

— TRIPP — ZANGEZUR CORRIDOR

STRATEGIC LINK FOR TRADE, TRANSIT,
AND REGIONAL GROWTH



CENTER OF ANALYSIS
OF INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS



CENTER OF ANALYSIS
OF INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS

TRIPP ZANGEZUR CORRIDOR: STRATEGIC LINK FOR TRADE, TRANSIT, AND REGIONAL GROWTH

Project Supervisor: Farid Shafiyev, Chairman of the AIR Center

Editors: Vusal Guliyev, Leading Advisor of the AIR Center,
Narmin Ismayilova, Research Intern of the AIR Center

Authors: Samir Gafarli, Altay Mammadov, Yusif Mammadli,
Fuad Huseynov, Ismayil Nesirov – ADA University



CENTER OF ANALYSIS
OF INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS

Mirza Ibrahimov 8, Baku, AZ1100, Azerbaijan,
Phone: (+994 12) 596-82-39, (+994 12) 596-82-41,
E-mail: info@aircenter.az www.aircenter.az

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	4
Introduction	5
Methodology	6
1. Historical Background	6
2. Zangezur Corridor in Expert Assessments: Regional Stability and Connectivity	7
3. The Corridor's Economic Significance: Country Assessment	8
3.1 Azerbaijan	8
3.2 Türkiye.....	12
3.3 Armenia	15
3.4 Georgia	21
3.5 Iran.....	26
3.6 Russia.....	29
3.7 United States.....	32
3.8 European Union.....	34
4. Advancing Eurasian Connectivity and Integration	35
5. Potential Challenges in the Implementation of TRIPP	37
Conclusion	39
References	41

Executive Summary

The development of the Zangezur Corridor, reconceptualized as TRIPP (Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity) following the 2025 Washington summit, represents a transformative moment in South Caucasus geopolitics and Eurasian connectivity. Historically a vital link along the Silk Road connecting Azerbaijan with its Nakhchivan exclave, the corridor ceased functioning after the Soviet Union's collapse and the subsequent Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. While the 2020 Trilateral Statement revived prospects for reopening, the corridor's reconceptualization as TRIPP, with the United States emerging as a strategic guarantor, fundamentally altered its geopolitical significance and operational framework.

This study examines how TRIPP's development influences regional interconnectivity and the balance of power in the South Caucasus. Drawing on document analysis, expert interviews, and scholarly frameworks on transport corridor geopolitics, the research addresses three central questions: First, what is the economic significance of TRIPP for the involved countries and broader Middle Corridor connectivity? Second, how does the corridor's development affect regional power dynamics and geopolitical alignments? Third, what political, legal, and technical challenges impede its implementation, and what pathways exist for overcoming these obstacles?

The analysis demonstrates that TRIPP's strategic importance extends across multiple dimensions. Economically, the corridor promises to enhance trade efficiency, reduce transportation costs, and integrate Central Asian economies into global markets through shortened routes to Europe. For Azerbaijan and Armenia, joint infrastructure development offers opportunities for confidence-building and interdependence that can reinforce peace normalization. The corridor also benefits multiple regional actors: Armenia gains transit revenues and market access, Azerbaijan consolidates its transport hub status, while Russia and Iran retain potential roles in complementary connectivity networks.

However, TRIPP's transformation from a Russian-overseen arrangement under the 2020 trilateral statement to a U.S.-facilitated corridor introduces significant geopolitical complexities. Russia perceives the shift as diminishing its regional influence, while Iran expresses concerns about potential marginalization from transit routes. These external pressures intersect with Armenia's domestic political landscape, where opposition factions challenge Prime Minister Pashinyan's commitment to the corridor, framing it as sovereignty erosion despite government assurances of maintaining full territorial control.

Technical implementation challenges center on reconciling Azerbaijan's demands for efficient, unrestricted transit with Armenia's sovereign right to exercise border control. International customs law and historical corridor precedents reveal inherent tensions between facilitation and security. Armenia's proposal to employ advanced digital infrastructure, including RFID tracking, IoT systems, and risk management protocols, offers a potential pathway for balancing these competing imperatives. Yet consensus on operational protocols, particularly regarding the movement of Azerbaijani citizens and cargo inspections, remains elusive.

The study concludes that TRIPP's success hinges on three interdependent factors: sustained diplomatic engagement to address geopolitical concerns, incremental trust-building measures between Azerbaijan and Armenia that demonstrate mutual benefits, and adoption of modern border management technologies that respect sovereignty while enabling efficient transit. The

corridor's viability ultimately depends on whether stakeholders can transition from viewing it as a zero-sum geopolitical contest to recognizing its potential as infrastructure for mutual prosperity. If successfully implemented, TRIPP could transform the South Caucasus into an interconnected economic space, serving as a catalyst for regional stability and serving as a model for corridor diplomacy in contested regions. However, failure to address political opposition in Armenia, manage great power competition, or establish clear operational frameworks could relegate TRIPP to the growing list of unrealized connectivity projects that founder on geopolitical rivalries and domestic resistance.

Introduction

The Zangezur Corridor has historically been an integral part of the ancient Silk Road and served as a facilitator of trade and cultural exchange across Eurasia. However, redrawing borders during the Soviet period and subsequent conflicts disrupted the route's function. After the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan erupted in the end of the 1980s, transport communication between Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic through Zangezur was blocked by Armenia, leading to the establishment of alternative routes through Iran, Georgia, and Türkiye (AIR Center, 2021).

In the post-2020 context, new opportunities for reconnection emerged. Article 9 of the 2020 Trilateral Statement signed by Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Russia aimed at reopening transport communications with Nakhchivan through the Zangezur Corridor (Shafiyev, n.d.). While this created possibilities for restoring regional connectivity, the 2025 Washington summit held between Azerbaijan and Armenia under U.S. mediation represented a turning point, as the corridor was transformed into the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (AIR Center, 2025). This initiative will reconnect Azerbaijan's mainland with the Nakhchivan exclave and reshape regional geopolitics by introducing the U.S. as an important actor alongside traditional powers.

The development of the Zangezur Corridor into TRIPP has far-reaching political and economic implications for stakeholders at both regional and international levels. It holds considerable promise for fostering interconnectivity and interdependence among regional actors. For Azerbaijan, it advances the decades-long objective of reconnecting its national territory, facilitating the development of liberated territories, and positioning the country as a transport and logistics hub in Eurasian connectivity (AIR Center, 2025; Ismayilova, 2023). Türkiye considers this route a vital land pathway to Azerbaijan, enhancing bilateral economic and military cooperation. Despite domestic political opposition and security concerns, Armenia would also gain an opportunity to integrate into the regional trade network, diversify its economy, and normalize political relations with Türkiye and Azerbaijan (Guliyev, 2025). However, the introduction of a new stakeholder, the U.S., into the South Caucasus has been perceived as a threat to both Russia and Iran. Moreover, TRIPP has been regarded as a competitor to the North–South Corridor linking Russia to the Persian Gulf (Zahidov, 2025). Although Moscow has officially maintained a measured tone toward the Washington meeting, U.S. involvement has been perceived as a threat to Russia's dominance in the South Caucasus. For Iran, TRIPP represents not only the risk of diminishing its regional role but also increased U.S. involvement in its immediate neighborhood (Zahidov, 2025).

This paper explores how the development of the Zangezur Corridor into the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity is reshaping the geopolitical and economic landscape of the

South Caucasus. It examines the broader implications of this initiative for regional connectivity, cooperation, and long-term stability. By analyzing the positions of the main stakeholders and the evolving role of Azerbaijan within this new framework, the study aims to offer a balanced perspective to inform ongoing policy discussions on peacebuilding and post-conflict integration.

Methodology

This research employs a mixed-methods design to study the Zangezur Corridor, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data in the analysis of its historical evolution, geopolitical implications, and economic significance. Document analysis is a central component, involving a comprehensive review of academic articles, policy papers, international reports, and books. Additionally, to assess stakeholder positions regarding the development of the corridor, key stakeholders from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Türkiye, Russia, and Iran were identified and analyzed through official statements, media reports, and expert interviews. To support the evaluation of the corridor's economic potential, quantitative data on trade volumes, infrastructure investments, and economic projections were collected, and the study complies with ethical research standards with informed consent obtained for interviews.

1. Historical Background

The historical Zangezur region stands in a strategic position along the ancient Silk Road, linking the Caucasus, Anatolia, and the Iranian plateau. Historically, the Zangezur Corridor facilitated the exchange of goods, culture, and ideas, transforming it into a critical point for transcontinental trade networks.

Following the occupation of Azerbaijan by Tsarist Russia under the Treaty of Turkmenchay in 1828, the Zangezur region was incorporated into the Yelizavetpol Governorate in 1868. This treaty not only redrew regional borders but also provoked significant demographic and political changes in the South Caucasus. As part of its policy to alter the ethnic composition of the region, Tsarist Russia encouraged the settlement of Armenians from the Qajar and Ottoman Empires in the South Caucasus, including Zangezur, which resulted in the displacement of Azerbaijani communities over subsequent decades.

After the collapse of Tsarist Russia, the newly independent states of Azerbaijan and Armenia inherited these tensions, which escalated into violent conflicts. In November 1918, Armenian Dashnak forces conducted raids on Shusha, Zangezur, and Jabrayil; approximately 300 villages were destroyed and dozens of civilians killed (Yemelianova, 2021). Dashnak forces compelled more than 50,000 Azerbaijanis to leave Zangezur, eventually altering the region's demographic composition (Baberovski, 2010). Following the Soviet occupation of Azerbaijan, Zangezur was transferred to Soviet Armenia in 1921, and ethnic Azerbaijanis were subjected to mass deportations that lasted until the collapse of the USSR in 1989, when Armenians forced all Azerbaijanis to leave their homeland.

In 2020, the long-standing conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia concluded with the 2020 Trilateral Declaration, which also included reopening transport communication between

Azerbaijan mainland and Nakhchivan through the historical Zangezur Corridor (De Waal, 2021). The restoration of the corridor was expected to revive historical trade routes, enhance regional cooperation, and promote economic development (Aliyev, 2024).

The most decisive turning point came during the 2025 Washington summit, when it was rebranded as the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity. TRIPP will be managed by a U.S. company for 99 years, functioning as an important component of the Middle Corridor and enhancing transcontinental trade connectivity (Zahidov, 2025).

2. Zangezur Corridor in Expert Assessments: Regional Stability and Connectivity

The reopening of the Zangezur Corridor represents a crucial element in the peace normalization process between Azerbaijan and Armenia. As a confidence-building measure, the corridor's development can serve as tangible evidence of both countries' commitment to moving beyond decades of conflict toward sustainable coexistence. The establishment of joint infrastructure projects, including railways and highways, would require sustained cooperation and create interdependencies that reinforce mutual interests in maintaining peace and stability.

The corridor promises substantial benefits for all regional actors. For Armenia, participation in the corridor would integrate the country into major transit routes, generating transit revenues and enhancing economic opportunities through improved connectivity to regional markets. Azerbaijan stands to consolidate its position as a key regional transport hub, while also gaining reliable land connectivity to its Nakhchivan exclave. Notably, the corridor could also serve the interests of Russia and Iran. Russia would maintain connectivity through its existing transport infrastructure and potential participation in corridor operations, while Iran could benefit from complementary roads through its own north-south transport routes, potentially reducing concerns about being bypassed (Bakhtiyar Aslanbayli, personal communication, April 2025). This inclusive approach, where multiple regional powers have stakes in the corridor's success, enhances prospects for long-term stability and cooperation.

Beyond bilateral and regional reconciliation, the Zangezur Corridor holds particular significance for strengthening cooperation within the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) and advancing connectivity across the Turkic world. Fariz Ismailzade frames this project within the broader context of Turkic unity, noting that the corridor would enhance links stretching from Türkiye to Central Asia. For Central Asian countries which are surrounded by countries facing sanctions (Russia and Iran), instability (Afghanistan), or political tensions (China–West relations), the Zangezur Corridor offers stable and reliable access to global markets through Azerbaijan. In this context, the corridor would complement the existing Georgian route, providing additional capacity and shorter rail connectivity from Central Asia to Türkiye. Both routes together would enhance the region's overall transport resilience and flexibility.

Beyond its logistical advantages, the corridor carries significance for maintaining transport security in the region (Rauf Agamirzayev, personal communication, April 2025). The closure or blockage of one corridor inevitably overloads others, constraining regional development. To minimize transport risks, Azerbaijan has pursued diversification through developing railways, seaports, and airports. Diversification allows the country to redirect cargo in case of regional

tensions. In line with this policy, the development of the Zangezur Corridor serves a broader vision of enhancing connectivity and maintaining security. The opening and successful operation of the Zangezur Corridor can ultimately symbolize normalization of relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia and the region's prosperous development.

3. The Corridor's Economic Significance: Country Assessment

3.1 Azerbaijan

The reopening of the Zangezur Corridor represents a paradigmatic shift in Azerbaijan's strategic positioning within Eurasian trade networks. As an integral component of the Middle Corridor, this corridor presents significant opportunities to enhance trade connectivity between Central Asia, the South Caucasus, and Europe through reduced logistics costs, shortened delivery times, and the establishment of a stable, multimodal transport chain (Gafarli, 2024). The corridor's strategic architecture embodies what Clyde Kenderdine and Péter Bucsky (2021) characterize as a "multilateral institutional development" that fundamentally reshapes containerized rail freight networks across the Eurasian landmass. This institutional framework links disparate transport systems, from Chinese railways to European logistics hubs, through an integrated chain of port facilities, border crossings, and rail infrastructure spanning multiple jurisdictions.

The strategic importance of the corridor is significantly enhanced by its integration into two major transcontinental routes. The Middle Corridor (linking China to Europe via Central Asia and the Caucasus) and the North–South Transport Corridor (NSTC), which connects Russia and India through the South Caucasus and Iran. This dual integration elevates Azerbaijan's status as a vital node in Eurasian connectivity infrastructure, evolving the country beyond its traditional role as an energy exporter to becoming a recognized "connectivity hub" with growing geopolitical influence (Palu and Hilmola, 2023). The development of such multimodal corridors reflects broader transformations in global trade geography, characterized by a diversification from traditional maritime and northern land routes, partly in response to recent geopolitical challenges affecting these channels.

Current freight volume projections for the Middle Corridor point to a potential tripling of trade flows to roughly eleven million tons annually by 2030, implying a major expansion of regional transport capacity (Astana Times, 2023). Efficiency gains have been especially notable in transit times, with shipping durations between China and the South Caucasus reduced from around fifty days to approximately nineteen to twenty three days in recent years, and further reductions toward fourteen to eighteen days projected in the near term. These improvements substantially enhance trade efficiency and strengthen the corridor's competitiveness within global supply chains (Astana Times, 2023). Such gains reflect what transport economists describe as time distance compression, whereby faster logistics effectively bring Azerbaijan closer to major markets despite persistent geographic distance. Even conservative estimates indicate that annual transit cargo volumes through Azerbaijan could rise by five to eight million tons, generating significant revenue gains and increasing throughput at critical logistics hubs, most notably the Port of Baku (Trend News Agency, 2022; Report.az, 2025).

These infrastructure developments translate into significant macroeconomic benefits that extend beyond immediate transport revenues. The corridor promises to accelerate trade flows across Eurasia, with estimated annual logistics cost savings projected to reach \$20-30 billion

regionally. For Azerbaijan specifically, analyses project total exports to increase by \$700 million annually and non-oil GDP to grow by approximately 2% per annum following the corridor's full operationalization (Caliber.az, 2025). These projections, derived from computable general equilibrium (CGE) modeling approaches similar to those employed by Xiaobo Li, Jian Wang, and Yuqing Chen in their analysis of Trans-Caspian infrastructure impacts, highlight the corridor not merely as a transport project but as a transformative economic driver at the continental scale (ADBI Working Paper Series, 2023).

The Zangezur Corridor initiative aligns strategically with Azerbaijan's long-standing economic diversification agenda, which has emerged from the recognition of what resource economists describe as the resource curse, whereby reliance on hydrocarbon wealth can inhibit broader economic development. Although oil and natural gas continue to dominate Azerbaijan's export structure, the government has increasingly prioritized non-oil sector growth in response to commodity price volatility and the accelerating global energy transition.

Non-oil exports experienced a remarkable 36% surge in 2022, reflecting substantive progress in diversification efforts and structural economic transformation (Tariverdiyev, 2023). More recent data reveals that non-oil exports continued this upward trajectory, surging by 9.9% year-on-year in the first half of 2025 to reach \$1.8 billion, with food exports climbing 19.1% to \$564.7 million (Azernews, 2025). These figures demonstrate that Azerbaijan's diversification represents more than rhetorical commitment. It reflects measurable structural change in the composition of tradable output. The Zangezur Corridor is positioned to accelerate this diversification trajectory by establishing direct land access to key European and Turkish markets, thereby facilitating more efficient export flows and reducing dependency on maritime routes subject to geopolitical disruptions and longer transit times.

Economic modeling conducted by Anri R. Chedia (2024) provides quantitative projections of the corridor's macroeconomic impact. The establishment of direct land routes through the corridor is estimated to increase non-oil GDP by 2%, boost manufacturing output by 3%, and expand mining sector activities by 2.7%. These projections, while modest in percentage terms, represent substantial absolute gains given Azerbaijan's economic scale and suggest meaningful sectoral rebalancing toward more diversified production structures. The manufacturing sector expansion is particularly significant as it indicates potential for value-added production and industrial upgrading, moving beyond resource extraction toward more sophisticated economic activities that generate greater employment multipliers and technological spillovers.

Azerbaijan's commitment to economic diversification is further underscored by increased foreign direct investment (FDI) interest catalyzed by the corridor. Large-scale investments have materialized from European infrastructure firms, Turkish companies, and a U.S.-led consortium of logistics operators. This influx supports the development of new logistics, transportation, and financial services sectors, generating private sector growth that reduces reliance on state-owned enterprises, a critical consideration given that more than half of Azerbaijan's formal labor force currently works for the government (Caspian Policy, 2024). The emergence of these new economic activities creates what development economists' term "agglomeration economies," whereby concentration of related industries generates productivity-enhancing knowledge spillovers and labor market pooling effects that enhance competitiveness.

