

# INFOGRAPHICS REPORT

A DOZEN YEARS OF RESEARCH AND COUNTING:  
SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE OSCE ACADEMY'S  
POLICY BRIEFS

*(NOVEMBER 2010 – AUGUST 2022)*



By Jacob W. Somerlot







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This report became possible with financial support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs via the Academy's Cooperation with the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

OSCE Academy in Bishkek is a public foundation created through collaboration between the Kyrgyz Republic and the OSCE. The mission of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek is to promote regional cooperation, conflict prevention and good governance in Central Asia through offering quality education, professional training and intellectual exchange.

In 2002 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the OSCE and the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, formally establishing the OSCE Academy in Bishkek as a regional centre for higher education and a platform for regional security dialogue and research.

In 2004 the OSCE Academy in Bishkek introduced its flagship program, the Master's Program in Political Science with a focus on Central Asia. The program aimed to cater to the emerging generation of intellectuals from the entire region, and therefore, efforts were made to ensure equitable representation from each Central Asian country.



In 2011 the second graduate programme was launched, Master's Programme in Economic Governance and Development. This came as result of the OSCE Academy's efforts to maximize its contribution to developing human professional capital in the sectors of particular importance for Central Asian states and societies.

In July 2022 the OSCE Academy in Bishkek has received a license issued by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic authorizing the launch of its new BA programme in Economics and plans to host its first cohort of BA students in September 2022.

Thus, today in the educational field the OSCE Academy offers two graduate programmes: the MA in Politics and Security, MA in Economic Governance and Development, and one undergraduate BA in Economics. These are multidisciplinary programmes that give young Central Asian professionals, including students from Afghanistan and Mongolia, a chance to receive a tuition free stipend supported high-quality education. Curriculums are developed by international team of education specialists and reflect the key trends in the relevant academic fields. Instructors of the Academy come from various OSCE PS. The language of instruction is English.

Apart from its educational initiatives, the OSCE Academy has been publishing various publications including the research papers, research reports, working papers, and policy briefs. Since 2010, Policy Briefs (PBs) have been published along with other publications, serving as a valuable resource that provides insights into various geopolitical, cultural, and economic aspects of Central Asia and Eurasia. PBs undergo an internal and external review process led by the research and training department of the OSCE Academy and are made available to the public through the OSCE Academy's official website ([www.osce-academy.net](http://www.osce-academy.net)). PBs cover a wide range of topics related to Central Asia, Eurasia, neighbouring countries, and the impact of foreign influences. They contribute to scholarly discourse on current events in the region and offer insights into geopolitics and international affairs.

# ABOUT THE REPORT

This Infographics Report was prepared by Jacob W. Somerlot - a researcher who specializes in Central Asian and Turkic cultures, politics, and religion. He has an MA in Applied Linguistics and Discourse Studies from Carleton University (Ottawa, Ontario, Canada), has two BAs in Russian linguistics and Islamic studies from the Ohio State University (Columbus, Ohio, USA), and is certified to teach English as a second/foreign language. He speaks English, Russian, Turkish and French.

This Report aims to visually present the OSCE Academy's key research and publication ideas and insights via exploring the Academy's series of PBs to make them more easily accessible to a larger audience of stakeholders, donors, partners, interested academic and research institutions and organizations. It focuses on infographics that present data extracted from the literature review, PBs publication achievements for the period from November 2010 – August 2022 offering accurate data on observed trends.

In this study the review was produced via three separate reading analyses. Each analysis produced a dataset that was then reviewed for patterns based on ascertainable categories and produced infographics that compare all policy briefs within the series.

The first reading gathered data about author demographic data usually provided in most of the policy brief introductions. The second reading focused on PB content and provided the majority of the information, revealing patterns related to the subject, language, style, and focus of the policy briefs. The third reading focused on the references used in the policy briefs: what kind of references were used, where they were published, and who published them.

The literature review provided an illustration of the last dozen years of the OSCE Academy's PB publications; it illustrates who wrote them, what they were about, and on what basis they made their assertions.



