring the failure of the political system to maintain unity. Finally, the reconstitution of Yugoslavia in 2003 and its eventual dissolution into separate states by 2006 further demonstrated the persistent instability and the inability of political structures to create a sustainable, cohesive state, reflecting a long-standing challenge in managing ethnic diversity and fostering national unity (Ramet, 2006).

Secondly, the Bosnian War was heavily influenced by the political regimes that governed Yugoslavia. Ramet's (2006) comparative analysis shows that each regime, starting from monarchy to communist dictatorship and finally to Milosevic's authoritarian rule, played a distinct role in shaping the country's political and ethnic landscape. These regimes contributed to escalating ethnic tensions, which were further exacerbated by a lack of legitimate governance. It is crucial to understand the impact of these regimes in assessing why international law had difficulty maintaining peace and order during the Bosnian War. The shifting political landscape not only fueled the conflict but also complicated the implementation of international legal resolutions.

Ramet's (2006, p. 390) analysis of nationalism's impact on the disintegration of Yugoslavia offers a critical perspective on the Bosnian War. The rise of ethnic nationalism, especially in the late 20th century, played a crucial role in triggering the conflict. However, this nationalism did not emerge spontaneously but was the result of various historical grievances and political manipulation. The deeply entrenched nationalist ideologies, often promoted, and exploited by political leaders, created an environment conducive to ethnic conflict. This historical context is crucial in comprehending why conventional international law mechanisms struggled to address the intricate and long-standing ethnic divisions in Bosnia.

Hence, in our analysis of the ethnic conflicts in Yugoslavia and the subsequent pursuit of justice, it is crucial to consider the multifaceted role of nationalism. Nationalism serves a dual and conflicting function, both uniting ethnic groups to create nations and mobilizing ethnic communities within existing nations toward nation-building (Konuralp, 2018, pp. 140-142)). This intricate interplay of nationalism's functions has significantly influenced the course of events in the Balkans (Adaş & Konuralp, 2020a; Adaş & Konuralp, 2020b; Konuralp & Adaş, 2020).

Throughout the period from 1991 to 1995, the ethnic conflicts that ravaged Yugoslavia were marked by a disturbing tactic known as ethnic cleansing. This merciless strategy aimed to establish homogeneous nation-states based on nationalism. At the heart of these conflicts, we can discern the tension between uniting ethnic groups to create new nations and the movement of ethnic communities within existing nations toward their own nationhood. This duality of nationalism's impact became a driving force behind the violence and strife that unfolded during this turbulent time.

Furthermore, the pursuit of justice in the aftermath of these conflicts was shaped by the same dual and conflicting function of nationalism. The establishment of the ICTY, for instance, was a response to the severity of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the region. It aimed to address individual accountability rather than state responsibility, reflecting the principle of individual criminal responsibility. This approach sought to navigate the intricate landscape of nationalism's effects on the region, acknowledging the need to hold individuals accountable for their involvement in grave international crimes against humanity.

Thirdly, this brings us to the relationship between legitimate statehood and effectiveness of the international law. Ramet (2006) argues that the stability of a state is dependent on its legitimacy, which provides a theoretical framework for examining the effectiveness of international law in the context of the Bosnian War. The failure to establish a legitimate and stable state in Yugoslavia had a direct impact on the ability of international legal interventions to be effective. International law, which is usually designed to resolve

disputes between sovereign states, faced an unprecedented challenge in dealing with a state where legitimacy was fundamentally contested. This analysis suggests that the success of international law in managing ethnic conflicts is closely tied to the level of legitimacy of the state structures that it seeks to engage with.

Following this line of analysis, we need to remind that in the early 1990s, the international community watched with growing apprehension as Yugoslavia plunged into a profound political crisis that swiftly evolved into full-scale armed conflict. The breakup of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia left behind a perilous power vacuum, triggering declarations of independence by its constituent states. This tumultuous sequence of events initiated a series of ethnic-based internal conflicts across the Balkans. The initial phase witnessed Serb forces directing their aggression towards Slovenia and Croatia (Đorđević *et al.*, 2022). Subsequent declarations of independence by Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina further exacerbated these conflicts (Neumann, 2012). Shockingly, these confrontations rapidly devolved into a nightmarish scenario, prompting international organizations to formally acknowledge acts of genocide in their reports (Gunawan *et al.*, 2020).