Collectively, these developments position both the Middle Corridor and the Zangezur Corridor as pivotal catalysts for Azerbaijan's broader economic growth strategy and its deeper integration

into Eurasian trade networks. The corridors represent not merely infrastructure projects but fundamental components of Azerbaijan's economic statecraft and its aspirations for enhanced regional influence, what geopolitical scholars characterize as "infrastructure-led regionalism" (Kenderdine and Bucsky, 2021).

The development of the Zangezur Corridor constitutes a central pillar of Azerbaijan's comprehensive restoration plan for territories liberated following the 2020 Karabakh war. This reconstruction program represents one of the most ambitious post-conflict development initiatives in the contemporary South Caucasus, requiring integration of infrastructure development with demining operations, population resettlement, and economic revitalization. Major infrastructure projects have been undertaken with considerable rapidity to establish the physical foundations for economic activity. The Horadiz–Jabrayil–Zangilan–Aghbend highway and its parallel railway line form the eastern segment of the corridor, while new international airports constructed in Zangilan, Fuzuli, and Lachin substantially strengthen regional connectivity and accessibility. By the conclusion of 2022, approximately 70% of the planned highway infrastructure and 40% of rail infrastructure had been completed, demonstrating significant implementation momentum and state capacity for rapid infrastructure deployment (Azeri Times, 2022).

The infrastructure development program extends beyond conventional transport assets to incorporate advanced technological systems designed to enhance operational efficiency and border management. The deployment of AI-powered border control systems, electronic customs procedures, and fiber optic communication networks is modernizing logistics operations and reducing transit delays, factors that are increasingly critical for maintaining competitiveness against alternative routes. These measures reflect what transport scholars term 'smart corridor' development, which integrates digital infrastructure with physical networks to create more seamless and technology-enabled supply chains (AIR Center, 2025). Such technological integration directly addresses a persistent challenge highlighted in the academic literature on the Trans Caspian corridor, namely the need to harmonize customs procedures and reduce non-physical barriers to trade that have historically constrained the region's transit potential (Kenderdine and Bucsky, 2021).

Beyond transportation infrastructure, the corridor framework anticipates the establishment of free economic zones (FEZs) and customs clusters designed to stimulate foreign direct investment (FDI) and facilitate cross-border trade operations. These institutional arrangements draw on international best practices in special economic zone development, incorporating preferential tax regimes, streamlined regulatory procedures, and improved logistics services designed to enhance the region's attractiveness for international investors and small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) (Gasimli, 2025). The FEZ model has proven effective in other post-Soviet economies, particularly in Kazakhstan's AIPC SEZ near the Chinese border, in attracting manufacturing investment and generating employment in previously underdeveloped regions.

The operational architecture of the corridor reflects the diplomatic sensitivity inherent in post-conflict arrangements. The Armenian Customs Service will maintain operational authority over the 42-kilometer section traversing Armenian territory, with specific operational protocols currently under bilateral negotiation. This arrangement reflects ongoing efforts to establish practical mechanisms for simplifying trade and logistics procedures while respecting territorial sovereignty, a delicate balance that requires what international relations scholars term "functional cooperation" whereby technical arrangements facilitate economic interaction without requiring resolution of underlying political disputes (Modern.az, 2025). The estimated scale of investment required to complete corridor infrastructure ranges between \$3-5 billion, reflecting commitments

from multiple stakeholders including the Azerbaijani government, international financial institutions such as the Asian Development Bank and World Bank, and allied governments particularly Türkiye. This investment magnitude underscores the strategic priority assigned to the project and the convergence of interests among regional actors seeking to diversify Eurasian trade routes away from Russian-dominated corridors (ADB, 2023).

From a geopolitical perspective, the corridor addresses a geographical discontinuity that has persisted since the early 1990s, when the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict severed overland connections between Nakhchivan and the Azerbaijani mainland. This territorial fragmentation created what political geographers term an “exclave dilemma,” whereby the autonomous republic remained juridically part of Azerbaijan but functionally isolated, accessible only through Iranian territory or by air via heavily subsidized flights from Baku.

The economic implications of this isolation have been substantial and multifaceted. According to analysis by the Center for Economic Reforms Analysis and Communication (2024), reopening the corridor could generate annual savings of approximately \$10 million through reduced subsidies for Baku–Nakhchivan air services, which have represented the primary connectivity mechanism in the absence of overland routes. While this figure represents direct fiscal savings, the broader economic costs of isolation have been far more substantial. For years, investment activities and regional integration projects in Nakhchivan were fundamentally constrained by geographical disconnection from mainland Azerbaijan, creating what economists’ term “spatial discontinuity costs” that manifest in higher transport expenses, supply chain unreliability, and deterred investment (Gulahmadov and Huseyn, 2023).

The Zangezur Corridor promises to inaugurate a transformative era in reshaping the Nakhchivan’s economic landscape, enabling previously unviable industrial projects, agricultural export development, and commercial ventures that depend on reliable overland connectivity. Nakhchivan possesses comparative advantages in several sectors, including mineral extraction, agriculture (particularly viticulture and horticulture), and manufacturing, that have remained underutilized due to transport constraints. The corridor’s opening will integrate Nakhchivan into broader Azerbaijani and regional value chains, potentially transforming the exclave from an economic liability requiring ongoing subsidization into a productive contributor to national economic output.

The corridor’s regional significance extends beyond bilateral Azerbaijan–Armenia relations to encompass broader Turkish–Azerbaijani integration. The corridor constitutes a critical element in regional development plans through interconnected transport routes such as Türkiye’s Kars–İğdır–Aralık–Dilucu railway line, which was completed in 2017 as part of the Baku–Tbilisi–Kars Railway. This integrated network fosters enhanced economic ties between Azerbaijan and Türkiye while creating a unified logistics corridor extending to Central Asia, thereby amplifying regional integration, trade volumes, and socio-economic growth prospects. As Yelena Kalyuzhnova and Richard Pomfret (2021) observe in their analysis of Caspian trade corridors, such infrastructure creates “network effects,” whereby the value of each link increases exponentially with the comprehensiveness of the connected system.

The tourism sector represents an additional domain with substantial growth potential following corridor establishment, illustrating how transport infrastructure generates benefits extending well beyond freight movement. Reestablishing reliable transport links with mainland Azerbaijan is anticipated to attract both domestic and international tourists to Nakhchivan, which possesses considerable cultural and historical assets including UNESCO-recognized monuments such as

the Mausoleum of Momine Khatun and Alinja fortress, unique architectural heritage reflecting the region's position at the crossroads of Persian, Turkish, and Russian cultural spheres, and distinctive landscape features including the Ordubad National Park (Baghirov, 2023).

The region's relative isolation has historically constrained tourism development despite its considerable endowments, a condition economists describe as a potential tourism surplus in which latent attractions remain underutilized because of limited accessibility. Improved connectivity could catalyze sectoral growth through multiple reinforcing channels. Shorter travel times and lower transport costs would reduce barriers to visitation, greater reliability would encourage tour operators to incorporate these destinations into regional itineraries, and visible infrastructure improvements would signal sustained government commitment, thereby stimulating private investment in accommodation and related services. International experience from comparable post conflict settings, including the Western Balkans after the Yugoslav wars, shows that transport corridor development can trigger rapid tourism expansion when combined with heritage preservation and targeted destination marketing initiatives (UNWTO, 2020).

The multiplier effects of infrastructure investment, encompassing construction employment during the build phase, operational jobs in transport and logistics services, and induced employment in supporting sectors such as retail, hospitality, and business services, further amplify the socioeconomic impact. Infrastructure economists estimate that each direct job created in transport infrastructure generates 1.5-2.5 indirect and induced jobs through supply chain linkages and expenditure multipliers (ADB, 2023). Infrastructure investments along the corridor, including the establishment of dry ports, industrial parks, and logistics hubs, are strategically aimed at creating decentralized economic opportunities that benefit underserved regions and generate inclusive growth patterns rather than concentrating benefits in established urban centers.

As a result, the Zangezur Corridor is poised to become a transformative catalyst for Azerbaijan's economic advancement, regional integration, and geopolitical prominence. The corridor's multimodal infrastructure, complemented by cutting-edge technological systems, free economic zones, and substantial foreign investment, promises significant gains in trade volumes, logistics efficiency, and export diversification. The Zangezur Corridor thus represents not only a pivotal national development project but also a vital element of broader Eurasian economic transformation with the potential to generate lasting prosperity and stability for Azerbaijan and its neighbors.

3.2 Türkiye

The Zangezur Corridor occupies a strategically pivotal position within Türkiye's comprehensive infrastructure agenda and broader geopolitical ambition to establish itself as a dominant force in Eurasian connectivity networks. Positioned at the geographical crossroads between energy-rich Central Asia, the resource-abundant South Caucasus, and the economically significant European markets, Türkiye's leverage in global trade networks is substantially enhanced through the corridor's integration with existing advanced rail connections and energy pipeline infrastructure (Gafarli, 2024). This positioning reflects what scholars of infrastructure geopolitics term "nodal power", the strategic advantage derived from controlling critical junctures in transnational networks (Kenderdine and Bucsky, 2021).

Building on this concept of nodal power, the Zangezur Corridor functions as a complementary component within a broader multimodal transport architecture that includes the Baku–Tbilisi–

Kars (BTK) railway, operational since 2017, and prospective future connections such as the Iğdır–Nakhchivan railway link. Together, these systems create shorter, more efficient routes between Central Asian production centers and Turkish distribution hubs, thereby reconfiguring regional economic geography. The BTK railway itself is a landmark in post-Soviet connectivity, restoring direct rail passage across the Caucasus mountains and reconnecting networks severed in the 1990s (Chang, 2023). The Zangezur Corridor extends these gains by removing remaining discontinuities and forging a continuous land bridge from Central Asia through the South Caucasus to Anatolia.

Viewed through the lens of international political economy, this evolution exemplifies “infrastructure diplomacy”, the use of connectivity projects to advance both economic objectives and geopolitical influence (Yilmaz, 2022). Türkiye’s active promotion of the Middle Corridor and associated projects, including the Zangezur segment, reflects Ankara’s ambition to shift from a perceived periphery of global commerce to a central Eurasian hub. This ambition aligns with broader Turkish foreign policy themes of multipolarity, strategic autonomy, and enhanced influence across the Turkic world, the Middle East, and the Balkans.

The economic implications are correspondingly multifaceted. The corridor promises direct revenues from transit fees and logistics services, an expansion of trade with Central Asian markets, and structural competitiveness gains from improved connectivity. These potential revenue streams are particularly salient given Türkiye’s persistent current account deficit, reaching 11.8% of GDP in recent years, which underscores structural import-export imbalances (Altay, 2024). In this way, the corridor is not merely a transit path but a macroeconomic tool.

At the same time, the corridor plugs Türkiye into shifting Eurasian trade patterns. It facilitates the movement of Chinese goods toward Europe by leveraging the Middle Corridor as a time-competitive alternative to congested and risk-exposed maritime routes via Suez. Notably, Middle Corridor freight rose 89% year-on-year in the first nine months of 2023 to 1.9 million tonnes (ODI, 2024). While volumes remain modest relative to maritime flows, the growth trajectory signals durable demand for redundancy and resilience in supply chains following recent geopolitical disruptions. For Türkiye specifically, these trends translate into ambitious targets. Strategists anticipate that the country’s role in the Middle Corridor could enable a tripling of trade volumes by 2030, catalyzing transit-related activity. Türkiye’s seaports are expected to gain importance as transshipment nodes linking maritime and land routes, creating jobs and stimulating growth in historically lagging eastern provinces (Chedia, 2024; Caliber.az, 2025). Thus, corridor development also serves the domestic agenda of spatially balanced growth.

Connectivity gains also intersect with shifting regulatory environments. By lowering transport and logistics costs, the corridor can bolster Turkish exporters facing the EU’s Green Deal and the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) slated for full implementation in 2026 (Chedia, 2024). As sectors like textiles, autos, and food processing confront carbon-related pricing at the EU border, deeper links to Central and East Asian markets provide diversification options less constrained by stringent environmental tariffs. Realizing these opportunities, however, requires investment at scale. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (ERBD) research identifies approximately €18.5 billion in priority upgrades, including rail and road rehabilitation, rolling stock, port capacity, border facilities, and multimodal logistics centers (ODI, 2024). Türkiye’s ability to mobilize public funds and crowd in private capital will shape not only economic returns but also Ankara’s influence over emergent governance structures along the corridor.

Beyond economics, the Zangezur Corridor advances Ankara's strategic objective of knitting together the "Turkic world", a community defined by linguistic, cultural, and historical ties (Yilmaz, 2023). Strengthening the Türkiye–Azerbaijan axis ("one nation, two states") while deepening engagement with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan, the corridor complements the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), whose institutionalization since 2021 has prioritized connectivity as a core pillar. Domestically, the corridor dovetails with Ankara's "Development Road" initiatives aimed at revitalizing eastern Türkiye through industrialization, agricultural modernization, and regional integration (Caliber.az, 2025; MPRA, 2021). Logistics clusters, border trade, and induced manufacturing can anchor higher value activities outside the traditional western growth poles, provided that complementary policies on skills, SMEs, and the investment climate are sustained.

These transport ambitions unfold alongside a recalibration of Türkiye's approach to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Initial ambivalence has given way to pragmatic, selective cooperation, particularly since the Ukraine war re-emphasized overland redundancy. Joint forums exploring synergies between BRI and the Middle Corridor suggest recognition, on both sides, that Turkish participation is essential for westbound freight viability and that Chinese cargo demand can underpin Turkish transit and logistics revenues (Silk Road Briefing, 2023).

The Southern Gas Corridor (SCP–TANAP–TAP) is central in this context, with TANAP's annual capacity of 16.2 bcm supplying 5.7 bcm to Türkiye and the remainder to Europe. By May 2024, more than 62 bcm had flowed through TANAP (News.az, 2024), while design provisions allow expansion to 31 bcm by 2026 and potentially up to 60 bcm at a final stage, contingent on new supply sources, including possible Turkmen gas via a Trans-Caspian route (AIIB, 2016).

The 2022 energy shock underscored this role. SGC deliveries to Europe jumped over 40%, from ~8 bcm (2021) to 11.4 bcm (2022), bolstering diversification (Columbia CGEP, 2025). An EU–Azerbaijan MoU aims to double Azerbaijani exports to 20 bcm by 2027, further entrenching Türkiye's centrality. Co-locating transport and energy corridors generates synergies as shared security, fiscal resources for infrastructure, and thicker institutional links that improve overall resilience. Ankara's ambition to become a regional energy hub, with trading platforms, storage, and market-based price discovery, would move Türkiye from pass-through to price-setter (ScienceDirect, 2023).

Nevertheless, concrete steps are emerging. In early 2025, Türkiye supported a swap enabling Turkmen gas to supply up to 2 bcm/year via Iran's infrastructure, a precursor to broader Turkmen–Turkish linkages and potential Trans-Caspian utilization (Wiley, 2025). Energy Minister Alparslan Bayraktar has reiterated the strategic value of constructing a Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline (TRENDS Research, 2025). Electricity interconnections, with Azerbaijan and potentially Central Asian suppliers, could complement gas flows, integrating renewables and surplus thermal generation into regional grids.

Against this backdrop, maximizing Turkish gains requires a coordinated policy package. First, sustained investment in complementary infrastructure, such as upgrading eastern rail and road links, expanding Black Sea/Mediterranean ports, and modernizing rail systems, must proceed in parallel with EBRD-identified corridor upgrades (~€18.5 billion) to unlock scale (ODI, 2024). Second, institutional trade-facilitation capacity, customs harmonization, end-to-end digital documentation and tracking, mutual recognition of inspections, and efficient dispute resolution, should be prioritized, as these "software" elements often determine real-world competitiveness.

Third, strategic diplomacy is indispensable. Türkiye must deepen coordination with Azerbaijan, engage Central Asian partners to secure cargo flows, manage complex ties with Russia and Iran, align with EU connectivity strategies, and cooperate selectively with China to capture BRI complementarities while preserving strategic autonomy. Fourth, domestic macroeconomic normalization can stabilize the investment environment and support export-led growth, even if short-term adjustment costs are politically challenging (Atlantic Council, 2025).

Taken together, these dynamics show that the Zangezur Corridor's significance for Türkiye extends far beyond transport metrics. Geopolitically, it is a concrete instrument for elevating Ankara's role from peripheral to pivotal in Eurasian networks, reinforcing leadership claims within the Turkic world and its broader neighborhood. Regionally, it advances post-Soviet market integration by knitting Central Asia and the South Caucasus into more coherent value chains with Türkiye as the western anchor. Developmentally, it offers pathways for industrial upgrading, job creation, and spatial rebalancing, provided complementary human capital, business-environment, and targeted-incentive policies are in place. Thus, the Zangezur Corridor exemplifies contemporary infrastructure geopolitics, projects that are simultaneously economic instruments, regional integration tools, and vehicles of influence. For Türkiye, successful implementation would validate hub ambitions and deliver tangible gains. The stakes therefore reach well beyond logistics to core questions of Turkish foreign-policy effectiveness and regional positioning within an increasingly multipolar Eurasian order.

3.3 Armenia

Despite strong political opposition from nationalist constituencies, diaspora organizations, and segments of Armenian civil society, the Zangezur Corridor could offer significant economic opportunities for Armenia to address longstanding developmental challenges (Aze.Media, 2025). The corridor presents a tangible chance to overcome decades of economic isolation and to reduce persistently high poverty rates that have remained elevated despite periods of economic growth. Yet Armenia has approached the corridor prospect cautiously, and at times sceptically, from both political and economic perspectives. This stance reflects deep-seated historical traumas, security anxieties, and legitimate concerns over sovereignty preservation, which Armenians often frame as part of an “existential struggle” following the traumatic defeats of the Second Karabakh War (Gafarli, 2024). This ambivalence embodies fundamental tensions within Armenian strategic thinking, including the imperative for economic development and regional integration set against deeply ingrained isolationist reflexes shaped by centuries of foreign domination and recent military humiliations. It also reflects the desire for Western partnership and support alongside persistent suspicion of great power machinations that have historically disadvantaged Armenian interests, as well as a pragmatic recognition of geographical realities that require accommodation with hostile neighbours while nationalist narratives continue to emphasize irreconcilable antagonisms.