# INFOGRAPHICS

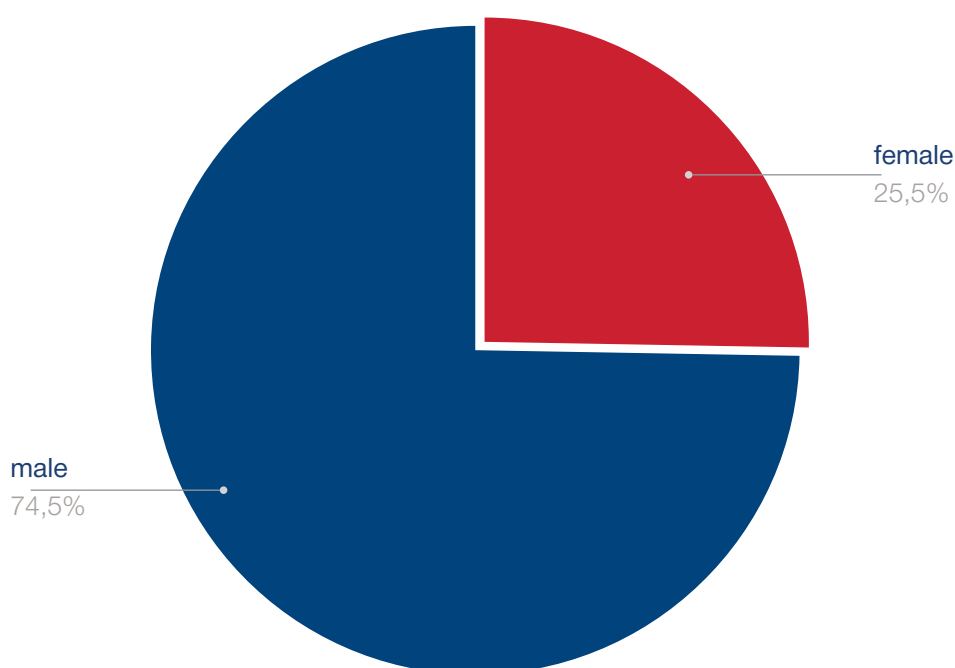


## 1. Graphic: Author Gender

The below provided infographics play a crucial role in enhancing the presentation of information, making it easier to understand and engage with the observed trends.

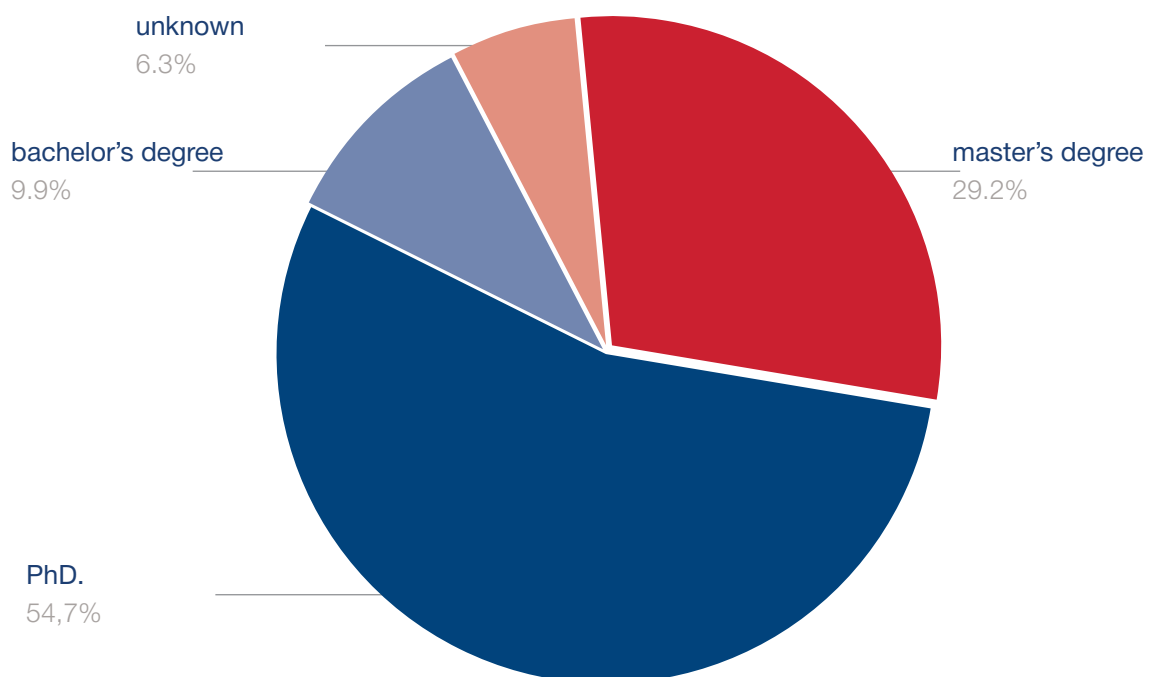
### 1. Graphic: Author Gender

Around 25.5% of the authors contributing to the OSCE PB series are women, while the majority, accounting for 74.5%, are men. Out of the total 88% authors (including co-authors), 33% are women, while the remaining 55% are men. The OSCE Academy in Bishkek places significant importance on gender equality and recognizes the need to enhance the representation of female scholarly work in its publications as part of its commitment to fostering gender equality.