Understanding the immediate outbreak of armed conflicts in the early 1990s necessitates a deeper exploration into the historical underpinnings of Yugoslavia's disintegration, particularly the post-Tito era that set the stage for these tumultuous events. The disintegration, catalyzed by the passing of its long-serving leader Josip Broz Tito, ushered in an era of profound instability and transformation across the Balkans. Despite Tito's earnest attempts to cultivate a unified Yugoslav identity through shared citizenship, the emergence of figures like Slobodan Milošević and the propagation of the "Greater Serbia" narrative significantly contributed to the resurgence of ethnic nationalism, ultimately culminating in the dissolution of the Yugoslav state.[2] This tumultuous period was characterized by intricate historical events that fueled ethnic tensions and reshaped political dynamics (Sell, 2002). Therefore, a pivotal driver behind Yugoslavia's disintegration was the emergence of nationalist movements, particularly in the mid-1980s. Serbian nationalist discourse gained substantial momentum, spurring a surge in nationalism among other ethnic groups. The overwhelming Serbian dominance within the Yugoslav Federation, combined with a significant Serbian population, created unease among other nationalities (Petrović *et al.*, 2019). This mounting unease and the perception of Serbian dominance reached a breaking point with violent conflicts erupting, particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Additionally, severe economic challenges stemming from Tito's passing further exacerbated these tensions and laid the foundation for uprisings (Bennett, 1995).

These events unfolded against the backdrop of post-Cold War international relations, where ethnic nationalism-driven disputes and conflicts assumed prominence. Nationalist rhetoric proved to be a potent tool for mobilizing individuals (Özdil, 2021, pp. 124-125; Shuangyun, 2021). Central to the conflicts of the Yugoslav Wars in the 1990s was a strong belief that a nation's political identity should align with its shared cultural traits. This

[2] Notably, Serbian nationalism, which had largely been kept in check under the banner of Yugoslav identity during the Tito era, spiraled out of control. In 1987, Slobodan Milošević, an extremist Serbian nationalist, assumed leadership of the Serbian Communist Party. His rise to power fueled a resurgence in Serbian nationalism, with a specific emphasis on advocating for Greater Serbia and expanding its influence across the entire Yugoslav territory. This development ultimately led to the disintegration of the country (Sell, 2002).

pursuit of national homogeneity and identity often led minority ethnic groups to seek separatist actions within their respective states. These minority groups, residing in empires and later in modern nation-states, regarded self-determination as their fundamental right. Nationalism emerged as the cornerstone for asserting this right, with the understanding that individuals can truly flourish when their community possesses the potential for statehood. While international norms typically stress respect for state borders, Europe witnessed a surge of nationalism in the 19th century that facilitated the formation of nation-states (Adas & Konuralp, 2020a, p. 106).

The consequences of the nationalist movement and the quest for self-determination varied significantly depending on the geographic and administrative structures of individual states. The outcomes were multifaceted. As existing literature suggests, this phenomenon spurred separatist movements within multinational states, often culminating in their dissolution (Bilić, 2011). Simultaneously, it served as a potent motivating force for nations striving for independence and the establishment of their own sovereign states. The aftermath of World War II, which had a profound impact on colonial nations and reshaped their environmental conditions, played a pivotal role in galvanizing independence movements (Choi, 2022). Furthermore, the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in the early 1990s created a power vacuum and paved the way for the emergence of new nation-states, each with their aspirations for self-determination and national identity. The nationalist movements that began in the late 18th century and persisted throughout the 19th century played a pivotal role in shaping the conflicts of the Yugoslav Wars in the 1990s (Ginieczki, 2020). Thus, the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s was deeply rooted in the nationalist movements that had been simmering throughout the region for decades.

The unfolding of the Bosnian War

The Bosnian War, a pivotal conflict in the dissolution of Yugoslavia, unfolded through a series of escalating events marked by complex ethnic and political dynamics. The conflict began in the aftermath of the democratic elections in Slovenia and Croatia in 1991, where both nations asserted independence from the Yugoslav Federation, prompting aggressive responses from the predominantly Serbian Yugoslav Federal Army. These initial conflicts in Slovenia and Croatia set the stage for broader regional instability (Bulatović, 2019).

