

DKU SCIENTIFIC BULLETIN



DKU RESUMES ITS SCIENTIFIC BULLETIN

After more than two years we are resuming our Scientific Bulletin. The Bulletin is intended to inform DKU staff, faculty and the public about scientific activities at DKU. The editorial team of the Bulletin aims to publish the bulletin at least twice per semester.

DKU SUMMER UNIVERSITY

From 1 to 14 August, the DKU organised its 18th Summer University. The theme of the Summer University this year was "Social Movements in Central Asia and the South Caucasus".

The choice of this topic was not by accident but reflected the growing popular discontent in the countries of Central Asia and the South Caucasus.

Indeed, more and more people are taking their grievances to the streets, challenging the authoritarian status quo with more demands for human rights, democratization and justice. Despite the growing protest dynamics, our knowledge about the causes, structures and actors of the protest movements in the two regions is still limited.





The aim of this year's Summer University was therefore, on the one hand, to take empirical stock of the development of social protest movements in the Central Asia and South Caucasus region and, on the other hand, to critically review theoretical approaches to protest dynamics in the two regions. During two weeks, 20 BA and MA students from Germany, Armenia, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan intensively studied the origins, structure and trajectory of social movements in the two regions, critically questioned the role of civil society, forms of social activism and citizen participation in policy-making, examined forms of women's activism, electoral mobilisation as well as the spectrum of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of social movements.



For this summer university, DKU collaborated with the following lecturers from around the world: Dr Catherine Owen (Senior Lecturer in Political Science, University of Exeter, UK), Dr Daniel Mikecz (Research Fellow at the Institute of Political Science, Budapest, Hungary), Dimash Alzhanov (Political Analyst, Co-Founder of the Legal Policy Research Centre, Almaty, Kazakhstan), Aizada Arystanbek (PhD Candidate, Rutgers University, UK), Dr. Aizhan Sharshenova (Post-Doctoral Fellow at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan), Olya Azatyan (PhD Candidate, Yerevan State University, Armenia), Dr Steve Schlegel (Lecturer in Political Science at TU Dortmund University, Germany) and Dr Serik Beimenbetov (Lecturer at DKU in Almaty, Kazakhstan).



A DIVERSE CULTURAL PROGRAMME

The Summer University was not only about generating knowledge about this fascinating subject and learning new skills, but also about various excursions, visits to NGOs, meetings with activists and sightseeing tours.

LAUNCH OF A NEW RESEARCH PROJECT ON URBAN ACTIVISM IN CENTRAL ASIA

DKU has launched a research project “Grass-root movements: urban activism in Central Asia” with Dr. Serik Beimenbetov as lead coordinator and funded by Rosa Luxemburg Foundation in Central Asia.

Over 1.5 years the project will examine the forms, motives and trajectories of urban activism in Central Asia looking at Almaty, Astana, Bishkek, Dushanbe and Tashkent as case-studies. In this project, the university has teamed up with Prof. Dr. Saodat Olimova (SHARQ Research Center, Dushanbe), Dr. Emil Nasritdinov (AUCA, Bishkek), Dr. Dina Sharipova (Nazarbaev University), Dr. Hikoyat Salimova (Independent Scholar, Tashkent), Dr. Shugyla Kilibayeva (KIMEP, Almaty).

Within the framework of the project it is planned to gather data on urban grass-root activism in Central Asian capitals and on this basis elaborate policy recommendations for policy makers, urban developers, civil society organisations, activists and other stakeholders. The project was launched to accommodate the growing demand for policy solutions to urban growth and development, to learn how to make cities healthier and more sustainable, and to make community voices heard.



DKU LAUNCHED A RESEARCH PROJECT WITH THE TU DARMSTADT

DKU in cooperation with the Technical University Darmstadt has begun a pilot research project running until the end of 2022 that examines the transport and storage capacities along the Transpaspian Railway. On the side of the TU Darmstadt the project is led by Johannes Rentschler, on the DKU side the project is led by Dr. Christoph Dilfer. With this project both DKU and TU Darmstadt acknowledge the importance of the Transcaspian Railroute, particularly so in the context of changed geopolitical situation after Russia' military invasion in the Ukraine.