## 2. Graphic: Author Level of Education

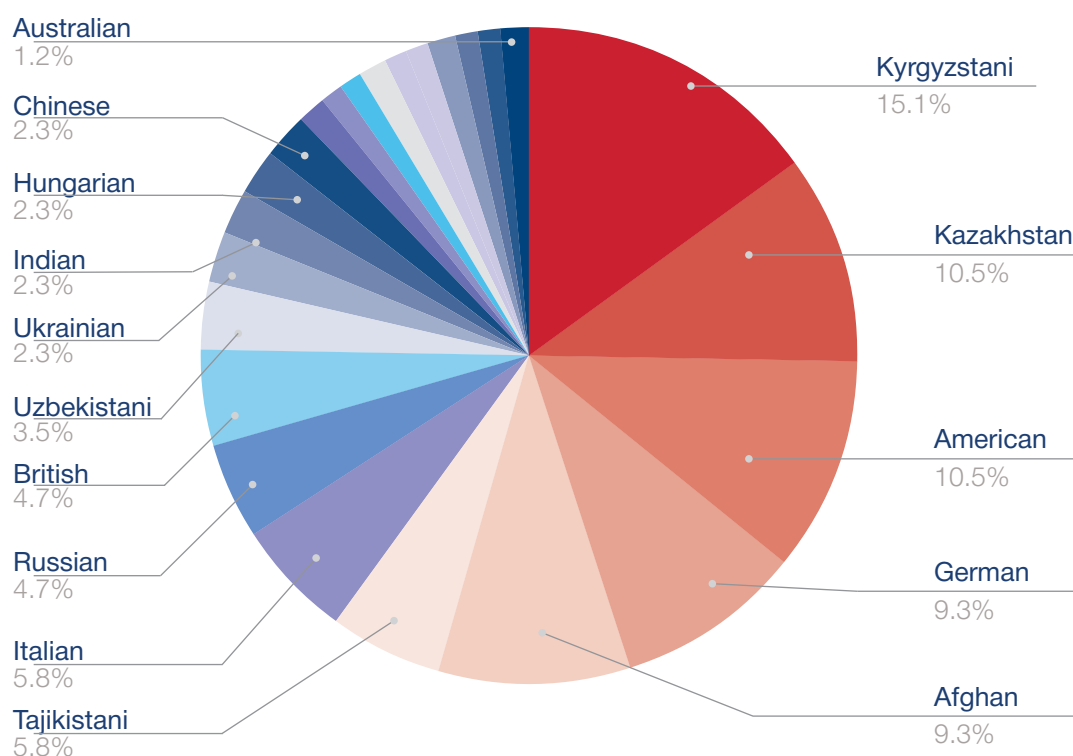
The examination of authors' educational backgrounds in the scholarly papers published over the past 12 years indicates that the largest proportion, comprising 54.7%, hold a PhD degree. Furthermore, 30% of authors possess a Master's degree, while 9.9% have a Bachelor's degree. It is worth highlighting that 6.3% of authors do not appear to possess any evident higher education degrees. These findings provide valuable insights into the breadth and variety of academic research undertaken during this period.





