

PÁZMÁNY UNIVERSITY SUMMER SCHOOL



PLURALISM IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS: RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC MINORITIES IN GEORGIA

პლურალიზმი სამხრეთ კავკასიაში:
რელიგიური და ეთნიკური უმცირესობები საქართველოში

CƏNUBİ QAFQAZDA PULLORİZM:
GÜRCÜSTANDA DİNİ VƏ ETNİK AZLIQLAR

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June 28 – July 2, 2025
Budapest, Hungary
Pázmány Péter Catholic University

***FREE accomodation in the downtown of Budapest
for each participant after the Summer School***

You have 10 more days - to discover the city and enjoy your summer holidays!!!

WHEN?

The summer school will take place from June 28 to July 2, 2025. Participants are expected to arrive on June 27.

If you choose to stay in the dormitory at Pázmány Péter Catholic University, you can extend your stay in Budapest for FREE for an additional 10 days to discover the city and enjoy your summer holidays. (YES! It is not a joke 😊)

Students are also expected to take part in a short online component, scheduled before the in-person program, during June.

WHERE?

The program will be held at Pázmány Péter Catholic University, located in the heart of Budapest, the lively and historic capital of Hungary. The city offers a unique mix of culture, history, and student-friendly nightlife.

With easy connections to Vienna and Bratislava, you may have the chance to explore three exciting Central European capitals before or after the program.

ACCOMMODATION

You will stay in twin rooms at a dormitory close to the university, sharing the room with another summer school participant.

The cost is 99 EUR per person for 7 days (your Erasmus+ grant will comfortably cover this fee) and you can stay in the accommodation without additional payments until July 14!

FUNDING

If you are enrolled at a university that is part of the Erasmus+ program, your participation will be supported by an Erasmus+ Blended Intensive Program (BIP) grant, coordinated through your home university's international relations office.

You are expected to receive around 553 EUR (79 EUR/day for 7 days), which should cover your accommodation and meals. Travel costs are also reimbursed through Erasmus+.

APPLICATION

If you would like to apply for our summer school, please first contact the International Relations Office at your home university to check whether Erasmus+ funding is available to support your participation.

Once confirmed, you will be asked to send your CV and a short motivation letter by email to armenian.studies@btk.ppke.hu until May 15. In your letter, please explain why you are interested in the program and how you expect to benefit from the knowledge and experience gained during the summer school.

Students from all academic backgrounds with an interest in the topic are welcome to apply. Applicants must be Bachelor's or Master's students with a good command of English. Selected students will receive a letter of acceptance by the end of May, which they will need to use for their Erasmus application at their home universities.

Over the last two decades, Georgia has made significant steps towards building a democratic political system, although the post-Soviet social structure is still evident in many areas. An important part of this is the development of programmes for the integration of ethnic minorities and the harmonisation of legislation at international level. In this regard, Georgia ratified the European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities as early as 2005 and later adopted the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

Georgia's 'national religion' is the Orthodoxy, practiced by a large majority and organised as an autocephalous church under the leadership of an independent patriarch. Ethnic and religious minorities make up about one sixth of Georgia's population. The Azeris are the largest minority community in the Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti regions, followed by Armenians, who make up the majority of the population of Samtskhe-Javakheti. Both groups differ from the national majority in linguistic and religious respect. There are also smaller Abkhaz, Russian, Assyrian, Greek, Jewish and other smaller communities. Despite the plurality of Georgian society, ethnic and religious minorities, although having a long historical tradition, face many challenges in their survival.

This summer school consists of seminars and lectures aimed at providing participants with an understanding of Georgia's minorities in large part determined by ethnic and religious identities, two broad categories which may overlap. Delivered by an international and interdisciplinary group of scholars, these seminars and lectures will also address the cultural and historical background of and the state administrative structures associated with Georgia's minority communities. The summer school will also offer the opportunity to discuss the relevant topics with local academics and students from Georgia, which can help bring to light important insights. Additionally, participants of the summer school will have the chance to visit numerous Hungarian national collections with Georgia-related exhibition materials, interact with ambassadors from Armenia and Georgia in Budapest, watch and discuss relevant films, as well as become acquainted with aspects of Hungarian culture.

The summer school will be divided into five broad topics, corresponding to each day of the program and consisting of various lectures and discussions:

1. Introduction & Theoretical Foundations
2. Historical Background; Memory and Identity
3. Religious Diversity and Minority Communities in Georgia
4. Religious Diversity in the South-Caucasus
5. Contemporary Challenges & Future Perspectives

After a successful completion of this work, participants will receive 3 ECTS.

	SATURDAY, 28 June	SUNDAY, 29 June	MONDAY, 30 June	TUESDAY, 1 July	WEDNESDAY, 2 July
Topic	Introduction & Theoretical Foundations	Historical Background; Memory and Identity	Religious Diversity and Minority Communities	Religious Diversity in the Caucasus	Contemporary Challenges & Future Perspectives
First Section	Welcome speeches Opening: Dr. Bálint KOVÁCS 1. Keynote: Prof. Elisabeth SÁNDOR-SZALAY: General Framework of National and Ethnic Minority Protection in Europe 2. Keynote: Prof. Oliver REISNER From ethnic nationhood to political citizenship? An introduction to the history and present of Georgia's minorities	Dr. András BÁCSKAY Pre-Christian heritage of Georgia	Dr. Konrad SIEKIERSKI Armenians in Post-Socialist Georgia: Cultural Heritage, Coexistence, and Conflict	Dr. Konrad SIEKIERSKI Armenian Catholics in Armenia and Georgia	Dr. Anatolii TOKMANTCEV Comparative analysis of new religious movements in South Caucasus
Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break
Second Section	Dr. Hakob MATEVOSYAN Focus Group Discussion	Lilit SAGHATELYAN Historical Narratives and Displacement: The Role of Memory in Ethnic Conflicts of the South Caucasus	Dr. Anna CIESLEWSKA Muslims in Georgia	Dr. Anna CIESLEWSKA Azerbaijanis in Georgia	Closing discussion
Lunch	Tifliso Restaurant	Loyola Restaurant	Loyola Restaurant	Loyola Restaurant	Loyola Restaurant
Third Section	Kristine BAGHDASARYAN Historical and Visual Contextualization of Nationalism: Caricatures in Early 20th Century Tbilisi Newspapers	Avet VARDANYAN Colonialism in the Soviet/Post-Soviet South Caucasus: A Focus on Georgia	Prof. Khachatur STEPANYAN Armenians in Javakheti		
Fourth Section/ Cultural Activities	Visit to Memento Park (Introduction: Historical Narratives and Political Symbols in the South Caucasus)	Bálint KOVÁCS Constructing an Imagined Homeland: Hungarian Perceptions of Georgia	Karen JALLATYAN Early Photography as a Religious Medium: The Case of the Caucasus		Workshop & Discussion: Traditional Games and Identity
Cultural Activities		Museum of Ethnography (Folklore as a Medium of Ethnic Identity Expression)	Movie Night 1 / Armenian Cinema	National Széchényi Library	Movie Night 2 / Georgian Cinema