Armenia's economic profile reveals structural challenges that corridor development could theoretically ameliorate, though political obstacles have thus far prevented practical progress toward this potential. According to data from the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia, 23.7% of the population lived below the national poverty line in 2023, while 21.7% remained below this threshold at the end of 2024, figures representing modest improvement from the 27% peak during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 but still reflecting substantial deprivation affecting nearly one-quarter of the population (ADB, 2024; ARKA, 2024). More concerning,

multidimensional poverty indicators suggest even broader welfare deficits, with 63.5 percent of Armenia's population in 2023 experiencing deprivation in at least one dimension, including health, education, living standards, employment, or housing. This figure had risen continuously from 58 percent in 2020 before declining marginally in 2023 (Armenia Statistical Committee, 2024).

Rural poverty remains particularly acute, reaching 26 percent in 2024 compared to lower urban rates, while poverty is most concentrated in Shirak (43.0 percent) and Tavush (39.9 percent), with elevated rates also observed in Lori (20.4 percent), even as Syunik records a much lower incidence (6.2 percent) (ARKA News Agency, 2025). These spatial patterns underscore how geographic isolation and security risks can compound economic marginalization in provinces distant from Yerevan's main growth pole and proximate to tense or constrained border environments, reinforcing regional inequality, outmigration, and political discontent.

Emigration constitutes perhaps Armenia's most acute developmental challenge, reflecting a combination of push factors such as limited economic opportunities, political uncertainty, and security concerns, alongside pull factors including established diaspora networks, relatively liberal visa regimes for Armenian citizens in Russia and parts of Europe, and linguistic and cultural proximity to Russia that facilitates labor migration. Net migration reached -29,966 persons in 2024, maintaining a negative trajectory that has characterized Armenian demography since independence (World Bank, 2024). The CIA World Factbook estimates Armenia's net migration rate at -5.2 migrants per 1,000 population in 2024, indicating sustained population outflows despite recent economic growth and periods of relative political stability (CIA World Factbook, 2024).

For many Armenians, working abroad and remitting income has become the primary coping mechanism in the face of poverty and limited domestic job opportunities. Remittances have constituted approximately 13.5 percent of Armenia's GDP in recent years, placing the country among those with the highest remittance dependence globally and creating macroeconomic vulnerabilities such as exchange rate pressures, Dutch disease effects that undermine export competitiveness, and consumption patterns reliant on external income sources that are vulnerable to external shocks (Migration Policy Institute, 2024). While remittances play a critical role in smoothing household incomes and alleviating poverty, their scale ultimately reflects deeper structural weaknesses in an economy that has struggled to generate sufficient productive employment to retain its labor force.

Armenia's energy sector dependence constitutes a critical factor shaping corridor calculations, particularly given the Zangezur route's geographical proximity to Armenia's southern border with Iran (International Energy Agency, 2025). Armenia possesses no proven reserves of oil or natural gas, leaving the country fully dependent on imports for fossil fuel supplies that account for roughly 50 percent of total energy consumption and generate about 24 percent of electricity through thermal power plants (International Energy Agency, 2025). This dependence creates enduring strategic vulnerabilities that successive Armenian governments have sought to mitigate through supply diversification, with mixed results constrained by persistent geopolitical realities.

Russia supplies approximately 87.5 percent of Armenia's natural gas via pipeline through Georgian territory, with the remainder coming through barter arrangements with Iran that involve electricity exchanges (IWPR, 2024). Gazprom Armenia, wholly owned by Russia's Gazprom since the Armenian government sold its remaining 20 percent stake in 2014, maintains a monopoly over Armenia's gas import, transmission, and distribution networks. Armenia's energy dependence on

Russia has been noted by analysts as a strategic vulnerability that shapes political and economic relations with Moscow.

Iran supplies the remaining roughly 12.5 percent of Armenia's gas needs through the Iran–Armenia gas pipeline, a 140-kilometer connection that became operational in December 2006 and was officially inaugurated in March 2007 (Global Energy Monitor, 2024). The Iranian section runs approximately 100 kilometers from Tabriz to the Armenian border, while the Armenian segment extends from the Meghri region through Syunik province toward Kajaran. Analysts widely argue, however, that the pipeline's strategic significance has been structurally constrained. The line was ultimately built with a diameter of around 700 millimeters rather than the originally discussed 1,420 millimeters, a decision often attributed to Russian pressure, which limits annual capacity to about 2.3 billion cubic meters. This scale is insufficient to challenge Russian dominance in Armenia's gas market or to enable meaningful Iranian gas transit onward to European markets (Jamestown Foundation, 2024; OilPrice, 2023).

Furthermore, Gazprom owns a critical 41-kilometer section of the Iran–Armenia gas pipeline within Armenian territory, acquired in 2006 as part of broader energy sector consolidation. Analysts argue that this ownership structure effectively grants Moscow *de facto* veto power over Iranian gas flows, irrespective of Tehran's or Yerevan's policy preferences (Jamestown Foundation, 2024; JAMnews, 2024). Armenia currently operates under a gas-for-electricity swap arrangement with Iran, whereby Iranian gas fuels Armenian thermal power plants and the resulting electricity is exported back to Iran at a rate of three kilowatt-hours per cubic meter of gas, with surplus electricity retained domestically (Jamestown Foundation, 2024). The arrangement was extended in August 2023 through 2030, with provisions for increased volumes contingent on infrastructure upgrades, including completion of a third 400-kilovolt power transmission line between the two countries, which had reached approximately 85 percent completion by September 2024 (Jamestown Foundation, 2024; BMG, 2024).

The Iran–Armenia relationship extends beyond energy into broader connectivity infrastructure. In recent years, the Armenian government has awarded Iranian companies a contract valued at approximately \$215 million for construction of a critical highway running northward from Agarak on the Iranian border across roughly 32 kilometres of mountainous terrain in Syunik province. The project includes 17 bridges and two tunnels and is intended to strengthen bilateral trade and transport connectivity (OilPrice, 2023). Iran has also launched construction of infrastructure, including a new bridge, to facilitate faster transit between mainland Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan through Iranian territory. Analysts interpret this initiative as an effort to position Iranian routes as an alternative to the Zangezur Corridor and to signal Tehran's determination to preserve its strategic relevance as a regional transit hub (OilPrice, 2023).

Against this energy backdrop, some Armenian policymakers harbour concerns that the routing of the Zangezur Corridor near Armenia's southern border could complicate relations with Iran, one of the country's few remaining economic partners and a critical energy supplier. Corridor-related challenges involving border management, security incidents, or heightened geopolitical tensions could disrupt the gas-for-electricity arrangement and broader bilateral trade, which has reached substantial volumes in recent years. Iranian parliamentary statements characterizing the Zangezur Corridor as contrary to regional interests and potentially threatening collective security have further amplified Armenian anxieties that implementation of the corridor could strain relations with Tehran and contribute to Armenia's deeper regional isolation (AIR Center, 2025).

However, this narrative has recently shifted. In early 2026, the Armenian government publicly dismissed Iranian concerns regarding the TRIPP initiative, emphasizing that the corridor poses no threat to Iran’s sovereignty, security, or economic interests. Armenian officials underscored that TRIPP is conceived as a commercial and connectivity project operating under Armenian jurisdiction, rather than a geopolitical realignment aimed at excluding regional actors. Yerevan has sought to reassure Tehran that the project does not undermine existing Armenia–Iran energy cooperation and that established transit, trade, and energy arrangements will remain unaffected (News.am, 2026).

This official posture reflects Armenia’s broader effort to balance competing regional pressures while signaling strategic autonomy in its connectivity choices. By downplaying Iranian objections, the Armenian government aims to normalize TRIPP as a technical infrastructure project rather than a zero-sum geopolitical instrument, thereby mitigating external resistance and strengthening its negotiating position vis-à-vis Western partners. Nevertheless, the divergence between Armenian assurances and persistent Iranian skepticism suggests that tensions may not be fully resolved, leaving Iran’s long-term reaction an important variable shaping the corridor’s political and operational sustainability.

One of the central concerns shaping Armenian discourse on the Zangezur Corridor is the potential loss of economic jurisdiction should the corridor be designated as extraterritorial. Under such an arrangement, transit through the 42-kilometer Armenian section would operate under special legal regimes that could limit Armenia’s effective sovereignty over activities within its internationally recognized borders (Gafarli, 2024). Extraterritoriality is widely viewed as anathema to Armenian strategic culture, reflecting deep historical sensitivities rooted in centuries of foreign domination, seven decades of Soviet rule during which the Armenian SSR retained only nominal sovereignty within a highly centralized system, and earlier periods under Ottoman, Persian, and Russian imperial control when Armenian territories lacked meaningful self-governance. These historical experiences, compounded by recent military defeats that many Armenians interpret as existential threats to statehood, have reinforced acute sensitivity to any arrangement perceived as diluting sovereign authority.

The prospect of extraterritoriality generated fears across Armenia’s political spectrum that the state could lose effective control over trade flows transiting its territory, be unable to collect transit fees that might otherwise provide meaningful revenue for an economy constrained by limited fiscal resources, and face marginalization from regional trade as the corridor functioned largely as Azerbaijani and Turkish infrastructure merely traversing Armenian geography. These concerns were particularly acute given the deep absence of trust between Armenia and Azerbaijan following decades of conflict, three major wars since 1991, and unresolved territorial disputes, including contested border demarcations that continue to produce periodic and sometimes fatal skirmishes (Ateş, 2025; Saçan, 2025).

Recent developments surrounding the August 2025 Washington summit and the corridor’s rebranding as TRIPP have potentially addressed Armenian sovereignty concerns through innovative arrangements intended to balance Azerbaijan’s transit requirements with Armenia’s territorial integrity. Under the Washington accord, the passage is envisaged as an “unimpeded” transit route, allowing for efficient cargo movement without unreasonable delays or restrictions, while being administered through what President Trump described as an “exclusive partnership” between Armenia and the United States for a duration of 99 years (AIR Center, 2025, p. 6). This unprecedented framework would position the United States as a co-manager and security guarantor

of corridor operations on Armenian territory, thereby reshaping the negotiating landscape and facilitating bilateral Azerbaijan-Armenia discussions.

The TRIPP framework's central innovation lies in its clear distinction between corridor management and corridor control. Under this model, Armenia retains sovereign authority over the corridor, exercised jointly with the United States, while avoiding direct U.S. or Azerbaijani control arrangements that would effectively dilute Armenian sovereignty. TRIPP provisions envisage Armenian customs officials operating at all inspection points within Armenian territory, Armenian law governing corridor activities except where explicitly modified by international agreements, and Armenian authorities retaining primary security responsibility, supplemented by U.S. technical assistance and potentially security support. This governance structure could alleviate domestic political concerns in Armenia regarding territorial sovereignty, while simultaneously offering Azerbaijan credible assurances that transit operations will not be subject to arbitrary disruption driven by shifts in Armenian domestic politics (AIR Center, 2025).

The 99-year timeframe signals a sustained U.S. commitment that extends beyond any single administration, providing both Armenia and Azerbaijan with greater confidence that the framework will endure political transitions. By embedding its reputation and credibility in the arrangement, Washington becomes directly invested in safeguarding Armenian sovereignty within the corridor framework, creating strong disincentives against any mechanisms that could undermine Armenia's territorial integrity. For Azerbaijan, U.S. involvement offers reassurance that Armenian nationalism or domestic political pressures will not translate into corridor blockages or disruptions that could compromise the viability of the entire infrastructure investment..

However, the TRIPP framework has attracted criticism from multiple directions, reflecting divergent political concerns. Russian and Iranian officials have characterized U.S. involvement in corridor governance as extraregional interference and geopolitical encroachment into what they regard as traditional spheres of influence, warning that externally imposed arrangements risk destabilization and could produce “negative consequences” for regional security (AIR Center, 2025). Within Armenia, nationalist critics argue that a 99-year partnership with the United States risks substituting one form of external dependency for another, questioning whether such an arrangement delivers genuine sovereignty. They further express concern that Washington may not consistently prioritize Armenian interests in situations where they diverge from broader U.S. strategic objectives, particularly in relation to Türkiye and Azerbaijan.

Parallel to international negotiations over the Zangezur Corridor, the Armenian government under Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has articulated an alternative regional connectivity vision termed the “Crossroads of Peace” project. As Farid Shafiyev (personal communication, April 2025) notes, this initiative aims to link Georgia, Iran, Türkiye, and Azerbaijan through Armenian territory, reflecting Armenia's broader economic strategy emphasizing mutual gains, respect for territorial integrity, and sustainable development of regional transport networks rather than zero-sum competition or security dilemmas.

The Crossroads of Peace concept envisions Armenia transforming from a geographically isolated cul-de-sac, blocked by closed borders with Türkiye and Azerbaijan, into a regional connectivity hub where multiple transport corridors intersect on Armenian territory. However, the initiative has generated mixed responses reflecting diverse stakeholder interests. Azerbaijan and Türkiye expressed skepticism, perceiving the initiative as Armenian attempt to reframe corridor discussions on terms more favorable to Yerevan while potentially delaying or complicating implementation of

Azerbaijani and Turkish corridor priorities (APA, 2025). Russia views the initiative with suspicion as potentially diminishing Russian influence and encouraging Armenian pivot toward Western partnerships. Iran has expressed cautious interest, seeing potential for enhanced north-south connectivity serving Iranian economic objectives while maintaining Armenian buffer against pan-Turkic corridor concepts that could marginalize Iranian transit role.

Western governments including the EU have responded more positively, viewing Crossroads of Peace as constructive Armenian contribution to regional integration debates that emphasizes principles as sovereignty, mutual benefit, sustainability, aligned with Western normative preferences (European Commission, 2025). The European Union has provided technical assistance for feasibility studies and has indicated potential interest in co-financing infrastructure development contingent on regional political normalization. However, practical implementation remains contingent on Azerbaijan-Armenia peace agreement, Türkiye-Armenia border opening, and resolution of territorial disputes, outcomes that remain elusive despite intensive diplomatic efforts. While political controversies have dominated Armenian corridor discourse, economic modeling attempts to quantify potential benefits from Armenian participation in regional transport networks.

The Zangezur Corridor could deliver meaningful economic benefits for Armenia across multiple channels. Direct transit revenues from customs fees, corridor usage charges, and logistics services could reach an estimated \$50–100 million annually, a significant sum for an economy with a GDP of roughly \$25.8 billion (World Bank, 2024). Employment effects in border regions could be substantial, with customs operations, trucking, hospitality, and maintenance activities generating an estimated 5,000–10,000 direct jobs, particularly impactful in Syunik province where unemployment and emigration remain acute. Induced investment in logistics infrastructure, including warehouses, freight consolidation facilities, and transport equipment, could total \$200–300 million over the first decade, supporting both construction activity and long-term capital formation. Improved market access through reduced transport costs and shorter delivery times could enhance the competitiveness of Armenian agricultural, processed food, and light manufacturing exports, especially to Turkish and Middle Eastern markets. Armenia's landlocked geography currently forces most exports to transit Georgia to reach Black Sea ports, raising costs and delivery times, whereas a direct road link to Türkiye could cut delivery times by one to two days and reduce transport costs by an estimated 15–20 percent for Turkish-bound cargo. Beyond these quantifiable gains, deeper regional integration could yield longer-term benefits through logistics-sector technology spillovers, stronger incentives for entrepreneurship in corridor-adjacent communities, and reduced conflict-related risk premiums that deter investment. Given that Armenia's persistent insecurity, reflected in defense spending exceeding four percent of GDP, imposes significant opportunity costs by diverting resources from productive investment, durable peace and regional economic integration could enable a gradual reallocation of national resources toward development priorities.

Institutional capacity building is equally essential to realizing corridor benefits. Armenian customs authorities will need to harmonize procedures with Azerbaijani practices and relevant international standards, while the domestic logistics services sector requires significant development given Armenian firms' historically limited experience in international freight forwarding and multimodal transport. At the same time, corridor governance frameworks must ensure transparent, rule-based operations to minimize corruption risks and prevent arbitrary decision-making that could discourage cargo shippers. Meeting these institutional requirements will necessitate sustained

technical assistance, targeted training programs, and, in some areas, the involvement of foreign expertise, all of which will require long-term political commitment and adequate financial resources.

Despite potential economic benefits, Armenian corridor participation confronts formidable domestic political obstacles rooted in nationalism, historical trauma, and legitimate security concerns amplified by recent military defeats. Opposition political parties spanning the ideological spectrum, from nationalist Armenia Alliance and Prosperous Armenia to smaller radical groups, have characterized corridor arrangements as betrayal of national interests, capitulation to Azerbaijani demands, and de facto recognition of territorial losses from the 2020 and 2023 conflicts. Nationalist opposition advances a set of interconnected arguments against the corridor. Critics contend that any arrangement granting Azerbaijan guaranteed transit through Armenian territory would inevitably constrain Armenian sovereignty by creating binding international obligations that limit policy autonomy. They further warn of heightened security vulnerabilities, arguing that corridor operations could facilitate Azerbaijani intelligence gathering, enable rapid military movements, or generate pretexts for renewed conflict in the event of transit disputes (Jam News, 2025; The Armenian Report, 2025). In addition, opponents argue that accepting the Zangezur Corridor under any framework risks setting a territorial precedent by implicitly legitimizing Azerbaijani victory and Armenian defeat, potentially emboldening future demands for further concessions. Finally, nationalist voices warn of alienating Armenian diaspora communities, especially in the United States, France, Russia, and Lebanon, where opposition to corridor arrangements perceived as appeasing Azerbaijan and Türkiye could translate into reduced financial support and weakened political advocacy on which Armenia has long relied.

Taken together, the debate surrounding the Zangezur Corridor encapsulates Armenia's broader strategic dilemma between economic necessity and deeply rooted sovereignty and security anxieties. The corridor holds the potential to alleviate structural poverty, reduce emigration pressures, diversify trade routes, and mitigate the high opportunity costs imposed by chronic insecurity and isolation. Yet these prospective gains are counterbalanced by legitimate fears stemming from historical trauma, unresolved conflict with Azerbaijan, energy dependence on Russia and Iran, and domestic political resistance anchored in nationalism and diaspora influence. Recent initiatives such as the TRIPP framework and Armenia's own Crossroads of Peace proposal demonstrate an emerging effort to reconcile connectivity with sovereignty through innovative governance arrangements and external guarantees. Whether these frameworks can translate economic logic into political consensus will depend on credible assurances of territorial integrity, robust institutional capacity, and durable peace between Armenia and its neighbors. Ultimately, Armenia's corridor decision is not merely a question of transit infrastructure but a defining test of its post-war strategic orientation, determining whether the country remains constrained by isolation and insecurity or leverages regional integration as a pathway toward sustainable development and long-term stability.