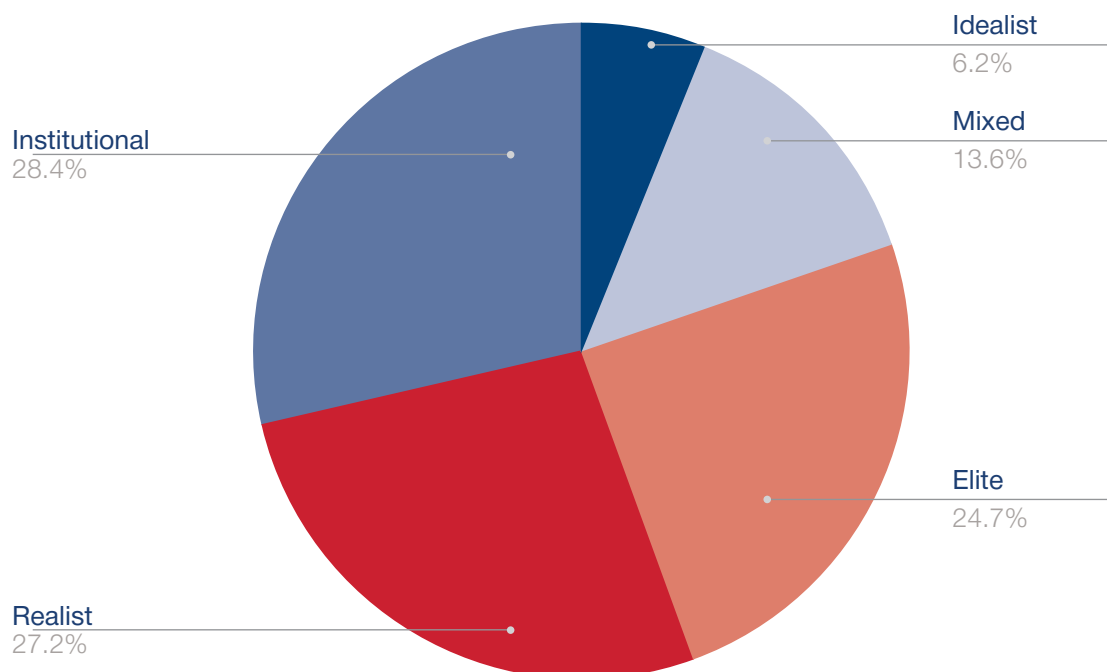
### 3. Graphic: Author Nationality

As the OSCE Academy in Bishkek places paramount importance on diversity, it is notable to examine the nationality distribution among OSCE Academy in Bishkek PB authors. While there is no dominant nationality, the most common nationalities include authors from: Kyrgyzstan (15.1%), Kazakhstan (10.5%), and USA (10.5%). Central Asian nationalities collectively account for 54.7% of the author nationalities, with authors from non-Central Asian nations comprising 41.0% of the total. Among these, the largest representation is from Russia (7.5%). Authors from the USA, Great Britain, Italy, Germany and others countries, constitute approximately one-fifth of the author nationalities. In comparison to global trends, there is a scarcity of researchers of Central Asian origin in the field, as Western observers dominate. Therefore, the opportunity provided by this series for research contributions from numerous Central Asian academics is rare and challenges the prevailing patterns in the broader field of Central Asian research.



## 4. Graphic: Concept/Theory Engaged

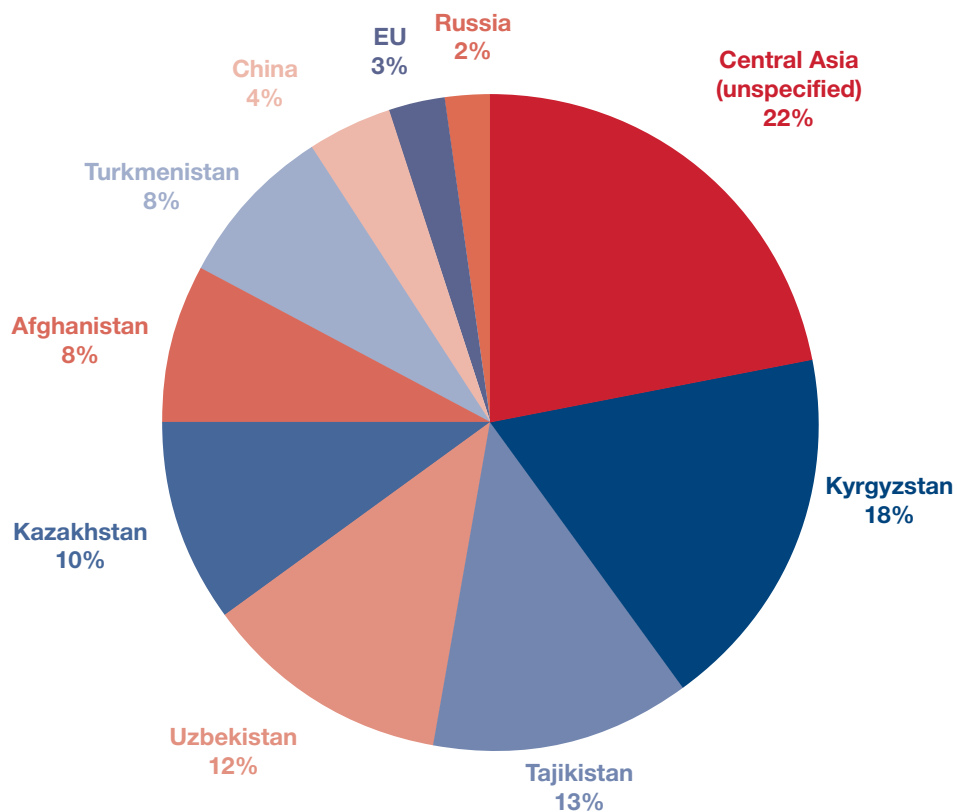
The graphic presents the distribution of PBs across 5 overarching theories. Realist theories, encompassing various rationalist/realist branches, are the most prevalent, emphasizing self-interest and rationality. Idealism or incremental theory focuses on abstract ideas such as humanitarianism and world peace. Mixed theories combine rational actor and idealist concepts, while group or institutional theories highlight the behaviour of cohesive groups or institutions. Elite or neo-colonial theories emphasize the dominance of a small group of actors maintaining hierarchical power. Among the PBs, the institutional category is the most utilized theory (28.4%), emphasizing institutional or organizational power in Central Asia. Rational theories follow closely (27.2%), treating all actors as self-interested and rational entities. Theories involving external hierarchical or imperial forces influencing events in Central Asia constitute the third largest group (24.7%). Mixed realist and idealist based PBs account for 13.6%, and purely idealist PBs make up 6.2%. This analysis aligns with the broader trend in Central Asian geopolitical research, which focuses on studying organizational, hierarchical, and power-maintaining phenomena in the region.