**TECHNISCHE
UNIVERSITÄT
DARMSTADT**



HANDBOOK ON INTERNATIONAL LAW AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

DKU professor Dr. Rustam Burnashev from the Faculty of World Politics has joined the editorial board of the International Handbook on International Law and International Relations as Co-Editor-in-Chief alongside Dr. Sergey Sayapin from the KIMEP University. The handbook is first of its kind in Central Asia and aims to promote high-quality research on international and comparative law and international relations in the region.

The journal is published by The Eleven Publishing House in the Netherlands (<https://www.elevenjournals.com/>). Its first volume was published this summer and can be accessed online at: <https://www.elevenjournals.com/tijdschrift/CAYILIR/2022/1>. The publishers have promised to make the first volume open-access until the end of September 2022. Several DKU professors, including Prof. Dr Bulat Sultanov, Dr Sebastian Mayer, and Dr Serik Beimenbetov will serve as members of editorial board.

The project with the Technical University Darmstadt will analyse the potentials and challenges of the intensified use of the Transcaspian Route. According to official information, the volume of freight traffic in Kazakhstan has grown steadily in recent years. In 2021 alone, freight transport by all modes of transport amounted to 4.2 billion tonnes.

The volume of container traffic reached 1.066 million TEU last year (i.e. TEU stands for Twenty Equipment Unit and is the standard measurement unit in logistics. 1 TEU contains 20-foot containers), which corresponds to an increase of 22 % compared to the previous year. Of these, 732,000 TEU were transported via the China-Europe-China route.

More details about the project can be learnt by visiting the project website: https://www.log.tu-darmstadt.de/forschung_log/forschungsprojekte_log/aktuelle_forschungsprojekte/dku_log.de.jsp

LATEST RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS FROM DKU FACULTY MEMBERS AND RESEARCHERS

DKU has released a number of new publications over the summer months, partly funded by the DAAD 2021-22 surplus funds. The latest publications are listed below:

Mayer, S. (2021), 'Cooperation from Outside: Security Regionalism in Central Asia and its Limits', *Central Asian Affairs*, (special issue on security in Central Asia), **2** (8): 203-28.

Mayer, S. (2022), 'Between Strategic and Material Interests: Kazakhstan as a Stability Provider in Afghanistan', *Kazakhstan Journal of Foreign Studies*, **1-2** (2): 20-31.

Moldabekova, G., Tleppaev A. et al. (2022), 'The Impact of Oil Prices on the Macroeconomic Indicators of Kazakhstan and the Consequences for the Formation of Social Policy', *International Journal of Energy Economics and Policy*, **12** (4): 447-54.

Tishkov, S., Tleppaev A. et al. (2022), 'Citizens' Behavior as a Driver of Energy Transition and Greening of the Economy in the Russian Arctic: Findings of a Sociological Survey in the Murmansk Region and Karelia', *Applied Sciences*, **12** (3): 1-14.

Tleppaev, A.M. (2022), *Povyshenie energoeffektivnosti Kazakhstana i vozobnovlyaemye istochniki energii* (Improving energy efficiency in Kazakhstan and renewable energy sources), Almaty.

Tleppaev, A.M. and S.Zh. Zeinolla (2022), *Environmental behavior of urban residents*, Almaty.

Ziyabekov, B.Z. (2022), *Problemy finansovoy sistemy Respubliki Kazakhstan i strategii eye modernisatzii* (Problems of financial system in the Republic of Kazakhstan and strategies for its modernization), Almaty.



CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

Dr. Sebastian Mayer, the DAAD long-term professor at DKU, attended the 63rd Annual Convention of the International Studies Association: A Wider Discipline For A Smaller World in March 2022. The convention was held in Nashville, USA. He presented on "Regime Complexity in Regional Security Governance: The Case of Transnational Challenges in Central Asia" in the panel "International Organizations, Regime Complexity and Interorganizational Relations I".

In addition, Dr Sebastian Mayer, together with DKU PhD student Zumrat Sanakulova, participated in the 7th Summer Conference of the Central Eurasian Studies Society in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, in June 2022. Dr Mayer gave a presentation on "Regime Complexity in Regional Security Governance: The Case of Counter-Terrorism in Central Asia" in the panel "Regime Complexity in Central Eurasia" and Zumrat Sanakulova presented her PhD project on "Labour protest movements in Kazakhstan".