As the crisis deepened, Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina also declared their independence, reshaping international borders and heightening tensions over minority populations. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the situation was particularly volatile. The Bosnian Parliament, apprehensive about Serb dominance, declared independence in 1991, a move supported by the Muslim and Christian populations. The independence referendum in February 1992 saw overwhelming support among voters, though boycotted by the Serbs. This led to international recognition from the EU and the United States, and eventually, UN membership on May 22, 1992 (Sancaktar, 2018).

However, conflict erupted in Sarajevo soon after, driven by Milošević's agenda for a "Greater Serbia." Milošević's instigation to arm the Bosnian Serbs marked the beginning of a civil war within Bosnia-Herzegovina, further complicated by Serbia and Croatia's involvement on behalf of their ethnic kin (Đorđević *et al.*, 2022). The conflict transformed Bosnia-Herzegovina into a battleground, with Milosevic and Croatian President Franjo

Tuđman even discussing the division of the country. Violence escalated rapidly, exemplified by the April 5, 1992, attack by Serb militias in Sarajevo, just as the European Community recognized Bosnia-Herzegovina's independence (Daalder, 1998; Akdemir, 2018).

The Bosnian War was characterized by severe atrocities against the Muslim Bosniak population, who were largely defenseless against the better-armed Serbian forces. By late 1992, the Bosniaks had lost most of their territory, and ethnic cleansing campaigns were rampant, marked by concentration camps, sexual violence, and systematic destruction of cultural sites (Nešković, 2023; Đorđević *et al.*, 2022; Galli, 2018; Putra *et al.*, 2021).

The UN Security Council, acknowledging the severity of the situation, established safe zones in an effort to protect civilians. One such notable resolution was Resolution 819 in 1993, declaring Srebrenica a safe area (United Nations, 1993b). Nevertheless, the establishment of these safe zones did not halt the conflict and the most heinous atrocity occurred in Srebrenica in July 1995. Serbian forces, under General Ratko Mladić, massacred over 8,000 Bosniak men and boys, an act later confirmed as genocide by international courts (Cohen-Almagor, 2020; Subotić, 2022).

The international community's response was marred by delays and ineffectiveness. The UN Security Council's initial measures, including deploying peacekeeping troops and declaring safe zones, proved inadequate in the face of Serbian aggression. The failure to prevent attacks, particularly in Srebrenica, highlighted the shortcomings of international intervention (Nešković, 2023).

The Dayton Peace Agreement, signed in December 1995, eventually ended the conflict. It divided Bosnia-Herzegovina into two entities but also cemented the division of the country, legitimizing the consequences of ethnic cleansing. This agreement, while ending hostilities, did not fully resolve underlying ethnic tensions (Rawski, 2021; Rangelov, 2006).

International law and the pursuit of justice in the Bosnian War

When we look closely at the complicated situation of the Yugoslav conflicts, we can see that both Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) play crucial but different roles. As Schabas (2006) pointed out, the ICTY stands as an example of how these two legal domains are intertwined. Human Rights Law deals with a wide range of individual rights and freedoms, which are important both in times of peace and war. It is a universal legal foundation that supports the protection of human rights (Meron, 2006).

According to Fleck's (2008) *Handbook of International Humanitarian Law*, IHL is designed to make sure that parties involved in armed conflicts conduct themselves properly. Its main goal is to reduce the impact of war by protecting non-combatants and regulating the methods of warfare. This legal framework was especially important during the Balkan conflicts and the ICTY, as it dealt with war crimes and other violations of IHL that occurred during that time (Cryer, 2010).

The interplay between these two legal realms is intricate. While Human Rights Law maintains a vigilant watch over individual liberties, IHL steps into the foreground in times of armed conflict, ensuring humanitarian principles are upheld amidst the chaos of war (Doswald-Beck, 2011). Resolutions 808 and 827 highlight the unique challenges posed by the Bosnian War, necessitating a response that combined the principles of human rights protection with the norms of conduct in armed conflict. The ICTY's mandate encompassed

this duality, prosecuting grave human rights abuses under the umbrella of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. This dual approach not only brought justice to the victims but also reinforced the symbiotic relationship between Human Rights Law and IHL in the realm of international conflict resolution.

In essence, the establishment of the ICTY and its subsequent proceedings showed how Human Rights Law and IHL work together in a complementary yet distinct way. This highlighted the importance of international cooperation in responding to complex and devastating conflicts, such as those experienced in the former Yugoslavia. Ultimately, it underscored the human impact of these conflicts and the need for justice and accountability to ensure a better future for affected communities.