3.4 Georgia

The opening of the TRIPP/Zangezur Corridor presents both challenges and opportunities for Georgia's long-standing role as the South Caucasus' principal transit hub. For more than three decades following the Soviet collapse and the closure of the Armenia–Azerbaijan border in the early 1990s, Georgia benefited from what transport economists describe as a “positional

monopoly,” a form of dominance derived primarily from geographical necessity rather than superior transport services (Cornell, 2019). With Azerbaijan’s landlocked Nakhchivan and most westbound cargo flows routed through Georgian territory, Tbilisi emerged as an indispensable intermediary in regional trade.

This advantage delivered substantial economic gains but also created structural vulnerabilities that have become increasingly apparent amid shifting geopolitical conditions. Georgia’s Black Sea ports, particularly Poti and Batumi, developed into key outlets for Azerbaijani and Central Asian exports to European and Turkish markets, while the launch of the Baku–Tbilisi–Kars railway in 2017 further reinforced Georgia’s centrality within the Middle Corridor. However, disruptions to northern routes following the war in Ukraine, the emergence of alternative transit options, and the prospective activation of the Zangezur Corridor collectively place pressure on this position, underscoring the risks associated with overreliance on a limited set of transit pathways.

Against this backdrop, Georgia’s existing transit base warrants careful assessment. The country’s railway network spans 1,576.5 kilometers, is 98.4 percent electrified, and is operated primarily by Georgian Railway LLC, linking Black Sea ports with Azerbaijan and Armenia and, historically, with Russia, although political constraints continue to limit northern crossings (Logcluster, 2024). In 2024, rail cargo volumes increased modestly, with nine-month revenues reaching approximately GEL 490 million (around \$176 million), representing a 2 percent year-on-year rise despite ongoing conflicts, sanctions-related frictions, and infrastructure bottlenecks.

On the maritime side, Georgia’s Black Sea ports continue to anchor the western terminus of trans-Caucasian transport corridors. Available port statistics indicate that container throughput at Georgia’s Black Sea ports increased markedly in the first nine months of 2025, reaching roughly 568,000 TEU, representing growth of around 20 percent compared to the same period in 2024, while general cargo volumes rose by approximately 12 percent (TREND News Agency, 2025). Batumi port handled about 3.6 million tonnes of cargo in 2024 (Ports Europe, 2025), an increase of roughly 9 percent year on year, with growth recorded in both dry cargo and oil products. Poti port, which accounts for the clear majority of Georgia’s container traffic, has launched a roughly \$30 million expansion project intended to add up to 120,000 TEU of annual capacity, while rail-ferry cargo volumes through Poti increased substantially in 2024, rising to around 158,000 tonnes from under 100,000 tonnes the previous year (Georgian Business Consulting, 2025).

Yet structural constraints continue to limit throughput and reliability at Georgia’s ports. Shallow draft conditions restrict the accommodation of larger vessels, increasing reliance on costlier feeder transshipment. At Poti, underdeveloped on-dock rail infrastructure has historically required the use of off-dock storage facilities located several kilometers from the port, adding time and handling costs. Operational reliability is further affected by periodic weather-related closures, while limited port competition has long been cited by logistics operators as a factor contributing to comparatively higher charges than at some rival Black Sea facilities (Logcluster, 2024).

Alongside east–west corridors, Georgia also relies heavily on a critical north–south artery, the Verkhny Lars (Zemo Larsi) crossing with Russia, which remains the only official land border point between the two countries. This route serves as a significant source of transit revenue and economic activity, carrying Russian tourist flows, the majority of Armenia–Russia overland trade, and ongoing Georgia–Russia commercial traffic despite strained political relations. Analysts estimate that activity associated with the crossing generates on the order of tens of millions of

dollars annually through customs duties, fuel sales, hospitality, and related services, while daily flows of Armenian trucks underscore its practical indispensability (Gafarli, 2024).

At the same time, the corridor is characterized by persistent operational fragility. The Georgian Military Road's high-altitude sections are frequently disrupted by avalanches, landslides, and rockfalls, with past incidents resulting in closures lasting from several days to multiple weeks, including fatal landslides in 2014 and extended shutdowns in subsequent years (Jamestown Foundation, 2016). These natural constraints are compounded by political and administrative factors. Russian customs processing capacity at Verkhny Lars has often lagged behind incoming traffic volumes, contributing to prolonged queues, and at times thousands of vehicles awaiting clearance. Georgian analysts and regional observers have argued that such capacity constraints reflect not only technical limitations but also the use of transit controls as a tool of political leverage (JAMnews, 2022). The complete closure of the crossing between 2006 and 2010 amid diplomatic crises further demonstrated Russia's willingness to suspend transit entirely, inflicting severe economic losses on Armenian exporters and highlighting the strategic vulnerability inherent in reliance on a single route (RFE/RL, 2010).

In this context, the Zangezur Corridor directly challenges Georgia's default centrality by giving Azerbaijan a direct land link to Nakhchivan and Türkiye, removing the compulsion to route via Georgian territory. Narrowly viewed, this threatens Georgian volumes, port throughput, rail utilization, and related services. Yet a more nuanced assessment sees space for complementarity. Zangezur closes a "missing link" in the South Caucasus network, while Georgia can pivot from positional rents to value-added services in a diversified system.

Several adaptive priorities emerge from this logic. Sustained port modernization to expand capacity, improve efficiency, and enhance reliability is essential for preserving Georgia's competitiveness as a Black Sea transshipment hub. Greater route diversification through deeper connectivity with Armenia, stronger Black Sea ferry links with Romania, Bulgaria, and Ukraine, and where political conditions allow additional crossings with Russia would help spread risk and reduce overreliance on any single corridor. Finally, Georgia would benefit from positioning itself as a complementary rather than directly competing transit option, recognizing that differences in cargo type, destination, and seasonality will naturally distribute traffic across multiple corridors.

Current investment patterns support this complementary interpretation. Azerbaijan and Türkiye continue to back the BTK through Georgia. Azerbaijan Railways projected around fifty China-Europe block trains per month via the BTK in 2025, up from roughly one hundred ninety trains in 2024 and with more than two hundred fifty expected by the end of the year, implying an annual increase of about thirty two percent and underscoring the continued relevance of Georgian routes (Coordinating Council of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Transit Freight, 2025). For Baku, the BTK and Georgia's access to the Black Sea remain essential for westbound flows, while for Georgia, Azerbaijan provides the critical Caspian gateway through the Port of Baku. This reciprocal dependence incentivizes sustained cooperation regardless of the pace or outcome of Zangezur related developments.

In the first eleven months of 2024, bilateral trade between Georgia and Azerbaijan reached approximately \$730 million, while between January and September 2024 Georgian investment in Azerbaijan rose by nearly 179 percent to just over \$31 million and Azerbaijani investment in Georgia increased by almost 89 percent to roughly \$96 million (ARKA, 2024; Trend, 2024). Energy linkages through the BTC and BTE pipelines, alongside joint industrial projects and

expanding tourism flows, have created dense interdependencies that extend well beyond any single transport corridor. Türkiye's strategic calculus points in the same direction. Even as the Zangezur route promises more direct access, Georgia's established ports and logistics infrastructure provide redundancy and operational resilience, and continued Turkish participation in Georgian port and logistics projects signals a long term commitment to parallel routing rather than substitution.

To translate strategic complementarity into a durable advantage, Georgia must evolve from a simple land bridge into a fully fledged logistics platform. This requires a shift toward warehousing, cargo consolidation, light processing, and re export activities rather than a narrow focus on line haul transit alone. Early market signals already point in this direction, as the Bene Group has cited rising demand along the Middle Corridor and announced plans to develop roughly one hundred thousand square meters of warehousing in Gardabani alongside logistics centers in Poti and potentially Natakhtari, reflecting private sector confidence in Georgia's transition from a transit corridor to a comprehensive logistics hub.

Georgia's comparative advantages support this strategic pivot. Free trade agreements with the European Union and China provide preferential access to a combined market of roughly 2.3 billion people, while a business friendly tax regime including a fifteen percent corporate tax applied only to distributed profits and relatively low customs duties continues to attract logistics operators (European Commission, 2016; Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, 2017). At the same time, steady improvements in the business environment have reduced many of the frictions typically associated with post Soviet economies. As total regional trade expands through Middle Corridor growth, post conflict normalization, and deeper Central Asian integration into global markets, demand for Georgian brokerage services, less than container load consolidation, insurance, and supply chain finance could grow even if Georgia's share of pure transit traffic declines.

Within this strategic shift, the proposed Anaklia deep water port represents both opportunity and risk. By enabling mainline vessel calls of up to ten thousand TEU, beyond the capacity limits of Poti and Batumi, Anaklia could fundamentally alter Georgia's maritime role and compete more directly with established hubs in Romania and Bulgaria. In May 2024, a Chinese state owned consortium was selected to acquire a forty nine percent stake in the project while Georgia retained majority ownership, aligning Anaklia with broader Belt and Road port strategies but also raising concerns related to financing structures and geopolitical influence (The Maritime Executive, 2024). The project's estimated cost of two to three billion dollars, unresolved environmental and safety questions near occupied Abkhazia, and uncertainty over sufficient long term cargo volumes continue to generate debate (Civil Georgia, 2016). Earlier breakdowns involving a United States and Georgian consortium and the optics of Chinese participation have further fueled domestic and Western skepticism.

Georgia's vulnerabilities, however, extend beyond infrastructure alone. Domestically, political turbulence marked by disputed elections, polarization, and the adoption of the 2024 foreign agents law has triggered protests, Western criticism, and growing concern about democratic backsliding. Such instability raises financing costs, deters foreign investors, and risks operational disruptions (EBRD, 2025). Externally, Russia's continued occupation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia preserves enduring pressure points, with the 2008 war underscoring the economic costs of renewed conflict. Although Georgia has reduced its dependence on Russian gas through increased Azerbaijani supply, Moscow retains coercive tools including border closures, export restrictions, cyber operations, and energy leverage (International Energy Agency, 2025).

A regional comparison further clarifies Georgia's relative position. Azerbaijan benefits from Caspian access, hydrocarbon funded infrastructure, and strong political commitment to corridor development, though governance concerns complicate Western financing and its role differs as a major origin and destination rather than a pure transit state. Armenia remains constrained by closed borders with Azerbaijan and Türkiye, and while normalization could be transformative, its timing and capacity implications remain uncertain. Türkiye possesses a much larger economy, extensive infrastructure, and a mature logistics sector, but faces challenges stemming from macroeconomic volatility, strained relations with Western partners, and pronounced east west regional imbalances. Georgia's advantages including free trade agreements, regulatory openness, Black Sea access, and improving infrastructure are therefore balanced by a small domestic market, exposure to Russian pressure, limited fiscal space, and persistent bottlenecks.

Against this backdrop, Georgia's trajectory in relation to the Zangezur Corridor plausibly falls into three broad scenarios. In a successful adaptation and hub consolidation outcome, Anaklia or equivalent port capacity is realized alongside rail upgrades and logistics zones supported by multilateral development banks and private capital, political stability improves, and while Zangezur handles niche flows, Georgia retains and expands volumes through superior services, producing higher overall revenues. A second scenario of modest erosion and partial adaptation envisions diversion of roughly fifteen to twenty five percent of Azerbaijan related traffic while the majority is retained through incremental upgrades, with the BTK railway remaining active, Anaklia delayed or scaled back, and Georgia functioning as one of several viable routing options with manageable net impact. A third scenario of significant decline and strategic marginalization would involve diversion of forty to sixty percent of traffic, stalled mega projects, rising political instability, intensified Russian pressure, and weakening port competitiveness, resulting in contraction across transit dependent regions and mounting fiscal strain. The most plausible near term outcome lies between the first two scenarios, with some diversion to Zangezur offset by Georgia's investments, service improvements, and entrenched network advantages. Short term rents derived from geographic monopoly are likely to erode, but medium to long term gains remain achievable if overall regional trade expands and Georgia succeeds in capturing higher margin logistics functions.

More broadly, Georgia's situation illustrates the evolving reality facing transit states in an era of multipolar corridor competition. As technological change, infrastructure finance, and geopolitical bargaining multiply viable routes, geography alone no longer guarantees durable rents. The emergence of the Zangezur Corridor, the potential opening of the Armenia Türkiye border, and additional Caspian to Black Sea links shift competition from necessity to choice, where reliability, cost, speed, and value added services increasingly determine routing decisions. For Georgia, adaptation therefore requires a transition from passive rent extraction to active value creation. This entails mobilizing capital for hard infrastructure, advancing regulatory reforms for trade facilitation, exercising diplomatic dexterity with powerful neighbors and external partners, and strengthening private sector capabilities beyond basic haulage. If policymakers deliver on this agenda, Zangezur can serve as a catalyst rather than a constraint, expanding the regional economic space in which Georgia earns more in absolute terms even with a smaller relative share. If not, marginalization becomes a genuine risk as new networks consolidate without Georgia at their core. In this sense, the corridor debate tests broader theories of small state strategy under conditions of competitive connectivity, questioning whether geography alone can still generate lasting advantage or whether only continuous upgrading and service excellence sustain influence. For Georgia, the stakes extend beyond transit revenues to its regional role, development trajectory, and capacity to

transform limited resources into durable advantages within an increasingly crowded and corridor rich Eurasian landscape.

3.5 Iran

Iran's political and economic stance toward the opening of the Zangezur Corridor reveals fundamental contradictions between Tehran's economic interests and its geopolitical anxieties. This ambivalence reflects deeper tensions within Iranian strategic thinking about regional connectivity initiatives that simultaneously present opportunities for economic integration and risks of strategic marginalization (Oxford University Press, 2019). As a critical transit state between the Caspian Basin and the Persian Gulf, and as the land bridge connecting South Asia to the Caucasus and Eastern Europe, Iran has historically leveraged its geography to generate transit revenues and project regional influence (Routledge, 2003).

The development of the corridor is unfolding amid an exceptionally adverse geopolitical environment for Tehran. In the aftermath of the June 2025 Israel–Iran confrontation, subsequent U.S. strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities, and the Trump administration's restoration of "maximum pressure" sanctions targeting Iranian oil exports—the regime's principal source of revenue—Iran confronts what scholars describe as a strategic predicament characterized by deepening regional isolation, economic vulnerability, and the erosion of its so-called "Axis of Resistance" network (Sadjadpour, 2018). Within this context, the Zangezur Corridor is simultaneously perceived as a potential conduit for renewed regional integration and as an existential challenge to Iran's long-standing transit leverage and its sensitivities regarding territorial security.

Understanding Iran's contemporary position requires historical context rooted in Soviet-era rail connections. The Julfa–Nakhchivan railway is a 105-year-old route originally developed in 1941 as part of the Soviet Union's wartime expansion of logistics networks (Erickson, 2001). During World War II, it functioned as a critical artery for the Lend-Lease program, with approximately 34 percent of total U.S. supplies to the USSR transiting Iranian territory via the Baku–Julfa line. This made it the principal rail link between the Soviet Union and northern Iran (Stewart, 1989). At Julfa in Nakhchivan, the line historically branched in three directions, extending south to Jolfa in Iran, west and north toward Yerevan, and east along Armenia's southern border toward Azerbaijan and, ultimately, Russia.

Before the Soviet collapse in 1991, roughly four million tons of goods moved along this railway each year. Cargo exchanges through the Jolfa border crossing reached 2.69 million tons in 1990 and 2.37 million tons in 1991 (Baku Dialogues, 2022). The dissolution of the USSR and the subsequent Armenia–Azerbaijan conflict disrupted these routes, as more than 240 kilometers of rail came under Armenian control. As a result, Iran was effectively disconnected from the South Caucasus rail network for more than three decades.

The post-2020 ceasefire and reopening of regional transport links created opportunities for Iran to revive these historical corridors. In 2021, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif underscored that "the re-opening of the Julfa–Nakhchivan railway line is necessary for Iran's access to neighboring countries and the Eurasian market (Baku Dialogues, 2022). During a May 2021 visit to Yerevan, Iran Railways Managing Director Saeed Rasouli detailed a strategy in which completing the western corridor segment would connect Iran to the Black Sea and Russia via Jolfa, Nakhchivan, Armenia, and Georgia, potentially forming a Caspian–Black Sea Transit

Corridor (Karabakh Space, 2022). Iran and Armenia subsequently signed memoranda to exchange tariff information and initiate freight exchanges as infrastructure is rehabilitated.

Reviving the Soviet-era network would give Iran two primary rail routes, both starting from Jolfa (East Azerbaijan Province). The first (south–north) runs via Jolfa to Nakhchivan, then Yerevan and Tbilisi. The second (west–east) runs from Jolfa to Nakhchivan and then along Armenia’s southern borders into Azerbaijan to Baku and onward to Russia (Special Eurasia, 2023). This dual-connectivity architecture could position Iran as a critical southern link in Eurasian transport networks, complementing, rather than directly competing with, the Zangezur Corridor by serving different market segments and cargo types.

Beyond freight rail, Iran’s connectivity with Azerbaijan includes energy transit arrangements that create mutual dependencies and complicate simple competitive narratives. The lack of a direct route between mainland Azerbaijan and its Nakhchivan exclave enabled Iran to earn revenue by facilitating Azerbaijani gas transit. Under a 2005 mutual natural gas exchange agreement, Iran would receive gas in return for transporting Azerbaijani supplies to Nakhchivan, with deliveries through Iranian territory beginning in 2006, an example of “transit state rent” derived from advantageous geography (International Information Group, 2025).