## 5. Graphic: Geographic Focus

Kyrgyzstan is the most popular geographic focus, with 43 occurrences: Tajikistan (30 occurrences), Uzbekistan (29 occurrences), Kazakhstan (23 occurrences), Afghanistan (20 occurrences), and Turkmenistan (20 occurrences) indicate the level of popularity of each country as a geographic focus. Regarding non-Central Asian nations, China (9 occurrences), Europe/the European Union (7 occurrences), and Russia (5 occurrences) were the countries, most often focused on throughout the PBs. This graphic does not indicate that Turkmenistan, for example, is the sole topic of twenty PBs but rather indicates that Turkmenistan was considered as one of the main foci of a particular PB, which may have also considered other Central Asian republics.

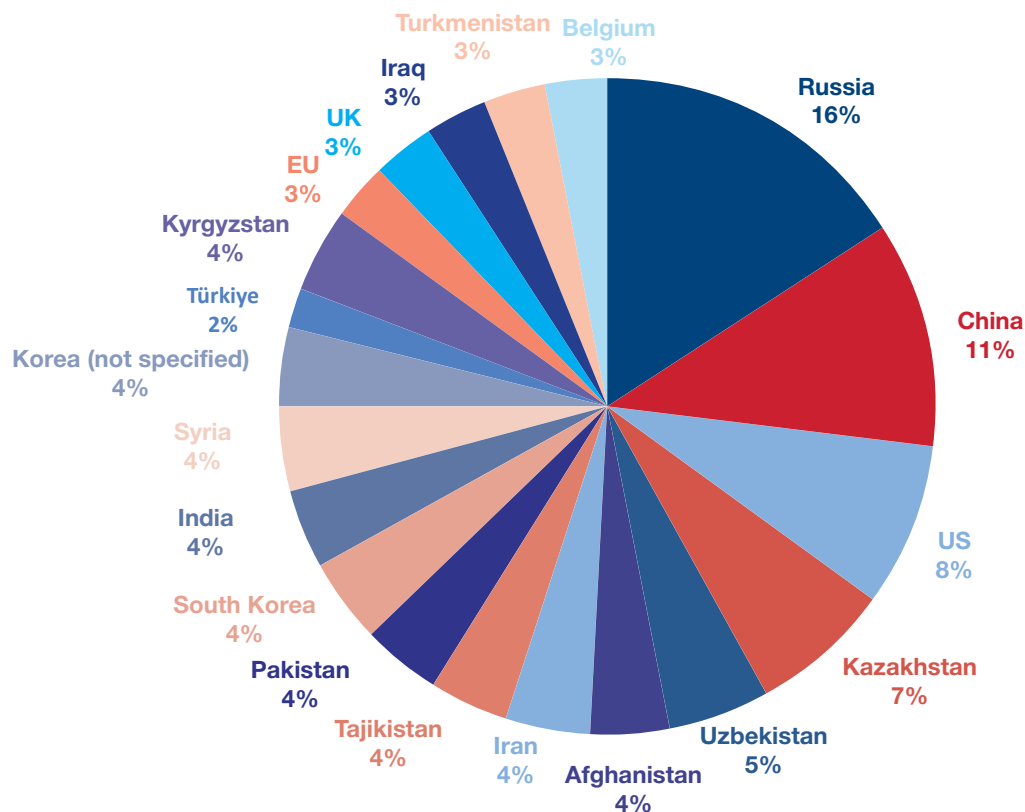
### GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS





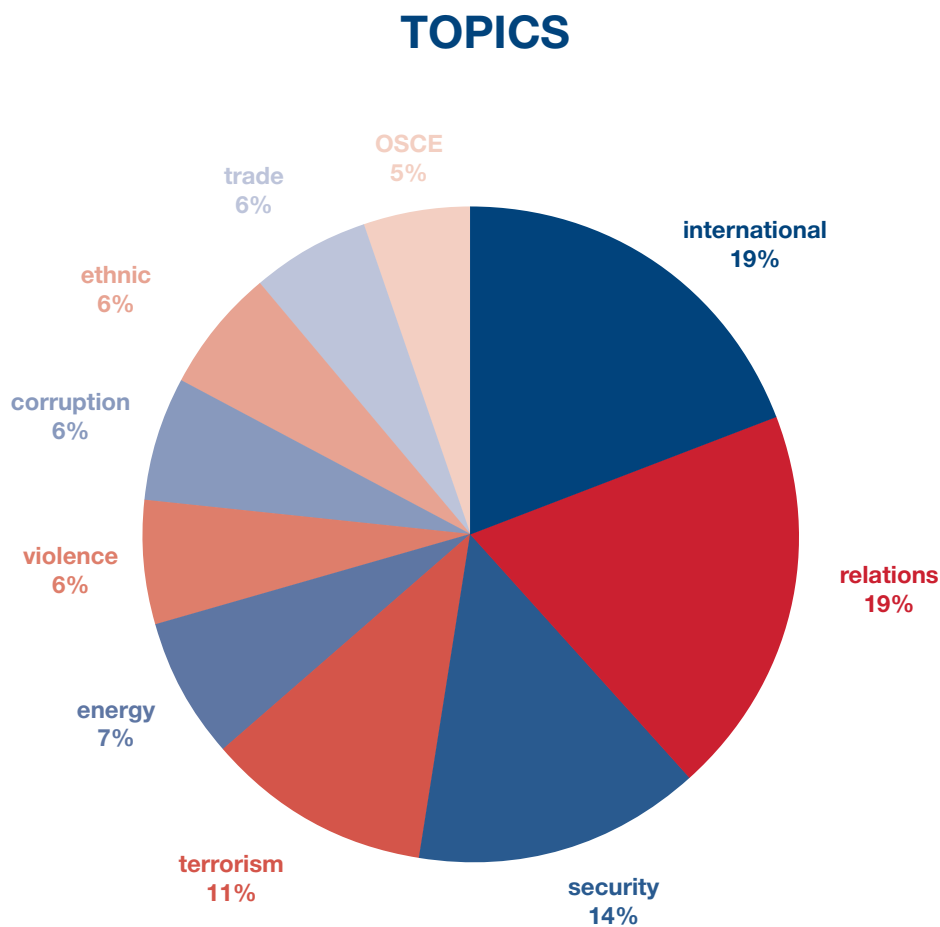
## 6. Graphic: Other Countries Mentioned

In addition to the previous graphic 5, the PBs highlight that Russia is mentioned the most (36 occurrences), followed by China (24 occurrences) and the USA (17 occurrences). The mentioned countries primarily consist of Central Asian states, as well as “unstable” nations like Iraq and Syria. Furthermore, the PBs reference countries in the periphery, including Iran, Pakistan, and India, as well as nations that contribute foreign investment such as Belgium, the US and the EU.