Nonetheless, the international community's response to the Yugoslav conflicts was initially marked by delay, influenced partly by concurrent global events like the Gulf Crisis. The United States, viewing the Balkan crisis primarily as a European issue, initially delegated resolution responsibilities to the European Union, leading to a slow reaction to the unfolding atrocities (Kulková, 2019).

However, as the severity of the situation in Yugoslavia, especially in Bosnia-Herzegovina, became apparent through media reports and detailed accounts of human rights violations, international action began to materialize. A significant step was the United Nations deploying peacekeepers to the region, although their presence did not immediately quell the conflicts. The human rights abuses were extensively documented in 1992 by UN-appointed experts, including a comprehensive report by the UN Rapporteur and the UN Commission on Human Rights, led by the former Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki. These reports highlighted the inadequacy of the measures in place and the urgent need for more decisive actions (Ktori & Baranhan, 2018).

Recognizing the necessity for legal accountability, the UN Security Council initiated steps towards establishing a global criminal tribunal. This was marked by Resolution 808, which underscored the importance of prosecuting war crimes in the region to foster peace and deter further Serbian aggression (United Nations, 1993a). The resolution supported a report that included the Statute of the International Criminal Court, calling for its establishment (Dag Hammarskjöld Library, 2020).

The process of creating the court saw contributions from various governments, including France, Italy, and Sweden, each proposing draft statutes. The most comprehensive draft was developed by rapporteurs Hans Correl, Gro Hillestad Thune, and Helmut Tuerk, under the Moscow Human Dimension Mechanism, and subsequently submitted to the UN by the Swedish Foreign Minister (Taylor, 2019).

Following extensive review and consolidation of these drafts, the UN Security Council formally established the ICTY on February 22, 1993. The tribunal's mandate, as confirmed by UN Security Council Resolution 827 on May 25, 1993, was to prosecute individuals for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in Yugoslavia (United Nations, 1993c). This marked a shift towards individual accountability for war crimes, extending jurisdiction over grave violations of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, wartime laws and customs, genocide, and crimes against humanity (International Criminal Court, 2020; Korać, 2022).

Antonio Cassese's (2005) insights in *International Law* are instrumental in understanding the application of international law in the Bosnian War. As the first President of the ICTY, Cassese's analysis of international humanitarian law and the legal frameworks governing

war crimes offers a vital perspective on the accountability of different actors in the conflict. His work helps elucidate the interpretation and practical application of international law during the Bosnian War and its influence on subsequent international legal practices in similar conflicts.

The formation of the ICTY, while contentious, was a crucial development under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which deals with threats to peace and acts of aggression. Resolution 827 explicitly invoked Chapter VII, emphasizing the role of prosecuting crimes in the pursuit of peace restoration. This move, despite opposition from Serbia, was a significant milestone in international law, allowing the tribunal to hold individuals accountable for grave crimes against humanity (Bam *et al.*, 2020; Farer, 2006; Whittle, 2015; Benson, 2020).

On the other hand, a thorough analysis of the Bosnian War and the international legal response requires a deep understanding of David Kennedy's (2006) *Of War and Law*. Kennedy's perspective encourages us to challenge traditional legal frameworks and narratives, which means going beyond the surface of legal processes to uncover the underlying power dynamics and ethical dilemmas at play. In the case of the Bosnian War, this involves examining the ICTY not only for its procedural aspects but for its wider implications on justice and reconciliation. A critical lens reveals how power relations and geopolitical interests may have influenced the ICTY's decisions and priorities, leading to biases or gaps in addressing the conflict's complexities. Kennedy's approach also compels us to consider the ethical consequences of these legal interventions, questioning whether the actions taken by international bodies were not only legally sound but also morally justifiable. Such a critical perspective is crucial for understanding the complex interplay of law, power, and ethics in the Bosnian War and provides valuable insights for shaping future international legal practices in conflict resolution.