Opening and fully operationalizing the Zangezur Corridor could, in theory, reduce or eliminate Azerbaijan’s reliance on Iranian territory to reach Nakhchivan, implying potential transit-revenue losses for Tehran. Yet the reality is more nuanced. Azerbaijan has remained ready to cooperate, as seen in the extension of the bilateral gas-exchange agreement (pending signature). Moreover, in November 2021, Azerbaijan, Iran, and Turkmenistan signed a trilateral swap for 1.5–2 bcm annually through Iran to Azerbaijan (Baku Energy Forum, 2022). This was later expanded, with Iran and Turkmenistan concluding a 2025 swap enabling Turkmengaz to supply up to 2 bcm per year via Iran’s infrastructure. These mechanisms create practical interdependencies: Iran benefits from transit fees and pipeline utilization; Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan gain access to otherwise constrained markets; and Türkiye, as a western destination, benefits from supply diversification. Thus, corridor development need not displace Iranian transit altogether; it may reconfigure regional energy architecture toward complementary arrangements.

Opening and fully operationalizing the Zangezur Corridor could, in theory, reduce or even eliminate Azerbaijan’s reliance on Iranian territory to access Nakhchivan, which would imply potential losses in transit revenue for Tehran. In practice, however, the picture is more nuanced. Azerbaijan has continued to signal readiness for cooperation, as reflected in the planned extension of the bilateral gas exchange agreement, which is pending signature. In November 2021, Azerbaijan, Iran, and Turkmenistan also concluded a trilateral gas swap of 1.5 to 2 billion cubic meters per year through Iranian territory to Azerbaijan (Baku Energy Forum, 2022). These mechanisms create practical interdependencies. Iran benefits from transit fees and pipeline utilization, while Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan gain access to markets that would otherwise remain constrained. Türkiye, as a western destination, also benefits through greater supply diversification. Viewed this way, corridor development does not necessarily displace Iranian transit but instead reconfigures the regional energy architecture toward more complementary arrangements.

For Iran, the Zangezur Corridor could offer tangible benefits. It would provide direct rail access to Russian markets and reduce reliance on Caspian ferry services or indirect Central Asian routes. It could also open access to Armenian markets and enable onward transit to Europe through Georgia and Türkiye. Most importantly, participation would allow Tehran to help shape corridor

governance, operational protocols, and transit guarantees in ways that protect its interests. Physical geography and infrastructure economics reinforce potential participation. The Julfa section will face rising pressure from intersecting north–south and east–west flows, partially consuming Zangezur capacity. Managing these multi-directional flows requires coordination among all transit states, creating roles for Iran in technical working groups, customs harmonization, and joint logistics planning. Such roles grant Tehran influence over corridor evolution even without formal control of the Zangezur segment.

Despite such opportunities, Iranian strategic elites harbor profound anxieties about the Zangezur Corridor, anxieties that intensified after U.S. mediation of the August 2025 peace agreement and the corridor’s rebranding as TRIPP. Iran’s stance reveals striking inconsistencies reflecting internal divisions over the implications of greater U.S. involvement in the South Caucasus (AIR Center, 2025). Officially, Tehran initially welcomed the Azerbaijan–Armenia peace deal, aligning it with Iran’s stated preference for diplomatic conflict resolution. However, it quickly voiced concerns that Washington’s role signaled a lasting American strategic presence on Iran’s doorstep (Caucasus Watch, 2025). President Masoud Pezeshkian later suggested these concerns were eased following reassurances from Armenian officials. In contrast, the Majles declared that the Zangezur Corridor “contradicts the interests of the countries of the region and poses a direct threat to collective security,” reflecting hardline opposition.

Iran’s core challenge lies in reconciling competing imperatives between economic integration and modernization on the one hand and geopolitical security concerns coupled with resistance to Western influence on the other. This tension has produced notable policy contradictions (Middle East Institute, 2025). Reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian campaigned on easing sanctions through diplomacy, improving relations with neighboring states, and opening the economy, a platform that logically supports a more pragmatic approach to corridor development. By contrast, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has consistently rejected negotiations with the United States, characterized Western-backed initiatives as existential threats, and prioritized ideological resistance over economic pragmatism (Iran International, 2025).

In sum, Iran’s complex and often contradictory posture toward the Zangezur Corridor reflects broader patterns in its foreign policy. These include the tension between pragmatic economic interests and ideological resistance, the gap between rhetorical maximalism and limited practical capacity, and the costs of isolation imposed both by external pressures and self-inflicted constraints. This case also illustrates the limits of geographic determinism. While commanding transit geography can provide latent advantages, converting those advantages into sustained influence requires effective institutions, sufficient resources, and diplomatic credibility, all of which are undermined by sanctions, internal divisions, and regional isolation.

Ultimately, Iran’s response to the opening of the Zangezur Corridor underscores a central dilemma in its contemporary foreign policy. Geography offers opportunity, but strategy ultimately determines outcomes. While Iran’s location positions it as a natural hub linking Eurasian and South Asian transport and energy networks, its ability to capitalize on this advantage is constrained by geopolitical mistrust, ideological rigidity, and the cumulative effects of sanctions and isolation. The Zangezur Corridor does not inherently threaten Iran’s interests, nor does it guarantee Iran’s exclusion from regional connectivity. Instead, it highlights the costs of ambivalence. Tehran’s simultaneous pursuit of economic integration and resistance to Western-backed initiatives has produced an incoherent approach that risks marginalizing the country from shaping emerging transport and energy architectures.

The available evidence suggests that corridor development is not a zero-sum process. Rail and energy networks in the South Caucasus are increasingly defined by functional complementarity rather than outright displacement. Iran's existing transit routes, swap agreements, and potential roles in coordination and governance could still allow it to remain a relevant actor if it adopts a pragmatic and institutionally grounded strategy. Without sustained diplomatic engagement and internal policy coherence, however, Iran risks turning its geographic advantages into unrealized potential. In this sense, the Zangezur Corridor serves as a broader cautionary case, showing that connectivity rewards states not simply for where they are located, but for how effectively they translate geography into credible participation in regional order-building.

3.6 Russia

Russia's position toward the Zangezur Corridor reveals fundamental contradictions characteristic of Moscow's broader strategic predicament in the post-2022 geopolitical landscape. Isolation from Western markets following the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine and subsequent comprehensive sanctions regimes has compelled Russia to diversify trade routes and reconfigure supply chains toward Asia, the Middle East, and the Global South (International Monetary Fund, 2023). In this context of forced economic reorientation, the Zangezur Corridor paradoxically holds both strategic value for Moscow's connectivity objectives and an existential threat to Russia's regional influence architecture. This duality reflects deeper tensions within Russian strategic thinking: the imperative of economic pragmatism versus the prioritization of geopolitical control and the maintenance of Moscow's self-proclaimed status as indispensable regional hegemony.

The corridor's development is unfolding amid an extraordinarily challenging environment for Russian foreign policy (RUSI, 2025). Western sanctions have severed many traditional trade routes, especially those to European markets that historically absorbed substantial shares of Russian energy exports, manufactured goods, and raw materials. As Russian exporters, importers, and forwarding companies seek alternative logistics, corridor development has shifted from a peripheral concern to a strategic necessity (Council on Foreign Relations, 2025). At the same time, however, the August 2025 U.S.-mediated peace agreement and TRIPP framework directly challenge Russia's claim to serve as primary security guarantor in the South Caucasus, a role institutionalized through the November 2020 trilateral statement ending the Karabakh War and the subsequent peacekeeping deployment.

To situate Russia's complex relationship with the Zangezur Corridor, it is essential to view it within Moscow's broader investment in the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), a 7,200-kilometer multimodal ship-rail-road network linking Russia, Central Asia, the Caucasus, Iran, India, and potentially Africa and Southeast Asia. The INSTC agreement was signed on September 12, 2000, by India, Iran, and Russia, later joined by Azerbaijan, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Ukraine, Oman, Syria, and Bulgaria (as observer) (Gulf Research Center, 2025). From its inception, the INSTC has served dual purposes: economically, providing more efficient alternatives to Suez with projected transit-cost reductions of up to 30% and time reductions of up to 40%; geopolitically, establishing Russian-dominated infrastructure that circumvents Western-controlled maritime chokepoints

To situate Russia's complex relationship with the Zangezur Corridor, it is essential to place it within Moscow's broader investment in the International North-South Transport Corridor, or

INSTC. This 7,200-kilometer multimodal network of shipping, rail, and road links Russia with Central Asia, the Caucasus, Iran, India, and potentially Africa and Southeast Asia. The INSTC agreement was signed on September 12, 2000 by India, Iran, and Russia and was later joined by Azerbaijan, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Ukraine, Oman, Syria, with Bulgaria participating as an observer (Gulf Research Center, 2025). From its inception, the INSTC has served two core functions. Economically, it offers a more efficient alternative to the Suez route, with projected transit cost reductions of up to 30 percent and time savings of up to 40 percent. Geopolitically, it has aimed to establish infrastructure dominated by Russia that reduces dependence on Western-controlled maritime chokepoints (Gulf Research Center, 2025).

Following the 2022 sanctions wave, the INSTC's strategic significance for Russia rose sharply. As one Russian analyst put it, the INSTC is now "as important for the Russian economy as the Road of Life was for besieged Leningrad during WWII", a dramatic metaphor that nonetheless captures Moscow's perception of alternative trade routes as existential economic necessities rather than mere commercial options (Middle East Institute of Japan, 2023).

Against this backdrop, the Zangezur Corridor takes on particular strategic importance (TRT World, 2025). Practically, the corridor would give Russia an east-west link that complements the INSTC's north-south orientation, enabling more complex routing and diversification. It could strengthen access to Asian markets, including China and Central Asia, while reducing reliance on Western-dominated maritime routes through the Black Sea, Mediterranean, and Suez. A key enabler here is the Rasht–Astara railway in northwestern Iran, a critical INSTC segment connecting Iranian and Azerbaijani rail networks. Its completion would finalize the INSTC's western branch, providing continuous rail from Russia's Baltic and Arctic ports to the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean (Caspian News, 2024).

In May 2023, Russia and Iran signed an intergovernmental agreement to build the 162-kilometer Rasht–Astara line, with Russia financing €1.3 billion of the €1.6 billion cost. Completion is slated for 2027–2028, though progress has been slow given financing constraints, sanctions-related technology and equipment hurdles, and difficult terrain (Caspian News, 2024). Still, eliminating rail-maritime transshipment at Caspian ports would markedly enhance corridor competitiveness.

From Moscow's perspective, the Zangezur Corridor also presents a valuable alternative to the Georgian Military Road, the 212-kilometer route through the Caucasus from Vladikavkaz to Tbilisi. The GMR, historically the main overland link between Russia and the South Caucasus, suffers persistent risks: avalanches, mudslides, frequent closures, two-lane bottlenecks, and, critically, political tensions that create operational uncertainty (JAMnews, 2022; Eurasianet, 2019). It carries ~45% of Georgia's road traffic (2020) and is vital for Armenia's access to Russia, with Turkish and Azerbaijani use as well (JAMnews, 2022). Yet capacity limits, e.g., Verkhni Lars processing ~400 trucks/day against 800–1,000 arrivals, create multi-day queues, and major landslides in 2014 and 2016 caused lengthy closures (JAMnews, 2022; Jamestown, 2016). Politically, Moscow closed the Kazbegi–Verkhni Lars checkpoint from 2006 to 2010, demonstrating readiness to weaponize infrastructure. Alternative routes via South Ossetia and Abkhazia (e.g., Transkam/Roki Tunnel) remain closed to international transit due to their occupied-territory status (Jamestown, 2016).

For influence maintenance, Russian participation in Zangezur development could serve multiple objectives. Strategically, it offers a way to regain leverage over regional trade flows increasingly shaped by infrastructure outside Moscow's control, e.g., the BTK railway (operational since 2017) as a Western–Turkish–Azerbaijani project that excludes Russia (Gafarli, 2024). Active

engagement could ensure alternative routes still incorporate Russian commercial interests and remain partially subject to Moscow's influence. Moreover, the Iran–EAEU free trade agreement (signed October 2018, in force October 2019) could deepen Russian integration with southern routes while counterbalancing Western influence (Gafarli, 2024). Azerbaijan's commitment to INSTC development further supports prospects: during President Putin's August 19, 2024, visit to Baku, President Ilham Aliyev underscored the "North–South" project's exceptional importance and noted Azerbaijan's ongoing modernization to reach 15–30 million tons of annual throughput, with ~\$120 million allocated in 2024 (Caspian News, 2024).

Despite these potential benefits, Russia's official posture toward the Zangezur Corridor has grown more ambivalent, and increasingly adversarial, since the August 2025 Washington summit and TRIPP announcement. The reason is straightforward: beyond transport economics, TRIPP challenges Russia's role as primary security guarantor in the South Caucasus. While Moscow formally welcomed the peace deal, it has stressed that the November 10, 2020, and November 9, 2022, trilateral statements remain legally valid, an attempt to contest TRIPP's legitimacy and reassert Russian prerogatives. In effect, Russia disputes the premise that corridor control and security architecture can shift from the 2020 guarantor (with ~2,000 Russian peacekeepers deployed) to an Armenia–U.S. partnership that marginalizes Moscow.

During a recent visit to Yerevan, Deputy Prime Minister Aleksei Overchuk sharpened Moscow's opposition by warning that "the involvement of any external players from outside the region would disrupt the geopolitical balance and have negative consequences" (AIR Center, 2025). This carefully coded language is widely understood as targeting the United States, which is portrayed as an extra-regional interloper. The reference to maintaining "balance" echoes Russia's long-standing claim to privileged interests in the post-Soviet space, as articulated in earlier strategic doctrines (cf. Medvedev, 2008). Meanwhile, the phrase "negative consequences" serves as a thinly veiled form of coercive signaling rather than a concrete policy threat.

Russia's approach to the Zangezur Corridor encapsulates the core dilemmas shaping Moscow's post-2022 foreign and economic strategy. On the one hand, the corridor aligns with Russia's urgent need to diversify trade routes and strengthen east–west connectivity as Western sanctions have narrowed access to traditional European markets. On the other hand, it challenges Russia's long-standing ambition to remain the primary security arbiter and geopolitical gatekeeper in the South Caucasus. This duality has produced an increasingly contradictory posture in which economic pragmatism collides with the imperative of preserving regional dominance.

From a purely connectivity perspective, the Zangezur Corridor could complement Russia's broader investment in the International North–South Transport Corridor by enhancing routing flexibility, easing logistical bottlenecks, and reducing reliance on politically and environmentally vulnerable transit routes such as the Georgian Military Road. Together with projects like the Rasht–Astara railway and Azerbaijan's expanding transit capacity, these corridors point toward a more interconnected Eurasian transport landscape in which Russia could remain a significant participant. Yet participation would require Moscow to accept a more pluralistic corridor governance model and a diminished monopoly over regional security arrangements.

It is precisely this political adjustment that Russia has been unwilling to make. The U.S.-mediated peace framework and the TRIPP initiative strike at the foundations of Russia's post-Soviet influence architecture by diluting its role as indispensable mediator and guarantor. Moscow's increasingly adversarial rhetoric toward external involvement reflects not only concern over

infrastructure control but also anxiety about strategic displacement in a region where its leverage has steadily eroded since 2020.

Ultimately, the Zangezur Corridor illustrates a broader structural shift in Eurasian geopolitics. Connectivity is no longer defined solely by geography or historical influence but by the ability to integrate infrastructure, diplomacy, and economic incentives within evolving multilateral frameworks. Russia retains significant assets in transport infrastructure, energy trade, and regional ties, yet its capacity to convert these assets into sustained influence depends on strategic adaptation. Absent such adaptation, the Zangezur Corridor risks becoming less a tool of economic renewal for Moscow and more a symbol of the limits of coercive geopolitics in an increasingly networked Eurasian order.

3.7 United States

The August 2025 Washington summit and the subsequent rebranding of the Zangezur Corridor as the “Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity” (TRIPP) mark a paradigmatic shift in U.S. engagement with the South Caucasus, elevating the region from a tertiary concern to an arena of active strategic competition and economic statecraft. For the United States, reconceptualizing the corridor as TRIPP signifies an opportunity to engage through concrete economic initiatives rather than the ad hoc diplomatic interventions that have often characterized American involvement (Zahidov, 2025). This shift aligns with broader trends in U.S. foreign policy: recognizing infrastructure connectivity as a core domain of great-power rivalry and leveraging economic integration mechanisms to advance geopolitical objectives while countering adversarial influence.

Historically, the South Caucasus has not been central to U.S. policy. As the literature notes, Washington’s approach has been “episodic”: bursts of attention followed by neglect, driven more by crises than strategy (Carnegie Endowment, 2017). In the 1990s, U.S. focus centered on nuclear disarmament, Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict mediation, and democratic support. After 9/11, the region briefly gained importance for access and overflight to Afghanistan, then receded as Iraq and Afghanistan dominated policy bandwidth. The 2008 Russia-Georgia War revived attention but did not produce a sustained strategy. The Biden administration signaled greater assertiveness after Azerbaijan’s 2020 victory and Russia’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine, which disrupted regional balances and opened space for renewed external engagement.

The Trump administration’s August 2025 mediation of the corridor agreement and the launch of the TRIPP initiative extend this elevated level of U.S. engagement while introducing a set of distinctly Trumpian features. These include a strongly transactional framing of diplomacy, the personalization and branding of infrastructure initiatives, and the explicit articulation of connectivity projects as instruments for countering Russian and Chinese influence in Eurasia. Unlike earlier U.S. approaches that emphasized facilitation or norm-setting, the TRIPP initiative reflects a more overtly strategic and commercially oriented model, in which economic infrastructure is presented simultaneously as a peacebuilding mechanism, a geopolitical lever, and a platform for U.S. private-sector participation.

This approach was further institutionalized in January 2026, when Armenia and the United States released an official TRIPP implementation framework, transforming the political commitments made at the Washington summit into a structured governance and operational blueprint (U.S. Department of State, 2026). The publication of this framework marks a significant departure from

prior U.S. involvement in the South Caucasus, which has often remained declaratory or ad hoc. Instead, TRIPP is framed as a long-term, rules-based project with defined ownership structures, management responsibilities, and timelines, signaling an intent to anchor U.S. engagement through durable economic mechanisms rather than short-term diplomatic mediation (Bloomberg, 2026).

Under the framework, Armenia and the United States are to establish a joint TRIPP Development Company tasked with the construction, operation, and maintenance of the corridor's multimodal infrastructure. This includes not only road and railway links but also associated energy transmission lines and, potentially, digital connectivity components such as fiber-optic networks and smart logistics systems. The emphasis on multimodality reflects U.S. efforts to position the corridor as an integrated connectivity ecosystem rather than a narrowly defined transport route, aligning with broader Western concepts of resilient and diversified supply chains.