## 7. Graphic: Topics

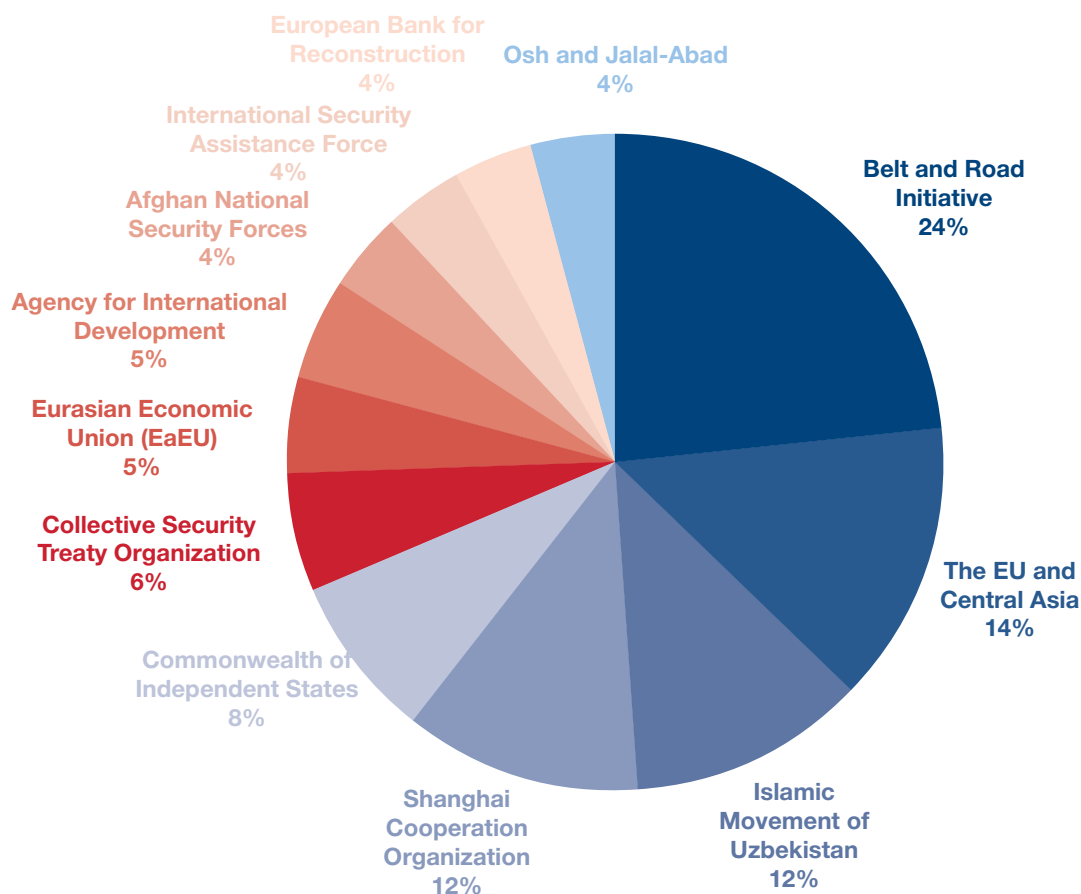
This graphic showcases the most frequent three-word combinations in the topics category. It highlights popular combinations such as international relations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, political violence/conflicts, the Kyrgyz business community, foreign investments, border security, and regime change. China's bilateral security engagement with these regions emerged after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. A significant shift in policy briefs occurred around 2010, moving away from emphasizing Russia as the primary source of security and economy. Instead, there has been a growing emphasis on China, as well as some attention given to American and European influences.



## 8. Graphic: Sub-Topics

This graphic presents the twelve most popular four-letter word combinations in the PB subtopics. These subtopics are not the focus but may be indirectly referenced or part of the larger discussion. The most popular combinations include topics related to the Belt and Road Initiative, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, and collective security organizations. Other important subjects include the European Union, the European Bank, the Afghan National Security Forces with the International Security Assistance Force, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, and the cities of Osh and Jalal-Abad in Kyrgyzstan.