Furthermore, this study takes inspiration from the findings of Snyder and Vinjamuri (2003) and conducts a comparative analysis of the Bosnian War in relation to other ethnic conflicts where international law interventions had a significant impact. The aim of this approach is to provide insights into the distinct challenges and results of the Bosnian conflict within the larger framework of international responses to ethnic tensions. For instance, an examination of other ethnic conflicts and the interventions made by international legal frameworks, such as the ones in Rwanda or the Middle East, can provide a comparative perspective. These case studies reveal the varying levels of success and limitations of international legal mechanisms in managing ethnic conflicts. Snyder and Vinjamuri's analysis of these interventions provides valuable insights into the conditions required for international law to effectively mitigate such conflicts and how international law has evolved in response to ethnic conflicts. The Bosnian War is a significant case study that illustrates the intricacies and fluidity of international legal responses to ethnic tensions. When compared to other conflicts, the intervention in Bosnia emphasizes the importance of flexible and context-specific methods in international law.

Reflecting on these varied international responses to ethnic conflicts, the harrowing events of the Rwandan genocide serve as a critical and starkly contrasting case study to the Bosnian War, highlighting the urgent need for timely and effective intervention in such crises. Over the course of just over three months between April and mid-July of 1994, the genocide in Rwanda tragically resulted in the deaths of around 800,000 Rwandans. About two million refugees were displaced and fled to neighboring countries as a result of the conflict. Fear, brutality, and violence, culminating in the mass killing of Rwandans by their

fellow citizens, were the root causes of the decades-long civil war between Tutsis and Hutus. After the genocide ended, policymakers and the international community began to reflect on how they could have better assessed the situation to intervene prudently and avert the genocide, as the United Nations Investigative Task Force began to sort through the mutilated bodies in churches, stadiums, rivers and on roadsides. Furthermore, both Rwanda and the international community sought to determine what form of justice could be delivered to the survivors. The issues related to the ethnic conflicts in Rwanda are still relevant today, much like the post-Dayton process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Rwanda is a discouraging lesson for foreign policymakers and practitioners involved in diplomatic mediation or international development. An apology alone cannot undo the trauma experienced by hundreds of thousands of Tutsi and Hutu victims. On top of that, rebuilding the nation is a daunting undertaking, requiring careful consideration of policy and the everyday realities of those seeking recovery and restoration. It is crucial for the international community to develop mechanisms that prevent conflicts before they escalate to genocide or massacre rather than intervening after the fact. In order to clarify this preventive mechanism, let us consider a hypothetical scenario: A leader who is aware of the high probability of being indicted by the international legal system would be less likely to commit such crimes (Des Forges, 1999; Gourevitch, 1999; Mamdani, 2020; Power, 2002; United Nations, 1999).

Conclusion

In hindsight, the ethnic conflicts that swept through Yugoslavia in the aftermath of the Cold War were marked by a disturbing tactic: ethnic cleansing, a merciless strategy designed to establish homogeneous nation-states based on nationalism. As global politics entered a new era post-Cold War, these conflicts emerged as a distressing outcome of this geopolitical change.

During the tumultuous period from 1991 to 1995, a series of aggressions committed by Serb forces against Bosniak Muslims emerged as a defining feature. The actions of these Serb-led assaults, carried out under the pretext of Greater Serbia, precipitated a significant political crisis that swiftly developed into a deeply destructive full-scale war. Known as the Bosnian War, this conflict remains notable for its egregious nature and stands as one of the most severe atrocities since World War II. This is primarily due to the systematic genocide perpetrated by Serb forces against the Bosnian population.

Throughout this conflict, there is irrefutable evidence in international documents and records of the perpetration of genocide, an abhorrent crime that will forever mar humanity's history. Unfortunately, despite the powerful images displayed by global media that captivated attention worldwide, the timely intervention of international organizations and influential states capable of directing these organizations to prevent both conflict and atrocities was regrettably postponed. The delay in responding to avert this war and the gruesome crimes committed against civilians serves as a stark reminder of the inadequacies within the international community when it comes to averting such catastrophic events.

Although the United Nations' Peacekeeping Force and subsequently NATO did intervene, their intervention came late in the timeline of the conflict, with instances of genocide, ongoing conflict, and the tragic events at Srebrenica already taking place.

International efforts facilitated the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement in 1995, marking the end of the Bosnian War and initiating the challenging process of post-conflict reconciliation (De la Vega, 2013). However, the agreement not only institutionalized ethnic nationalisms, but also created a governance structure that inadvertently reinforced ethnic discrimination and favored the Serbs (Adaş & Konuralp, 2020a, pp. 109-110). This compromise left Bosnia and Herzegovina with little choice but to accept this unequal arrangement as necessary for maintaining stability after years of conflict.