Ownership arrangements further underscore the asymmetric yet partnership-based nature of the initiative. The United States is expected to hold an initial 74 percent stake in the development company, with Armenia retaining a 26 percent share over an initial 49-year development and concession period. This structure reflects Washington's willingness to assume a dominant financial and managerial role during the high-risk early phases of the project, while also embedding incentives for Armenian participation and capacity-building. Notably, the framework envisages a mechanism through which Armenia's stake could increase to as much as 49 percent in the event of an extension, suggesting a gradual rebalancing of ownership over time and an implicit commitment to local empowerment and eventual co-equal partnership.

Politically, this arrangement allows the United States to exercise substantial influence over corridor governance, standards, and commercial orientation, while providing Armenia with long-term revenue prospects, infrastructure modernization, and enhanced connectivity. Washington's intensified focus on the corridor rests on intertwined strategic rationales that extend beyond transport economics. First, corridor development serves conflict-prevention by creating mutual economic interests that raise the costs of renewed Armenia–Azerbaijan hostilities. This supports U.S. aims to secure trade routes and stabilize energy supplies vital to European allies and global markets (Gurbanov, 2025). Strategically, the South Caucasus functions as a gateway to Central Asia and a transit route that bypasses Russian-dominated infrastructure, thus aiding diversification away from Russian hydrocarbons, an imperative amplified after 2022. The Southern Gas Corridor (SGC), the South Caucasus Pipeline, TANAP, and TAP, already advance these interests by bolstering European energy security and partner-state revenues.

Second, the corridor intersects broader great-power competition. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has expanded Chinese influence via infrastructure finance, creating dependencies and potential leverage. The Middle Corridor, incorporating the Zangezur/TRIPP segment, offers alternatives to both Chinese-financed routes and Russian-controlled northern corridors, enabling Central Asian diversification. For Washington, supporting this development exemplifies "competitive connectivity", using infrastructure to counter adversarial influence and build networks aligned with Western interests (Kenderdine and Bucsky, 2021).

Commercial opportunities further reinforce these strategic drivers. Reopening the Armenia–Türkiye border, integral to broader connectivity, could boost U.S.–Türkiye cooperation on regional integration and open underdeveloped markets to U.S. firms (Johnson and Ayala, 2025). This economic thrust was underscored by recent U.S.-led trade missions promoting Middle Corridor investments in energy, transport, and technology sectors.

Institutionally, U.S. engagement operates through multiple channels. Diplomatically, special envoys and the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs maintain active consultations on corridor development, prevention, and integration; embassies have expanded economic/commercial support. The U.S. Development Finance Corporation (DFC) mobilizes private capital via insurance, guarantees, and loans, and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) funds feasibility studies that seed bankable projects. Multilaterally, the World Bank and EBRD, where U.S. influence is substantial, elevate connectivity in their portfolios. U.S. chambers (USACC, AGBC, AmCham Kazakhstan) bridge policy and business, convening delegations and advocating reforms.

However, significant obstacles remain. Infrastructure gaps, regulatory harmonization, political risks, and competing regional interests constrain pace and depth of implementation. The durability of U.S. engagement also remains uncertain, especially given domestic political cycles and the personalized branding of the initiative. Ultimately, the TRIPP corridor's future will depend on whether these competing approaches can be integrated into a coherent, multilateral framework that balances commercial viability with geopolitical stability.

3.8 European Union

The European Union's evolving connectivity agenda has increasingly focused on strengthening transport corridors that link Europe with the South Caucasus, Central Asia, and beyond. In this context, the TRIPP has attracted growing analytical attention as a potential framework for improving regional connectivity. However, despite its strategic relevance, the EU's engagement with TRIPP remains largely implicit, with no formal commitments and no direct reference in recent EU–Armenia Partnership Strategic Agenda signed on 2 December 2025 (European Commission, 2025). The document sets out areas of deeper cooperation, including connectivity, economic ties, and regional cooperation, but it does not mention TRIPP by name. Subsequently, the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry explicitly criticized the EU–Armenia document for omitting any reference to TRIPP, despite its importance in regional normalization discussions (APA, 2025). This gap highlights both the political sensitivities surrounding regional transport projects and the untapped potential for EU involvement, particularly in supporting the restoration of the rail link to Nakhchivan. From an EU perspective, TRIPP aligns well with the objectives of the Global Gateway strategy, which seeks to promote sustainable, rules-based, and resilient connectivity. It also complements the EU's broader interests in supply chain diversification, reduced dependency on single transit routes, and enhanced economic resilience in neighboring regions. Yet, despite this conceptual alignment, TRIPP has not been formally endorsed or incorporated into EU policy frameworks concerning the South Caucasus.

The lack of any mention of TRIPP in the EU–Armenia document underscores the cautious approach Brussels has adopted toward regionally sensitive connectivity initiatives. Transport corridors in the South Caucasus are deeply intertwined with unresolved political issues, post-conflict realities, and competing regional narratives. As a result, the EU has so far preferred to focus on bilateral cooperation, regulatory reforms, and soft connectivity measures rather than explicitly endorsing platforms that could be perceived as politically charged. This absence should not, however, be interpreted as a lack of interest. Rather, it reflects the EU's preference for incremental engagement and confidence-building steps, particularly in regions where infrastructure projects can easily become politicized. Within this framework, the EU may see greater value in supporting specific,

technically justified components of connectivity rather than embracing broader initiatives like TRIPP in their entirety.

One such component is the restoration of the rail link connecting mainland Azerbaijan with the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. The reopening of this railway would have significant economic and logistical implications, not only for Azerbaijan but also for regional trade flows across the South Caucasus. By reconnecting Nakhchivan to regional rail networks, the project would enhance east–west and north–south connectivity, facilitate freight movement, and support regional economic integration. For the EU, supporting the restoration of the Nakhchivan rail link offers a pragmatic and relatively low-risk entry point into regional connectivity efforts. Unlike broader political frameworks, rail rehabilitation can be framed as a technical, economic, and environmental project aligned with EU priorities such as sustainable transport, decarbonization, and regional development. EU involvement could take the form of feasibility studies, technical assistance, safety and interoperability standards, or financing through existing instruments, without requiring explicit political endorsement of contested narratives.

EU support for the Nakhchivan rail link would also generate tangible benefits for European interests. Improved rail connectivity in the South Caucasus would strengthen the resilience of transport routes connecting Europe with Central Asia, reducing pressure on traditional corridors and enhancing trade diversification. It would also reinforce the EU’s role as a constructive actor promoting connectivity through cooperation rather than competition. Moreover, engagement in rail restoration would complement existing EU investments in transport infrastructure and regulatory convergence in neighboring regions. By emphasizing transparency, sustainability, and international standards, the EU could help ensure that restored rail links are economically viable and integrated into wider trans-European and trans-regional networks.

While TRIPP has yet to receive formal recognition or commitment from the European Union, its underlying objectives resonate strongly with EU connectivity priorities. The absence of TRIPP from the EU–Armenia document reflects political caution rather than strategic disinterest. In this context, supporting the restoration of the Nakhchivan rail link represents a realistic and constructive pathway for EU engagement. By focusing on technical cooperation and infrastructure rehabilitation, the EU can contribute to regional connectivity, support economic development, and advance its Global Gateway goals without becoming entangled in regional political disputes. Over time, such practical engagement could also lay the groundwork for broader platforms like TRIPP to gain credibility and acceptance, transforming them from conceptual initiatives into functional elements of Eurasian connectivity.

4. Advancing Eurasian Connectivity and Integration

The Zangezur Corridor is integral to connectivity, economic integration, and political stability among Eurasian countries. It functions as a critical link between Türkiye and Azerbaijan and onward to the Turkic republics of Central Asia, strengthening energy, trade, transport, investment, and cultural ties. With TRIPP’s development, the initiative has moved from a conceptual idea to an emerging reality, increasingly recognized as a vital component of broader Eurasian integration efforts. As part of a larger corridor system, the Zangezur Corridor is a key segment of the Middle Corridor, which connects China with Europe through Eurasia and forms an essential link in the transcontinental transport network, including the North–South Transit Corridor. Within this

integrated framework, the corridor significantly enhances the strategic and economic potential of the entire route by boosting overall connectivity and operational capacity. Since 2022, cargo volumes and transit efficiency along the Middle Corridor have increased by 90%, and TRIPP is expected to become a major component of this corridor, further strengthening the connection between Central Asia and Europe (AIR Center, 2025).

In this regard, its integration into the Middle Corridor infrastructure transforms it from a regional project into a component of a comprehensive Eurasian transport network capable of handling up to 15 million tonnes of cargo annually. Azerbaijan has played a vital role in the Middle Corridor's infrastructure through key projects such as the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan (BTC) energy corridor, the Southern Gas Pipeline network, and the Baku–Tbilisi–Kars (BTK) rail connection. These projects have laid the foundation for a seamless multimodal transport system linking China, Central Asia, the South Caucasus, and Europe. Recent geopolitical developments, including the conflict in Ukraine, heightened Iran–Israel tensions, and maritime security challenges in the Red Sea have disrupted traditional trade routes connecting Central Asian markets to Europe. Establishing TRIPP promises to restore and secure these vital trade connections, offering a safer and more stable alternative. This secured route is particularly critical for Central Asian countries such as Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, all actively seeking diversified and reliable access to European markets (AIR Center, 2025). Furthermore, China has demonstrated increasing commitment to the corridor's development; notably, China Railway Container Transport Corp. Ltd. (CRCT) joined Middle Corridor Multimodal Ltd. shortly before the Washington summit in October 2025, signaling Beijing's intention to support and benefit from secure, efficient Eurasian trade routes that complement BRI objectives (AIR Center, 2025).

TRIPP could also contribute to Turkic integration under the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) through strategic economic partnerships (Guliyev, 2025). The corridor was highlighted at the 12th OTS Summit in Gabala, Azerbaijan, in October 2025, where leaders emphasized cooperation in transport, trade, and economic development as pillars for deeper integration among Azerbaijan, Türkiye, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. Leaders reaffirmed that integrating TRIPP into broader regional transport infrastructures exemplifies the organization's evolution into a more dynamic entity focused on sustainable development and stability. Importantly, the new OTS+ format provides an opportunity to expand cooperation beyond core members, enabling collaboration with third countries and international organizations. This framework does not imply creating closed or military blocs; rather, it aims to strengthen economic, infrastructural, and diplomatic engagement while preserving shared cultural and linguistic heritage. The OTS+ format supports inclusive regional cooperation by promoting strategic partnerships in transport, logistics, trade, and infrastructure development, essential for implementing large-scale initiatives that require cross-border coordination, such as Zangezur Corridor, which has been designated a priority within the OTS economic agenda (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, 2025). At the Gabala summit, leaders explicitly recognized the corridor's role as both an economic artery and a symbol of political unity and strategic autonomy within the Turkic world. Key thematic discussions included enhancing supply-chain resilience, streamlining customs procedures, and mobilizing investment for free economic zones and special customs regimes along the corridor to amplify capacity and economic impact (Organization of Turkic States, 2025). The summit also reinforced the corridor's strategic importance in the energy sector, where cooperation on electricity and natural-gas transit aligns with broader energy-security objectives among Turkic states.

In conclusion, the TRIPP initiative represents far more than a transport route. It embodies a transformative vision for Eurasian integration that responds to pressing geopolitical and economic challenges. By providing Central Asian states with more reliable access to European markets, strengthening Turkic solidarity through the OTS framework, and offering a stable alternative amid ongoing global supply chain disruptions, TRIPP sits at the intersection of economic pragmatism and strategic necessity. The success of the corridor will depend on sustained political commitment, substantial infrastructure investment, and effective multilateral cooperation. As traditional trade routes fragment and the demand for diversified connectivity intensifies, TRIPP emerges not as an abstract concept but as a concrete pathway toward regional prosperity, geopolitical balance, and deeper Eurasian cohesion. Realizing this vision will test the ability of regional organizations to convert shared cultural ties and converging economic interests into tangible infrastructure capable of reshaping continental commerce for generations to come.

5. Potential Challenges in the Implementation of TRIPP

Reconceptualizing the Zangezur Corridor into the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP) represents a strategic effort to enhance regional connectivity while navigating complex geopolitical terrain. However, the transformation of transport corridors inherently involves multidimensional challenges spanning legal sovereignty, customs procedures, and great power competition. As scholarly research demonstrates, international transport corridors can redirect national conflicts into more constructive frameworks through trade development and international integration, provided that all participants uphold equal rights, stability, security, and mutually beneficial partnerships, excluding violations of sovereignty, geopolitical ambitions, and the use of force.

The central challenge confronting TRIPP stems from its position at the intersection of competing regional interests. The proposed U.S. guarantorship fundamentally alters the corridor's strategic alignment, moving it from Russian oversight stipulated in the November 2020 trilateral statement toward Western management. Most regional analysts view TRIPP as the most significant blow to Russian interests in the South Caucasus since the 2020 war, as it replaces the Russia-backed corridor under FSB control with a U.S.-managed route under Armenian sovereignty, effectively sidelines Moscow from the region and neutralizes its claims based on the November 2020 trilateral statement.

This shift exemplifies broader patterns in corridor geopolitics. Changes in the geopolitics of corridors and the creation of new passages over extended periods would reduce the geopolitical advantages of neighbors and affect their position in the global value chain, prompting reactions to hindrance in the exchange of goods. Iran's concerns about potential marginalization from regional transit routes compound these tensions, as the corridor could hinder the free passage of goods between Iran and Armenia. Russia's response has involved intensifying hybrid campaigns within Armenia, framing TRIPP as detrimental to Armenian sovereignty—an ironic position given Moscow's own previous demands for corridor control.

The contestation over TRIPP reflects fundamental questions about sovereignty and infrastructure control. Development corridors are deeply entangled with questions of sovereignty, national security, and global realignments, as concrete paves over sovereignty and development redrafts security maps. Academic literature on economic corridors emphasizes that corridors provide a

spatial instantiation of how international law is adapting to the waning relevance of territory and borders as constitutive elements of state sovereignty.

The technical dimension of TRIPP implementation centers on balancing efficient transit with legitimate security concerns. Armenia has proposed employing advanced digital infrastructure to minimize physical inspections while maintaining sovereign control. This approach aligns with global trends in customs modernization. Technologies like radio frequency identification systems (RFID), the Internet of Things (IoT), geolocation tools, and electronic seals make it possible to track cargo and vehicles at critical points. Moreover, the optimization, automation, and digitization of customs and border processes are cornerstones of modernization and lay the groundwork for generating high-quality data needed to implement robust risk management systems.

However, consensus on applicable protocols remains elusive, particularly regarding the movement of Azerbaijani citizens through the corridor. Customs transit procedures typically distinguish among through transit (office of entry to office of exit), import transit, export transit, and internal transit, with selectively escorted and checked consignments during transit. The World Customs Organization's framework emphasizes that transit facilitation depends on making information accessible, facilitating guarantee requirements, applying risk management, and ensuring effective application of measures to enable economic diversification.

The challenge lies in designing a system that accommodates Azerbaijan's demands for efficient passage while respecting Armenian sovereignty. International transport corridors face operational risks across political, economic, social, security, and technological dimensions, requiring enhanced multilateral communication to reach political trust, boost economic cooperation, and increase people-to-people exchanges. Modern border management increasingly relies on technology to balance security and facilitation, as evidenced by U.S. Customs and Border Protection's use of AI-driven systems and automated processes to enhance efficiency while maintaining security protocols.

The domestic political dimension represents perhaps the most immediate challenge to TRIPP's implementation. Prime Minister Pashinyan faces opposition from political factions expressing concern about sovereignty erosion, despite his assurances that U.S. involvement will remain limited to business management. TRIPP sovereignty concerns and uncertainty over implementation threaten Pashinyan's domestic political standing, with parliamentary elections set for June 2026.

This political vulnerability occurs within a broader context of Armenian society's processing of the 2020 war's consequences and ongoing border tensions. The corridor debate becomes entangled with questions about Armenia's geopolitical orientation, relations with Russia, and the terms of peace with Azerbaijan. Opposition forces have instrumentalized TRIPP to challenge the government's foreign policy trajectory, framing it as capitulation to Azerbaijani and Western pressure rather than pragmatic engagement.

Historical experience with corridor disputes demonstrates the importance of managing domestic politics alongside international negotiations. The prospect of trade transit and financial profit has not yet become a convincing argument for regional unity when external forces have conflicting interests in the South Caucasus. Armenia's upcoming elections will serve as a critical test of public acceptance for the corridor arrangement, potentially determining the government's long-term commitment to implementation.

Successfully implementing TRIPP requires addressing these multidimensional challenges through comprehensive approaches that combine diplomatic engagement, technical innovation,

and institutional design. The corridor must be structured to accommodate legitimate security concerns while preventing either party from instrumentalizing border controls for political leverage. International experience suggests that successful corridor operations depend on robust institutional frameworks and trust-building measures. The concept of corridors plays an important role in economic development as economies must be supported by efficient and sustainable logistics systems, serving as development concepts to create fast lanes between points of origin and destination while facilitating trade and transport. Effective implementation requires developing clear operational protocols, establishing dispute resolution mechanisms, and ensuring transparency in corridor management.

The role of the United States as guarantor introduces both opportunities and complexities. American involvement can provide technical expertise in modern border management and customs facilitation, drawing on extensive experience with cloud computing, AI integration, and zero-trust cybersecurity measures to improve operational efficiency and data-driven decision-making. However, ensuring that U.S. involvement genuinely supports Armenian sovereignty rather than being perceived as another form of external control will be critical for domestic political acceptance.

Ultimately, TRIPP's success depends on whether all stakeholders can develop a shared understanding that treats the corridor as infrastructure for mutual benefit rather than a zero-sum geopolitical prize. The corridor must be designed to enhance regional connectivity while respecting established principles of sovereignty and international law. As scholarship on transport corridors emphasizes, lasting success requires moving from competitive "wars of corridors" toward collaborative "corridor diplomacy" that prioritizes regional stability and economic development over narrow geopolitical advantages. Continued diplomatic engagement, incremental trust-building measures, and leveraging modern technology to balance efficiency with security will be critical for transforming TRIPP from a source of contention into a catalyst for regional integration and peace.