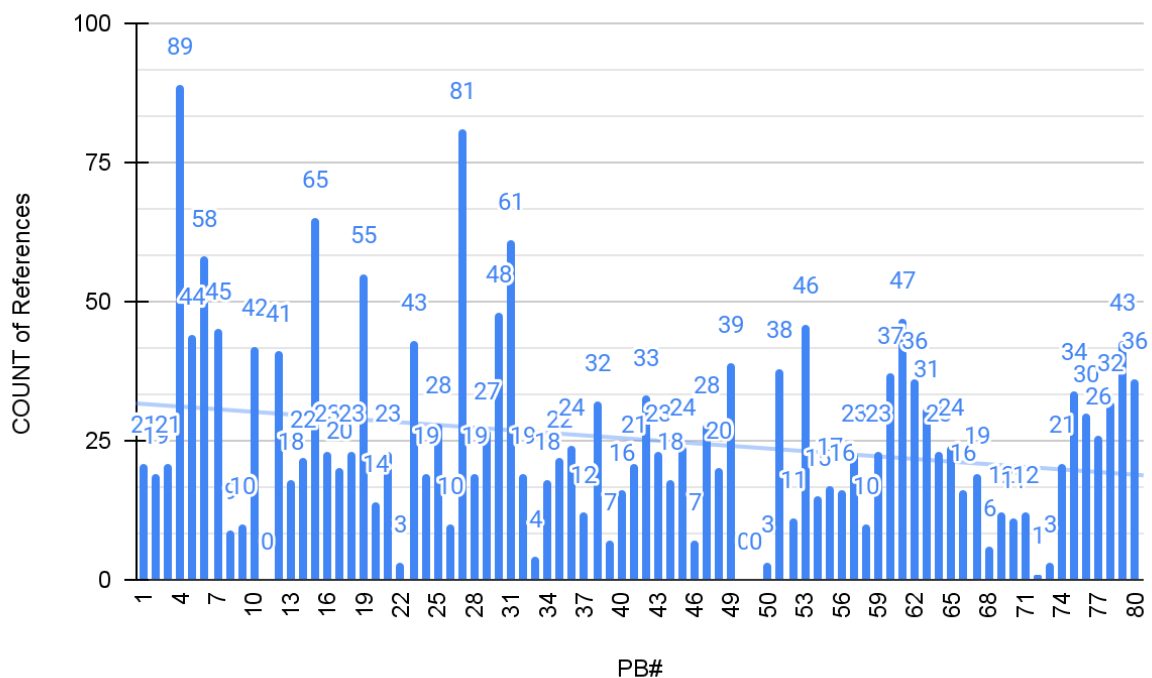
### SUBTOPICS





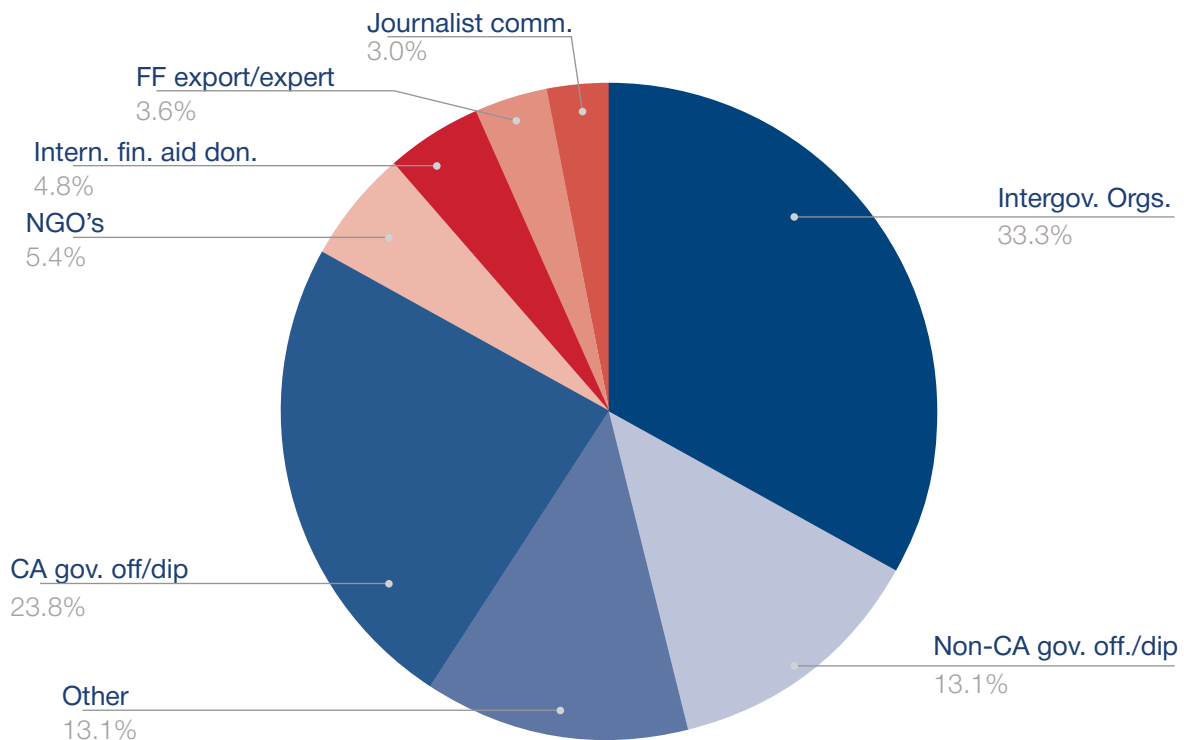
## 9. Graphic: Count of References per PB#

This data highlights a total of 2 069 citations used over the past 12 years. Incorporating this information would provide a comprehensive view of citation trends and enrich our understanding of the research impact and scholarly influence of the work. On average, each publication receives 21 citations, underscoring the extent of referencing and engagement with the research.



## 10. Graphic: Who is the Audience?

This graphic reveals that approximately one-third of the PBs' recommendations target intergovernmental organizations, indicating that these organizations themselves are the primary recipients. The second largest group consists of Central Asian government officials and diplomats, accounting for 23.8% of the intended audience. This highlights the significant focus on addressing and engaging with the intergovernmental landscape and Central Asian governments in the policy recommendations. The combined categories of NGOs, international financial aid donors, fossil fuel exporters and experts, and the journalist community make up 16.8% of the intended audience. While not representing a majority or trend, these actors, who often collaborate with governments to achieve their goals, play a significant role as secondary audiences. Non-Central Asian government officials and diplomats, along with the "other" category encompassing diverse entities such as the Taliban and the Afghan diaspora, each account for 13.1% of the intended audiences. Overall, the primary targets of the PBs' recommendations are intergovernmental organizations and Central Asian governments, with other groups serving as important secondary audiences.









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