One of the most significant interventions in the Bosnian War was the implementation of international law. Following instances of genocide and grave crimes against humanity, the UN Security Council established the ICTY. This tribunal, based on Chapter VII of the UN Charter, represents a vital stride towards achieving justice. Acknowledging that these crimes posed a serious threat to global peace and security, establishing this tribunal holds lasting importance despite its belated initiation. It serves as an essential mechanism for holding accountable those responsible for committing acts of genocide against Bosniak Muslims and other atrocities.

In conclusion, the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the subsequent Bosnian War serve as powerful reminders of the devastating consequences that arise from ethnic conflicts. These events emphasize the urgent need for swift international intervention to prevent such atrocities from occurring. Additionally, the establishment of institutions like the ICTY underscores the importance of accountability and justice in addressing post-war trauma, promoting lasting peace, and facilitating reconciliation efforts.

Bibliography

Adaş, S. & Konuralp, E. (2020a). Sırp milliyetçiliği fay hattında Bosna-hersek siyasetinin krizi. *Barış Araştırmaları ve Çatışma Çözümleri Dergisi*, *8*(2), 102-126.

Adaş, S., & Konuralp, E. (2020b). Eski Yugoslavya'da Sırp milliyetçiliğinin tarihsel temelleri ve Yugoslavya Sosyalist Federal Cumhuriyeti'nin dağılmasına etkileri. *Anadolu ve Balkan Araştırmaları Dergisi*, *3*(6), 107-139.

Akdemir, E. (2018). European Union perception of Bosnia and Herzegovina's people. *Balkan Araştırma Enstitüsü Dergisi, 7*(1), 1-30.
DOI: 10.30903/Balkan.444557

Anholt, R. M. (2016). Understanding sexual violence in armed conflict: cutting ourselves with Occam's razor. *Journal of International Humanitarian Action*, *1*, 1-10.

Bam, N., Shrestha, R., & Maharjan, R. K. (2020). Importance of international humanitarian law (IHL) training in armed police force, Nepal. *Journal of APF Command and Staff College*, *3*(1), 106–119.
DOI: 10.3126/japfcsc.v3i1.27532

Bennett, C. (1995). *Yugoslavia's bloody collapse: Causes, course and consequences*. New York University Press.

Benson, S. A. (2020). Fragmentation or coherence? Does international dispute settlement achieve comprehensive justice? *International Journal of Law and Public Administration, 3*(1), 77-88.

Bilić, B. (2011). (Post-)Yugoslav anti-war engagement: A research topic awaiting attention. *Filozofija I Drustvo, 22*, 83-107.

Bolton, M. & Jeffrey, A. (2008), The politics of NGO registration in international protectorates: the cases of Bosnia and Iraq. *Disasters*, 32, 586-608.

DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-7717.2008.01056.x

Bulatović, S. (2019). The role of orthographic and phonetic distances in mutual intelligibility between Montenegrin and Bulgarian. *Logos & Littera: Journal of Interdisciplinary Approaches to Text*, *6*(1), 49-66. DOI: 10.31902/LL.2019.6.1.3

Cassese, A. (2005). *International law*. Oxford University Press.

Choi, S. (2022). The Multidirectional memory connecting the Holocaust and French decolonization. *Journal of Student Research*, *11*(3), 1-8. DOI: 10.47611/jsrhs.v11i3.2932

Cohen-Almagor, R. (2020). Taking profound offence seriously: Freedom of speech v. human dignity. *Journal of Hate Studies, 16*(1), 1–11. https://ssrn.com/abstract=3757329

Cryer, R. (2010). *Prosecuting ınternational crimes: Selectivity and the ınternational criminal law regime*. Cambridge University Press.

Daalder, I. H. (1998). Decision to intervene: How the war in Bosnia ended. *Foreign Service Journal*, *75*(12), 24-31.

Dag Hammarskjöld Library. (2020). Courts & tribunals - UN international law documentation. *Research*. https://research.un.org/en/docs/law/courts

De la Vega, C. (2013). *Dictionary of international human rights law*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Des Forges, A. (1999). Leave none to tell the story. *Human Rights Watch*.