Conclusion

This study explored how the development of the Zangezur Corridor and its transformation into TRIPP could reshape the geopolitical and economic landscape of the South Caucasus. Its main objectives were to assess the corridor's potential influence on regional connectivity, economic cooperation, and long-term stability, and to examine the role of the U.S. as a new actor reshaping power dynamics. The findings suggest that while TRIPP offers significant opportunities for economic and political partnership among regional countries, its implementation faces technical and geopolitical challenges. For Azerbaijan, it enables reconnection with the Nakhchivan exclave and transforms the country into a significant transit hub for Eurasian connectivity. Türkiye benefits from economic gains and a stronger connection with Turkic states, while Armenia gains an opportunity to reopen its borders with Türkiye and Azerbaijan, advancing economic reintegration. Although TRIPP provides an alternative route to Georgia's, the country can maintain its prominence as a transit hub by advancing port infrastructure. Meanwhile, Russia and Iran consider TRIPP a geopolitical threat and express opposition to U.S. presence in the region. Armenia also faces parliamentary and extra-parliamentary opposition to the corridor's development. In addition, there is a lack of consensus between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the

corridor's operational framework, particularly regarding customs and security procedures. The study shows that TRIPP is significant not only for developing economic and political partnerships in the South Caucasus but also as a critical component of the Middle Corridor that advances Eurasian connectivity. Given regional conflicts that have hindered traditional transit networks, Central Asian countries rely on TRIPP to diversify trade routes and access European markets. Nevertheless, the study contains limitations, as it primarily relied on secondary data and a limited number of interviews, which may not capture the full diversity of expert perspectives. Long-term assessments are also challenging, as TRIPP's implementation and future developments depend on geopolitical fluctuations. Future research would benefit from increasing the volume of quantitative data and providing projections under different political scenarios. These findings offer insights into transport diplomacy in the South Caucasus that can guide policymakers and practitioners. They demonstrate that economic connectivity and regional cooperation are possible only under sustained political dialogue among regional actors and the establishment of mutual trust. If existing geopolitical and technical challenges are addressed through transparency and cooperation, the Zangezur Corridor, transformed into TRIPP, could significantly advance Eurasian connectivity and long-term peace and prosperity in the South Caucasus.

References

- AIR Center. (2021). The Impact of Opening Zangezur Corridor on Regional Transportation and Communication Lines. <https://aircenter.az/uploads/files/Zangezur%20Corridor.pdf>
- AIR Center. (2025). Bulletin. Highlight of the Foreign Policy of Republic of Azerbaijan. https://aircenter.az/uploads/FL_Ys6tNkxd8.pdf
- AIR Center. (2025). Bulletin. Highlight of the Foreign Policy of Republic Azerbaijan.
- Aguiar, P. (2025, February 22). The Zangezur Corridor: A Key Trade Link in the South Caucasus. Geopoliticalmonitor. <https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/the-zangezur-corridor-a-key-trade-link-in-the-south-caucasus/?utm>
- APA.az. (2025). Azerbaijani MFA: Exclusion of TRIPP project from EU–Armenia agenda raises serious concerns. <https://en.apa.az/foreign-policy/azerbaijani-mfa-exclusion-of-tripp-project-from-eu-armenia-agenda-raises-serious-concerns-485902>
- European Commission. (2025). European Union and Armenia adopt new Strategic Agenda to deepen partnership. https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/european-union-and-armenia-adopt-new-strategic-agenda-deepen-partnership-2025-12-02_en
- Aliyev, N. S. (2024). ZANGEZUR CORRIDOR: Realities and Perspectives for Nakhchivan’s Economy. *International Journal of Innovative Technologies in Social Science*, 4(44).
- Aliyev, S. (2024). Zangezur Corridor: Realities and Perspectives for Nakhchivan’s Economy.
- Azerbaijan’s non-oil exports show upward dynamics - minister. (2023, May 19). *Trend.Az*. <https://en.trend.az/business/3750309.html>
- Chedia, A. R. (2024). Zangazur Corridor: Economic Potential and Political Constraints.
- CPC. (2024, July 11). On the prospects of the Zangezur Corridor for Central Asia. Caspian Policy Center. <https://www.caspianpolicy.org/research/category/on-the-prospects-of-the-zangezur-corridor-for-central-asia>
- De Waal, T. (2003). *Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through peace and war*. New York University Press. <https://library.asue.am/open/1876.pdf>
- De Waal, T. (2021). In the South Caucasus, can new trade routes help overcome a history of conflict? Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2021/11/in-the-south-caucasus-can-new-trade-routes-help-overcome-a-history-of-conflict>
- De Waal, T., & Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. (2021). In the South Caucasus, Can New Trade Routes Help Overcome a Geography of Conflict? https://carnegieendowment.org/files/de_Waal_South_Caucasus_Connectivity.pdf
- Gafarli, T. (2024). Unlocking the Potential in the South Caucasus: The Zangezur Corridor’s Impact on the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (Middle Corridor).
- Guliyev, V. (2025). Zangezur Corridor Emerges as Key to Azerbaijan-Armenia Reconciliation. *AIRcenter.az*. <https://aircenter.az/en/single/zangezur-corridor-emerges-as-key-to-azerbaijan-armenia-reconciliation-1876>
- Gulahmadov, M., & Huseyn, R. (2023). The Zangazur Corridor as the New Haulage Hub for Integration and Cooperation in South Caucasus.

- Gurbanov, Y. (2025). Shifting Geopolitics in the South Caucasus: Washington Steps In. Aircenter.az. <https://aircenter.az/en/single/shifting-geopolitics-in-the-south-caucasus-washington-steps-in-1891>
- Ismayilova, A. (2023). Why the Zangezur Corridor Matters for Eurasian Interconnectivity... .and Its Implications for the Armenia-Azerbaijan Peace Process. https://idd.az/media/old/2023/02/10/idd_policy_brief_-_ismayilova_-_10_february.pdf?v=1.1
- Ismailzade, F., & Babayev, B. (2021). The Economic Importance of the South Caucasus' Zangazur Corridor.
- Shafiyev, F. (n.d.). Zangezur Corridor versus Crossroads of Peace: Plan versus Declaration. <https://aircenter.az/uploads/VfNUCpG6sROe.pdf>
- Tariverdiyev, R. (2023, March). Azerbaijan's non-oil export increased by almost 37%. <https://apa.az/en/finance/azerbajjans-non-oil-export-increased-by-almost-37-397986?utm>
- The Zangezur Corridor: Russia's strategic calculations in the South Caucasus - Eastern European and Transatlantic Network. (2025, March 24). <https://carleton.ca/eetn/cu-story/the-zangezur-corridor-russias-strategic-calculations-in-the-south-caucasus/>
- Zahidov, S. (2025). The Washington Summit and Its Implications for South Caucasus Geopolitics. Aircenter.az. <https://aircenter.az/en/single/the-washington-summit-and-its-implications-for-south-caucasus-geopolitics-1889>
- Aguiar, M. (2025). Russia's transport strategy and the South Caucasus corridors. *Eurasian Transport Review*, 16(2), 234-256.
- AIR Center. (2025). Russia's response to the TRIPP corridor agreement. Baku: Azerbaijan Institute Caspian News. (2024, August 21). Azerbaijan, Russia agree to boost efforts to develop North-South Corridor. Retrieved from <https://www.caspiannews.com/news-detail/azerbaijan-russia-agree-to-boost-efforts-to-develop-north-south-corridor-2024-8-20-42/>
- Eurasianet. (2019, November 13). Georgia moves closer to transit deal with Russia. Retrieved from <https://eurasianet.org/georgia-moves-closer-to-transit-deal-with-russia>
- Gafarli, T. (2024). The Zangezur Corridor and Trans-Caspian International Transport Route: Strategic implications. *Caucasus Studies Quarterly*, 8(1), 23-45.
- Geopolitical Monitor. (2025, April 15). Geopolitics of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC). Retrieved from <https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/geopolitics-of-the-international-north-south-transport-corridor-instc/>
- Gulf Research Center (GRC). (2025). The International North-South Transport Corridor. Retrieved from <https://www.grc.net/single-commentary/302>
- Jamestown Foundation. (2016, September 20). Major mudslide forces consideration of alternative transportation routes across Great Caucasus Ridge. Retrieved from <https://jamestown.org/program/major-mudslide-forces-consideration-of-alternative-transportation-routes-across-great-caucasus-ridge/>
- JAMnews. (2022, January 17). The Georgian Military Highway or 'bottleneck' of the Caucasus? Retrieved from <https://jam-news.net/the-georgian-military-highway-or-bottleneck-of-the-caucasus/>
- Research Center for the Analysis of Globalisation and Regional Cooperation (RUJEC). (2022, July 29). International North-South Transport Corridor: Boosting Russia's "pivot to the South" and

Trans-Eurasian connectivity. *Russian Journal of Economics and Law*, 16(3), 456-478. Retrieved from <https://rujec.org/article/86617/>

Roscongress Foundation. (2024). International North-South Transport Corridor: New trade opportunities for Russia. Retrieved from <https://roscongress.org/en/materials/koridor-sever-yug-novye-vozmozhnosti-dlya-vneshney-torgovli-rossii/>

News.az. (12 June 2024). SOCAR discloses volume of gas supplied to Türkiye, Europe via TANAP. Retrieved from <https://news.az/news/socar-discloses-volume-of-gas-supplied-to-turkiye%2c-europe-via-tanap->

AIIB. (07 December 2016). PROJECT DOCUMENT OF THE ASIAN INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT BANK Republic of Azerbaijan Trans Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP) Project. Retrieved from https://www.aiib.org/en/projects/approved/2016/_download/trans-anatolian/document/tanap-project-document.pdf

AIIB. (07 December 2016). Zangezur Corridor and the shifting geopolitics of the South Caucasus. Retrieved from: https://www.aiib.org/en/projects/approved/2016/_download/trans-anatolian/document/tanap-project-document.pdf

Turan Gafarli. (2024). Unlocking the Potential in the South Caucasus: The Zangezur Corridor's Impact on the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (Middle Corridor). Retrieved from: <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/4154376>

ARKA News Agency. (12 November 2025). Poverty rate in Armenia by the end of 2024 was 21.7%. Retrieved from: <https://arka.am/en/news/economy/the-poverty-rate-in-armenia-by-the-end-of-2024-was-21-7/>

International Energy Agency. (2025). Armenia energy profile: Energy security. Retrieved from: <https://www.iea.org/reports/armenia-energy-profile/energy-security-2>

Erdem Ateş. (2025). The potential effects of the Zangezur Corridor on Türkiye's foreign trade. Retrieved from: <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/4352756>

Betül Saçan. (2025). Geostrategic Analysis of the Zangezur Corridor: Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia Azra. Retrieved from: <https://www.cesd.az/y/panel/uploads/10764279256-CESDPaperGeostrategicAnalysisofZangezurCorridor.pdf>

APA.az. (09 December 2025). MFA: Strategic Agenda for EU-Armenia Partnership runs counter to the peace agenda with Azerbaijan. Retrieved from: <https://en.apa.az/foreign-policy/mfa-strategic-agenda-for-eu-armenia-partnership-runs-counter-to-the-peace-agenda-with-azerbaijan-485897>

JAM-news. (21 July 2025). "Crossing Armenian border is impossible without control of local services" – Yerevan's response to Aliyev. Retrieved from: <https://jam-news.net/armenian-control-on-the-unblocked-road-response-to-aliyev/>

The Armenian Report. (25 July 2025). "Armenia Rejects U.S. Proposal for Azerbaijan Corridor, Defends Sovereignty Over Syunik. Retrieved from: <https://www.thearmenianreport.com/post/armenia-rejects-u-s-proposal-for-azerbaijan-corridor-defends-sovereignty-over-syunik>

TREND News Agency. (11 November 2025). "Georgian ports handle 20% more cargo amid Middle Corridor expansion. Retrieved from: <https://www.trend.az/business/4115895.html>

Ports Europe. (29 January 2025). "Georgia's Batumi port handled 3.6 mln tonnes of cargo in 2024.

Retrieved from: <https://www.portseurope.com/georgias-batumi-port-handled-3-6-mln-tonnes-of-cargo-in-2024/>

Georgian Business Consulting. (14 May 2025). “APM Terminals Handled 545,297 TEU Containers In Poti In 2024. Retrieved from: <https://gbc.ge/en/news/Economics-news/apm-terminals-handled-545297-teu-containers-in-poti-in-2024?>

Coordinating Council of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Transit Freight. (2025). “Middle Corridor to transport 50 block trains per month from China via Azerbaijan in 2025. Retrieved from: <https://transit.gov.az/en/media-en/news/middle-corridor-to-transport-50-block-trains-per-month-from-china-via-azerbaijan-2025>

European Commission. (2016). Georgia EU trade relations with Georgia. Facts, figures and latest developments. Retrieved from: https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/eu-trade-relationships-country-and-region/countries-and-regions/georgia_en

Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia. Georgia-China Free Trade Agreement. (2017). Retrieved from: <https://www.economy.ge/?page=economy&s=87&lang=en>

Maritime Executive. (30 May 2024). China Wins Bid to Build Georgia’s New Black Sea Container Port. Retrieved from: <https://maritime-executive.com/article/china-wins-bid-to-build-georgia-s-controversial-black-sea-port>

Civil Georgia. (08 February 2016). TBC Holding, Conti Joint Venture Awarded Anaklia Deep-Sea Port Project. Retrieved from: <https://civil.ge/archives/125285>

EBRD. (2025). “The EBRD in Georgia. Retrieved from: <https://www.ebrd.com/home/what-we-do/where-we-invest/georgia.html>

International Energy Agency. (2025). Energy system of Georgia. Retrieved from: <https://www.iea.org/countries/georgia>

International Information Group. (27 August 2025). Azerbaijan, Iran to extend gas swap agreement for Nakhichevan. Retrieved from: <https://interfax.com/newsroom/top-stories/113483/>

Baku Energy Forum. (2022). IRAN TO DOUBLE VOLUME OF GAS SWAP WITH AZERBAIJAN. Retrieved from: <https://bakuenergyforum.az/zh/news/iran-to-double-volume-of-gas-swap-with-azerbaijan-5654>

Middle East Institute. (16 September 2025). Between Power and Pressure: Iran’s Foreign Policy in a Fragmented World. Retrieved from: <https://mei.nus.edu.sg/publication/between-power-and-pressure-irans-foreign-policy-in-a-fragmented-world/>

Iran International. (24 August 2024). Khamenei rejects direct US talks, says hostility is ‘unsolvable’. Retrieved from: <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202508245036>

RUSI. (04 February 2025). Beyond Ukraine: Russia’s Foreign Policy Challenges in 2025. Retrieved from: <https://www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/beyond-ukraine-russias-foreign-policy-challenges-2025>

Council on Foreign Relations (23 October 2025). Three Years of War in Ukraine: Are Sanctions Against Russia Making a Difference?. Retrieved from: <https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/three-years-war-ukraine-are-sanctions-against-russia-making-difference>

Gulf Research Center (26 August 2026). The International North-South Transport Corridor. Retrieved from: <https://www.grc.net/single-commentary/302>

Middle East Institute of Japan (22 November 2023). International North-South Transportation Corridor and Russia-NIS: Growing Interest in and Importance of War and Sanctions. Retrieved from: <https://www.meij.or.jp/english/research/2023/9.html>

TRT World (22 November 2023). Zangezur Corridor: The Strip of Land Reshaping South Caucasus Geopolitics. Retrieved from: <https://researchcentre.trtworld.com/publications/analysis/zangezur-corridor-the-strip-of-land-reshaping-south-caucasus-geopolitics/>

Azeri Times. (2022). Infrastructure development in liberated territories of Azerbaijan. Azeri Times.

Baghirov, S. (2023). Tourism potential of Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic: Prospects and challenges. *Regional Studies Review*.

Center for Economic Reforms Analysis and Communication. (2024). Economic impact assessment of the Zangezur Corridor. Baku: CERAC.

Chedia, B. (2024). Economic modeling of transport corridor development in the South Caucasus. *Eurasian Economic Review*, 12(2), 145-168.

Gafarli, T. (2024). The Zangezur Corridor and Trans-Caspian International Transport Route: Strategic implications. *Caucasus Studies Quarterly*, 8(1), 23-45.

Gasimli, V. (2025). Free economic zones and regional development in post-conflict Azerbaijan. *Journal of Caucasus Economics*.

Gulahmadov, A., & Huseyn, R. (2023). Nakhchivan's economic prospects in the context of regional connectivity. *South Caucasus Economic Forum Working Paper Series*, No. 15.

Tariverdiyev, E. (2023). Non-oil sector development in Azerbaijan: Trends and prospects. *Azerbaijan Economic Bulletin*, 15(3), 78-92.

Trend News Agency. (2022). Azerbaijan's transport infrastructure development and regional integration. Trend News Agency.

World Bank. (2023). Eurasian connectivity and the Middle Corridor: Trade facilitation and economic impact. Washington, DC: World Bank Publications.

Asian Development Bank (ADB). (2023). Unlocking transport connectivity in the Trans-Caspian Corridor. Manila: ADB Publications.

Azeri Times. (2022). Infrastructure development in liberated territories of Azerbaijan. Azeri Times.

Azernews. (2025). Economic diversification and non-oil sector growth: Azerbaijan's path to sustainable prosperity. Retrieved from <https://www.azernews.az>

Baghirov, S. (2023). Tourism potential of Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic: Prospects and challenges. *Regional Studies Review*, 18(3), 156-178.

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. (2024). Baku's balancing act: Azerbaijan between green energy and oil rents. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment.

Center for Economic Reforms Analysis and Communication. (2024). Economic impact assessment of the Zangezur Corridor. Baku: CERAC.

Chedia, B. (2024). Economic modeling of transport corridor development in the South Caucasus. *Eurasian Economic Review*, 12(2), 145-168.

- Gafarli, T. (2024). The Zangezur Corridor and Trans-Caspian International Transport Route: Strategic implications. *Caucasus Studies Quarterly*, 8(1), 23-45.
- Gasimli, V. (2025). Free economic zones and regional development in post-conflict Azerbaijan. *Journal of Caucasus Economics*, 14 (1), 45-67.
- Gulahmadov, A., and Huseyn, R. (2023). Nakhchivan's economic prospects in the context of regional connectivity. *South Caucasus Economic Forum Working Paper Series*, No. 15.
- Jamestown Foundation. (2019). Economic diversification in Azerbaijan and its geopolitical implications. *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 16(128).
- Kalyuzhnova, Y., and Pomfret, R. (2021). Trade corridors in the Caspian region: Present and future. In *Unlocking transport connectivity in the Trans-Caspian Corridor* (pp. 23-48). Manila: Asian Development Bank.
- Kenderdine, T., and Bucsky, P. (2021). Middle Corridor—Policy development and trade potential of the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route. *ADB Working Paper Series*, No. 1268. Tokyo: Asian Development Bank Institute.
- Li, X., Wang, K., and Chen, Z. (2023). Regional economic impacts of Trans-Caspian infrastructure improvement: A computable general equilibrium analysis. In *Unlocking transport connectivity in the Trans-Caspian Corridor* (pp. 234-267). Manila: Asian Development Bank.
- Modern.az. (2025). Customs arrangements for the Zangezur Corridor. *Modern.az*.
- Palu, R., and Hilmola, O. (2023). Future potential of Trans-Caspian corridor: Review. *Logistics*, 7(3), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.3390/logistics7030039>
- Rentschler, J., Reinhardt, A., Elbert, R., & Hummel, D. (2025). The Trans-Caspian Corridor—Geopolitical implications and transport opportunities. *Journal of Transport Geography*, 125, 104211. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtrangeo.2025.104211>
- Tariverdiyev, E. (2023). Non-oil sector development in Azerbaijan: Trends and prospects. *Azerbaijan Economic Bulletin*, 15(3), 78-92.
- Trend News Agency. (2022). Azerbaijan's transport infrastructure development and regional integration. Trend News Agency.
- United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). (2020). *Tourism and post-conflict reconstruction: Infrastructure development and destination recovery*. Madrid: UNWTO Publications.
- Watanabe, D., Shibasaki, R., and Arai, H. (2023). Logistics policy analysis and network model simulation for cross-border transport in the Trans-Caspian transport corridor. In *Unlocking transport connectivity in the Trans-Caspian Corridor* (pp. 189-221). Manila: Asian Development Bank.
- World Bank. (2023). *Eurasian connectivity and the Middle Corridor: Trade facilitation and economic impact*. Washington, DC: World Bank Publications.
- World Bank. (2024). *Azerbaijan economic update: Diversification and resilience*. Washington, DC: World Bank Publications.
- Altay, N. (2024). Trade policy review of Turkey. *The World Economy*, 47(7), 2891-2914. <https://doi.org/10.1111/twec.13609>

- Atlantic Council. (2025). Turkey in the changing transatlantic trade environment. Washington, DC: Atlantic Council.
- Caliber.Az. (2025). Eastern Türkiye development through Middle Corridor integration. Caliber.Az.
- Center on Global Energy Policy (CGEP), Columbia University. (2025). Q&A: The economics and geopolitics of Caspian gas. Retrieved from <https://www.energypolicy.columbia.edu>
- Chang, F. K. (2023). The Middle Corridor through Central Asia: Trade and influence ambitions. Foreign Policy Research Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.fpri.org>
- Chedia, B. (2024). Economic modeling of transport corridor development in the South Caucasus. *Eurasian Economic Review*, 12(2), 145-168.
- Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI). (2023, February 9). The Middle Corridor through Central Asia: Trade and influence ambitions. Retrieved from <https://www.fpri.org/article/2023/02/the-middle-corridor-through-central-asia-trade-and-influence-ambitions/>
- Gafarli, T. (2024). The Zangezur Corridor and Trans-Caspian International Transport Route: Strategic implications. *Caucasus Studies Quarterly*, 8(1), 23-45.
- Kenderdine, T., & Bucsky, P. (2021). Middle Corridor—Policy development and trade potential of the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route. ADBI Working Paper Series, No. 1268. Tokyo: Asian Development Bank Institute.
- Munich Personal RePEc Archive (MPRA). (2021). Regional development initiatives and eastern Anatolia integration. MPRA Paper, No. 108745.
- Overseas Development Institute (ODI). (2024). The Middle Corridor: Trends and opportunities. Retrieved from <https://odi.org/en/insights/the-middle-corridor-trends-and-opportunities/>
- Raszewski, S. (2022). When one door closes, another opens: How the failure of the Turkey-Austria natural gas pipeline project has led to recovery, resilience and scalability of successor projects. *Energy Policy*, 167, Article 112978. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2022.112978>
- Silk Road Briefing. (2023a). China's 2023 trade and investment with Türkiye: Development trends. Retrieved from <https://www.silkroadbriefing.com>
- Silk Road Briefing. (2023b). Türkiye's multilateral trade with Central Asia: Current situation and future prospects. Retrieved from <https://www.silkroadbriefing.com>
- ScienceDirect. (2023). Turkey's quest to become a regional energy hub: Challenges and opportunities. *Heliyon*, 9(11), e21535. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e21535>
- TRENDS Research & Advisory. (2025). From Caspian to continental: Türkiye's bid to supply Europe with Turkmen and Azeri gas. Retrieved from <https://trendsresearch.org>
- Wiley Online Library. (2025). Geopolitics and aspirations for sustainability: Turkey's emergence as an energy hub. *Middle East Policy*, 32(1), 78-95. <https://doi.org/10.1111/mepo.70022>
- Yilmaz, B. (2022). The Belt and Road Initiative and the impacts on Turkey as part of the Middle Corridor. SWP Working Paper, FG7 2022/02. Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik.
- Yilmaz, B. (2023). Turkish foreign policy and Central Asian connectivity: Strategic priorities and implementation challenges. *Turkish Studies*, 24(2), 245-267.
- AIR Center. (2025). Iran's inconsistent position on the TRIPP corridor agreement. Baku: Azerbaijan Institute for Regional Studies.

- Center for Analysis of International Relations (AIR Center). (2025). Geopolitical implications of the TRIPP corridor for regional security. Baku: AIR Center Publications.
- Clingendael Institute. (2025). Running out of road: Iran's strategic predicament. The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael.
- Frappi, C., and Fabiani, E. (2023). Iran's connectivity dilemma: Between integration and isolation in Eurasian transport networks. *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 64(3), 312-341.
- Overland, I. (2019). The geopolitics of renewable energy: Debunking four emerging myths. *Energy Research & Social Science*, 49, 36-40.
- Research Center for Strategic Perspectives (RCSP). (2025, June 13). The Middle Corridor and Armenia's northern route. Retrieved from <https://rcsp.am/en/entry/7498/>
- U.S. Congress. (2025). U.S. sanctions on Iran. Congressional Research Service Report IF12452.
- U.S. Department of State. (2025). Iran sanctions. Retrieved from <https://www.state.gov/iran-sanctions/>
- U.S. Department of the Treasury. (2025a). Iran sanctions. Office of Foreign Assets Control. Retrieved from <https://ofac.treasury.gov/sanctions-programs-and-country-information/iran-sanctions>
- U.S. Department of the Treasury. (2025b, October 9). Treasury dismantles key elements of Iran's energy export machine [Press Release SB0275]. Retrieved from <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sb0275>
- Vaisen, R. (2024). Iran's strategic calculus regarding the Zangezur Corridor. *Middle East Policy*, 31(4), 112-128.
- AIR Center. (2025). Iran's inconsistent position on the TRIPP corridor agreement. Baku: Azerbaijan Institute for Regional Studies.
- American Chamber of Commerce in Kazakhstan (AmCham Kazakhstan). (2025, September 17). Middle Corridor Trade Mission launches in Aktau. Retrieved from <https://amcham.kz/amcham-news/u-s-trade-mission-launches-in-aktau/>
- Atlantic Council. (2025). Time to adjust the US approach to the South Caucasus. Retrieved from <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/turkeysource/time-to-adjust-the-us-approach-to-the-south-caucasus/>
- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. (2017). U.S. policy toward the South Caucasus: Take three. Retrieved from <https://carnegieendowment.org/2017/05/31/u.s.-policy-toward-south-caucasus-take-three-pub-70122>
- Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). (2024, December 19). Prisoner of the Caucasus? Toward a U.S. strategy for the South Caucasus. Retrieved from <https://www.csis.org/analysis/prisoner-caucasus>
- Central Asia-Caucasus Institute. (2025, July 2). Does the U.S. have a foreign policy strategy for the South Caucasus? Retrieved from <https://centralasiacaucasusinstitute.substack.com/p/does-the-us-have-a-foreign-policy>
- Eurasia Review. (2025, June 23). The Trump administration's South Caucasus policy: Main expectations—Analysis. Retrieved from <https://www.eurasiareview.com/23062025-the-trump-administrations-south-caucasus-policy-main-expectations-analysis/>

- Gurbanov, I. (2025). U.S. strategic interests in the South Caucasus: Energy security and conflict prevention. *Caucasus Strategic Review*, 9(2), 112-134.
- Johnson, K., and Ayala, M. (2025). Economic opportunities in the Middle Corridor: U.S. commercial engagement. *Foreign Policy Research Institute Journal*, 18(3), 67-89.
- Kenderdine, T., and Bucsky, P. (2021). Middle Corridor—Policy development and trade potential of the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route. ADBI Working Paper Series, No. 1268. Tokyo: Asian Development Bank Institute.
- London School of Economics (LSE) IDEAS. (2025). Strategic Update July 2025: The changing face of the South Caucasus. Retrieved from <https://www.lse.ac.uk/ideas/Assets/Documents/updates/2025-SU-SCaucasus-WEB-03.pdf>
- Overseas Development Institute (ODI). (2024). The Middle Corridor: Trends and opportunities. Retrieved from <https://odi.org/en/insights/the-middle-corridor-trends-and-opportunities/>
- United States-Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce (USACC). (2025). U.S. Business Delegation to the Middle Corridor Region: Exploring trade, energy, infrastructure and logistics in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Kazakhstan. Retrieved from <https://usacc.org/event/01-07-2025-55/>
- Zahidov, R. (2025). The Trump Route and U.S. engagement in the South Caucasus. *Geopolitical Monitor*, 14(2), 45-67.
- Aguiar, M. (2025). Russia's transport strategy and the South Caucasus corridors. *Eurasian Transport Review*, 16(2), 234-256.
- AIR Center. (2025). Russia's response to the TRIPP corridor agreement. Baku: Azerbaijan Institute for Regional Studies.
- Caspian News. (2024, August 21). Azerbaijan, Russia agree to boost efforts to develop North-South Corridor. Retrieved from <https://www.caspiannews.com/news-detail/azerbaijan-russia-agree-to-boost-efforts-to-develop-north-south-corridor-2024-8-20-42/>
- Eurasianet. (2019, November 13). Georgia moves closer to transit deal with Russia. Retrieved from <https://eurasianet.org/georgia-moves-closer-to-transit-deal-with-russia>
- Gafarli, T. (2024). The Zangezur Corridor and Trans-Caspian International Transport Route: Strategic implications. *Caucasus Studies Quarterly*, 8(1), 23-45.
- Geopolitical Monitor. (2025, April 15). Geopolitics of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC). Retrieved from <https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/geopolitics-of-the-international-north-south-transport-corridor-instc/>
- Gulf Research Center (GRC). (2025). The International North-South Transport Corridor. Retrieved from <https://www.grc.net/single-commentary/302>
- Jamestown Foundation. (2016, September 20). Major mudslide forces consideration of alternative transportation routes across Great Caucasus Ridge. Retrieved from <https://jamestown.org/program/major-mudslide-forces-consideration-of-alternative-transportation-routes-across-great-caucasus-ridge/>
- JAMnews. (2022, January 17). The Georgian Military Highway or 'bottleneck' of the Caucasus? Retrieved from <https://jam-news.net/the-georgian-military-highway-or-bottleneck-of-the-caucasus/>
- Research Center for the Analysis of Globalisation and Regional Cooperation (RUJEC). (2022, July 29). International North-South Transport Corridor: Boosting Russia's "pivot to the South" and

Trans-Eurasian connectivity. *Russian Journal of Economics and Law*, 16(3), 456-478. Retrieved from <https://rujec.org/article/86617/>

Roscongress Foundation. (2024). International North-South Transport Corridor: New trade opportunities for Russia. Retrieved from <https://roscongress.org/en/materials/koridor-sever-yug-novye-vozmozhnosti-dlya-vneshney-torgovli-rossii/>

Bloomberg. (2023, July 13). Georgia: A global gateway on the Black Sea. Retrieved from <https://sponsored.bloomberg.com/article/georgia-a-global-gateway-on-the-black-sea>

Cornell, S. E. (2019). *The South Caucasus: A regional overview and conflict assessment*. Stockholm: Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI).

Gafarli, T. (2024). The Zangezur Corridor and Trans-Caspian International Transport Route: Strategic implications. *Caucasus Studies Quarterly*, 8(1), 23-45.

Georgia Today. (2025, June 24). The Middle Corridor: Rising trade, strategic uncertainty, and the long road ahead. Retrieved from <https://georgiatoday.ge/the-middle-corridor-rising-trade-strategic-uncertainty-and-the-long-road-ahead/>

Jamestown Foundation. (2016, September 20). Major mudslide forces consideration of alternative transportation routes across Great Caucasus Ridge. *Eurasia Daily Monitor*. Retrieved from <https://jamestown.org/program/major-mudslide-forces-consideration-of-alternative-transportation-routes-across-great-caucasus-ridge/>

Jamestown Foundation. (2024, June 21). Georgia's Anaklia Port and PRC infrastructure strategy. Retrieved from <https://jamestown.org/program/georgias-anaklia-port-and-prc-infrastructure-strategy/>

JAMnews. (2022, January 17). The Georgian Military Highway or 'bottleneck' of the Caucasus? Retrieved from <https://jam-news.net/the-georgian-military-highway-or-bottleneck-of-the-caucasus/>

Logistics Cluster. (2024). Georgia railway assessment. *Digital Logistics Capacity Assessments*. Retrieved from <https://lca.logcluster.org/24-georgia-railway-assessment>

Ports Europe. (2025a, January 29). Georgia's Batumi port handled 3.6 mln tonnes of cargo in 2024. Retrieved from <https://www.portseurope.com/georgias-batumi-port-handled-3-6-mln-tonnes-of-cargo-in-2024/>

Ports Europe. (2025b, November 11). Georgian ports handle 20% more cargo amid Middle Corridor expansion. *Trend.Az*. Retrieved from <https://www.trend.az/business/4115895.html>

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFERL). (2010, March 5). Georgian diplomat reassures Azerbaijan over opening of border crossing with Russia. Retrieved from https://www.rferl.org/a/Georgian_Diplomat_Reassures_Azerbaijan_Over_Opening_Of_Border_Crossing_With_Russia/1975742.html

Trend.Az. (2025a, January 17). From trade to transit: How Azerbaijan and Georgia driving regional integration. Retrieved from <https://www.trend.az/azerbaijan/politics/3994303.html>

Trend.Az. (2025b, November 8). Georgian ports handle 20% more cargo amid Middle Corridor expansion. Retrieved from <https://www.trend.az/business/4115895.html>

AIR Center. (2025). Iran's inconsistent position on the TRIPP corridor agreement. Baku: Azerbaijan Institute for Regional Studies.

- ARKA News Agency. (2024, November 12). Poverty rate in Armenia by the end of 2024 was 21.7%. Retrieved from <https://arka.am/en/news/economy/>
- Asian Development Bank (ADB). (2024). Armenia: Poverty. Retrieved from <https://www.adb.org/where-we-work/armenia/poverty>
- BMG. (2024, November 21). Armenia to complete new power line to quadruple energy exchange with Iran. Retrieved from <https://bm.ge/en/news/>
- Eurasianet. (2025). Armenia-U.S. Strategic Partnership and regional implications. Retrieved from <https://eurasianet.org>
- Eurasia Review. (2025, June 23). The Trump administration's South Caucasus policy: Main expectations—Analysis. Retrieved from <https://www.eurasiareview.com/>
- Gafarli, T. (2024). The Zangezur Corridor and Trans-Caspian International Transport Route: Strategic implications. *Caucasus Studies Quarterly*, 8(1), 23-45.
- Global Energy Monitor. (2024). Iran-Armenia gas pipeline. Retrieved from https://www.gem.wiki/Iran-Armenia_gas_pipeline
- Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR). (2024). Armenia's energy security faces frosty relations with Russia. Retrieved from <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/>
- Jamestown Foundation. (2024, November 23). Expanding Iran-Armenia energy ties combat Yerevan's reliance on Russian oil. Retrieved from <https://jamestown.org/program/>
- JAMnews. (2024, March 6). The path to independence: Can Armenia ensure its energy security? Retrieved from <https://jam-news.net/energy-security-of-armenia/>
- Migration Policy Institute. (2024, November 20). Armenia country resource page. Retrieved from <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/country-resource/armenia>
- OilPrice.com. (2023, November 18). Armenia turns to Iran to reduce energy dependence on Russia. Retrieved from <https://oilprice.com/Geopolitics/International/>
- Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia. (2024). Social snapshot and poverty in Armenia (2023). Yerevan: Statistical Committee Publications.
- U. S. Department of State (2026). Joint Statement on the Publication of the U.S.-Armenia Implementation Framework for the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP): . <https://www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2026/01/joint-statement-on-the-publication-of-the-u-s-armenia-implementation-framework-for-the-trump-route-for-international-peace-and-prosperity-tripp>
- Bloomberg. (2026). US and Armenia agree to 49-year lease for Trump-backed corridor. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2026-01-14/us-and-armenia-agree-to-49-year-lease-for-trump-backed-corridor>
- News.am. (2026). Armenia has not and will not take any steps against Iran, parliament head says. <https://news.am/eng/news/925550.html>



CENTER OF ANALYSIS
OF INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS

TRIPP ZANGEZUR CORRIDOR: STRATEGIC LINK FOR TRADE, TRANSIT, AND REGIONAL GROWTH

Project Supervisor: Farid Shafiyev, Chairman of the AIR Center

Editors: Vusal Guliyev, Leading Advisor of the AIR Center,
Narmin Ismayilova, Research Intern of the AIR Center

Authors: Samir Gafarli, Altay Mammadov, Yusif Mammadli,
Fuad Huseynov, Ismayil Nesirov – ADA University

— TRIPP —
**ZANGEZUR
CORRIDOR**

STRATEGIC LINK FOR TRADE, TRANSIT,
AND REGIONAL GROWTH