Milošević Đorđević, J., Di Napoli, F. & Đurić, Ž. (2022). Endorsement and social role of the ethos of conflict in Serbia. *Politička misao, 59* (4), 192-214. DOI: 10.20901/pm.59.4.09

Doswald-Beck, L. (2011). *Human rights in times of conflict and terrorism*. Oxford University Press.

Farer, T. (2006). Rumo a uma ordem legal internacional efetiva: da coexistência ao consenso?. *Sur. Revista Internacional de Direitos Humanos*, *3*, 156-177.

Fleck, D. (Ed.). (2008). *The handbook of international humanitarian law* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Galli, V. (2018). Paul Wehr's conflict mapping: The Bosnian War. *Conflict Analysis Research Centre*. https://blogs.kent.ac.uk/carc/2018/04/02/conflict-mapping-of-the-bosnian-war/

Gourevitch, P. (1999). *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families: stories from Rwanda*. Picador.

Ginieczki, T. (2020). Constructions of identity and war: A reciprocal relationship in former Yugoslavia. *Undergraduate Research Journal, 17*, 19-28.

Gunawan, Y., Refisyanti, S. W., Mufida, A., Takarub, K. D., & Nur, A. (2020). Jurisdiction of International Court of Justice (ICJ) over the genocide violations: With special references to Rohingya case. *Fiat Justisia: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum*, *14*(4), 313-336.

Hall, J., Kovras, I., Stefanovic, D., & Loizides, N. (2018). Exposure to violence and attitudes towards transitional justice. *Political Psychology*, *39*(2), 345-363.

Heffes, E. (2022). Documents and resolutions. In *Detention by non-state armed groups under ınternational law*. Cambridge University Press. DOI: 10.1017/9781108862561.003

International Criminal Court. (2020). *Understanding the International Criminal Court*. International Criminal Court.

Israel, M. & Hay, I. (2006). *Research ethics for social scientists*. Sage Publications.

Kennedy, D. (2006). *Of war and law*. Princeton University Press.

Konuralp, E. (2018). Kimliğin etni ve ulus arasında salınımı: Çokkültürcülük mü yeniden kabilecilik mi? *Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Dergisi*, 13 (2), 133-146.
DOI: 10.17153/oguiibf.400350a

Konuralp, E. & Adaş, S. (2020). Makedonya'da isim Sorunu: Yunan ve Makedon milliyetçiliklerinin kıskacında kimlik inşası. *Iğdır Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, (21), 311-344.

Korać, S. (2022). Entangled in the continuum of violence: how do women experience war? *The Review of International Affairs*, *73*(1185), 27-50.

Ktori, M. & Baranhan, G. (2018). Development and future perspectives of a humanitarian forensic programme: the committee on missing persons in Cyprus example. *Egyptian Journal of Forensic Sciences*, *8*(1), 1-12.

Kulkova, M. (2019). From negative to positive peace in Western Balkans: A case for eclectic theory. *Central European Journal of International & Security Studies*, *13*(3), 26-47.

Malešević, S. (2020). Is it easy to kill in war? Emotions and violence in the combat zones of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (1991-1995). *European Journal of Sociology/Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, *61*(2), 301-331.

Mamdani, M. (2020). *When victims become killers: Colonialism, nativism, and the genocide in Rwanda*. Princeton University Press.

Meron, T. (2006). *The Humanization of International Law*. Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.

Moon, P. (2018). Reconstructions of Serbian national ıdentity in the post-Yugoslav era: A thematic survey. *Etnoantropološki Problemi Issues in Ethnology and Anthropology*, *13*(4), 1069–1089.
DOI: 10.21301/eap.v13i4.8.

Moor, G. A. (1994). The Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Article 51: Inherent rights and unmet responsibilities. *Fordham Int'l LJ*, 18, 870.

Mulaj, K. (2008). Forced displacement in Darfur, Sudan: Dilemmas of classifying the crimes. *International Migration*, *46*(2), 27-48.

Neumann, M. (2012). Modelling the dynamics of securitizing national identities. *Interdisciplinary Description of Complex Systems, 10*(1), 28-49.

Özdil, M. A. (2021). The effect of clothing as a marker on identity. *Motif Akademi Halkbilimi Dergisi*, *14*(33), 117-130.

Petrović, B., Međedović, J., Radović, O., & Lovrić, S. R. (2019). Conspiracy mentality in post-conflict societies: Relations with the ethos of conflict and readiness for reconciliation. *Europe's journal of psychology*, *15*(1), 59-81.

Power, S. (2002). *A Problem from hell: America and the age of genocide*. Basic Books.

Putra, I. E., Selvanathan, H. P., Mashuri, A., & Montiel, C. J. (2021). Aung San Suu Kyi's defensive denial of the Rohingya massacre: A rhetorical analysis of denial and positive-image construction. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, *9*(2), 353-369.

Qureshi, A., Michell, P., Copeland, P., Chang, F., Scott, C. M. & Kalajdzic, J. (1994). A memorial for Bosnia: Framework of legal arguments concerning the lawfulness of the maintenance of the United Nations Security Council's arms embargo on Bosnia and Herzegovina. *SSRN*.
DOI: 10.2139/ssrn.1661863

Ramet, S. P. (2006). *The three Yugoslavias: State-building and legitimation, 1918–2005*. Indiana University Press.
Rangelov, I. (2006). EU conditionality and transitional justice in the former Yugoslavia. *Croatian Yearbook of European Law & Policy*, *2*(1), 365-375.
Rawski, T. (2021). The persistence of national victimhood: Bosniak post-war memory politics of the Srebrenica mass killings. *Sprawy Narodowościowe*, (53), 1-23.
Sancaktar, C. (2018, July 31). Bosna-Hersek'te siyasal ve ekonomik yeniden yapılanma. *Balkan Araştırma Enstitüsü Dergisi, 7*(1), 211 -237.
Sell, L. (2003). *Slobodan Milosevic and the destruction of Yugoslavia*. Duke University Press.
Schabas, W. A. (2006). *An introduction to the International Criminal Court* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
Shuangyun, Y. & Hongxia, L. (2021). Ethnic Identity and acculturation orientation of Chinese Yi villagers in the context of social media. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, *8*(4), 109-127.
Snyder, J. & Vinjamuri, L. (2003). Trials and errors: Principle and pragmatism in strategies of ınternational justice. *International Security*, 28(3), 5-44.
Taylor, M. L. (2019). Combating disinformation and foreign interference in democracies: Lessons from Europe. *Brookings*. https://www.brookings.edu/articles/combating-disinformation-and-foreign-interference-in-democracies-lessons-from-europe/
Tepšić, G., & Džuverović, N. (2018). Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Giessmann, H. J., Mac Ginty, R., Austin, B. & Seifert, C. (Eds.), *The Elgar companion to post-conflict transition* (pp. 27-48). Edward Elgar Publishing.
United Nations. (1991). Resolution 713 (1991) / adopted by the Security Council at its 3009th meeting, on 25 September 1991. *UN Document S/RES/713(1991).* https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/126827
United Nations. (1993a). Resolution 808 (1993) / adopted by the Security Council at its 3175th meeting, on 22 February 1993. *UN Document S/RES/808(1993).* *https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/243008*
United Nations. (1993b). Resolution 827 (1993) / adopted by the Security Council at its 3217th meeting, on 25 May 1993. *UN Document S/RES/819(1993).* https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/164939
United Nations. (1993c). Resolution 819 (1993) / adopted by the Security Council at its 3199th meeting, on 16 April 1993. *UN Document S/RES/827(1993).* https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/166567
United Nations. (1999). Report of the ındependent ınquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. *UN Document S/1999/1257.* https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/document/poc-s19991257.php
Vomlela, L. (2016). Changes of American Foreign Policy towards the Countries of the Former Yugoslavia between 1991 and 1995. *Central European Papers*, *4*(1), 63-81.
Vučinić Nešković, V. (2023). Emerging subdisciplines in ethnology and anthropology of Serbia: research trends at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. *International Journal of Anthropology and Ethnology*, *7*(1), 5.
Whittle, D. (2015). The Limits of legality and the United Nations Security Council: Applying the extra-legal measures model to Chapter VII action. *European Journal of International Law*, *26*(3), 671-698.

Notes on contributor

Aslıhan Iğdır-Akaras is a faculty member at Iğdır University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Department of Political Science and Public Administration. She works in the fields of international politics, conflict resolution, and security studies.

ORCID

Aslıhan Iğdır-Akaras https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3211-696X

Disclosure statement

The author has declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article. The author has received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.