

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

DOI: 10.46340/eppd.2025.12.3.1

GEOSTRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF THE ZANGEZUR CORRIDOR'S POTENTIAL COMMERCIAL AND LOGISTIC IMPACTS ON THE REGION

Gulgun Mubariz Guliyeva¹ 

¹ Baku State University, Azerbaijan

E-mail: gulgunguliyeva@bsu.edu.az

Citation: Guliyeva, G. M. (2025). Geostrategic Analysis of the Zangezur Corridor's Potential Commercial and Logistic Impacts on the Region. *Evropský politický a právní diskurz*, 12, 3, 5-15. <https://doi.org/10.46340/eppd.2025.12.3.1>

Abstract

The Zangezur Corridor stands out as a strategic initiative aimed at strengthening regional connectivity across the South Caucasus by linking Central Asia to Europe via Azerbaijan and Türkiye. It is expected to reduce transport time and costs significantly, providing new momentum to trade, logistics, and infrastructure development, especially for landlocked Azerbaijan. This research employs a qualitative methodology based on content analysis of government strategies, statistical reports (ARDSK 2025), academic publications, and international expert opinions. The study focuses on assessing the corridor's impact on Azerbaijan's foreign trade, transit capacity, and its broader geopolitical significance in Eurasian logistics.

The findings suggest that the corridor presents multiple advantages: it creates a shorter and more efficient transport route compared to the BTK railway, facilitates direct Azerbaijan–Nakhchivan–Türkiye connectivity, and strengthens Azerbaijan's role as a critical transit country in the Middle Corridor. The study also highlights the projected increase in freight and passenger movement and the potential establishment of logistics hubs in Fuzuli, Zəngilan, and Culfa. Despite the corridor's transformative potential, significant challenges remain, including political resistance from Armenia, unresolved border disputes, a lack of a qualified labour force, and infrastructure financing gaps. However, if fully realized, the corridor may reduce dependence on Iran, provide strategic advantages to Azerbaijan and Türkiye, and contribute to regional peace and economic interdependence. It is also positioned as an alternative to routes such as the Suez Canal, enhancing Europe-Asia transport security. Additionally, the project is expected to attract foreign investment and foster technological exchange through international partnerships in the logistics sector.

Keywords: Zangezur Corridor, Azerbaijan's foreign trade, Regional logistics, Middle Corridor, Transport infrastructure, Geopolitical risks.

Introduction

As a result of the Second Karabakh War, a ceasefire agreement was signed between Armenia, Russia and Azerbaijan. This agreement ended the conflicts and became a turning point in the region. At the same time, Azerbaijan and Turkey signed the Shusha Declaration. This declaration emphasized the strategic cooperation of Shusha between Turkey and Azerbaijan. Later, on November 10, 2020, Azerbaijan, Russia and Armenia signed the Tripartite Declaration. Article 9 of the Declaration includes the reorganization of direct relations between Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan. This arrangement means both getting rid of the traffic

© Guliyeva, G.M. 2025. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International. It gives an opportunity to read, to load, to copy out, to expand, to print, to search, to quote or to refer to the full text of the article in this Journal.

blockade of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic and the construction of the Azerbaijan-Nakhchivan-Turkey (ANT) railway, which is an alternative to the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars (BTK) railway, with the restoration of the Zangezur Corridor. Azerbaijan has historically been at the intersection of important trade routes due to its strategic location. This has contributed to the development of Azerbaijan's logistics sector. However, the economic, social and political problems experienced with the collapse of the Soviet Union also affected the logistics sector of Azerbaijan. In addition, the war between Azerbaijan and Armenia caused significant negative effects on the logistics sector of the states in the region. Especially the loss of land connection between Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan Region as a result of the annexation of the western parts of the Zangezur region to Armenia, and the fact that Nakhchivan is connected to Azerbaijan but does not have a land connection, has caused various difficulties, especially in the logistics sector, for many years. In this sense, the Zangezur Corridor has the potential to create a new trade network of intercontinental importance and to support development again. In addition to all these potential positive effects, there are also some problematic issues. For example, it is thought that the Corridor will present some geopolitical disadvantages for countries such as Armenia and Iran in terms of supporting transit trade. In addition, there are infrastructural deficiencies and planning problems in order for the corridor to operate effectively. However, the literature review and web resource reviews have shown that, although the Zangezur corridor is of intercontinental importance and a current foreign trade issue, it has not been studied at a level that will help make strategic decisions that will provide a situation assessment for Azerbaijan and the countries in the region. In addition, the strengths and weaknesses of the corridor and the opportunities and threats originating from the external environment have not been investigated. In this context, there is a lack of a study that tries to understand the dimensions of the effects of the opening of the Zangezur Corridor for the states. In this context, the aim of this study is to examine the possible foreign trade and logistics effects that the opening of the Zangezur Corridor will create for Azerbaijan and the surrounding countries.

Literature review

According to the literature review on the Zangezur Corridor, it is seen that the subject is newly established at the conceptual level in the international literature. It has been determined that in non-empirical studies on the effects of the corridor, the majority of them are published in Azerbaijani and Turkish; in limited resources, the universal language, English, is used and international publications are made. For example, Özlem Arzu Azer, Yasemin Ülker, and Wei Min (Azer et al, 2021). "The Strategic Importance of the "Belt and Road Initiative" Connectivity With the "Middle Corridor" Program in Turkey" analyzes the importance of the corridor for the functioning of both the Turkic world and the Middle Corridor as a whole.

Orkhan Baghirov (Baghirov, 2021). "The Impact of the Opening of Zangezur Corridor on Regional Transportation and Communication Lines" examined the geopolitical and geoeconomic aspects of the transit potential of countries in the modern period, the feasibility study of the transport infrastructure, which is one of the main sectors of the national economy, and the assessment of the international location of the transit potential, the realization of cooperation and competition in the system of international transport corridors, the economic benefits and future prospects in the direction of the implementation of international transport projects.

In the study titled "Problems and Analysis Solutions in the Field of Transport and Logistics" written by Quliyev (Quliyev, 2018), the problems of cooperation in the field of transport and logistics of the Republic of Az <https://globalhorizons.wsj.com> erbaijan were mentioned and solutions were discussed.

In the study titled "Improving the Efficiency of the Transport and Logistics System in Azerbaijan" written by Abdullaoğlu, ways to increase the efficiency of Azerbaijan's logistics and transportation system were examined and in accordance with the Strategic Roadmap, ways to increase the competitiveness of Azerbaijan in transport and logistics services were determined in order to use its transit potential more efficiently.

In the study titled "Transportation System in the Occupied Territories and Its Contribution to the National Economy" written by Xudiyeva and Aslanov (Xudiyeva & Aslanov 2022), the analysis of the modern transportation situation in the Republic of Azerbaijan was given and at the same time, the contribution of the Azerbaijani territories liberated from occupation during the 2nd Karabakh War to the country's transportation and economy was examined, and detailed research results were noted. The development dynamics of the transportation sector, which has an important place in the Azerbaijani

economy, were examined and analyzed with statistical indicators. The classification of the types of transportation in Karabakh was given and their effects on the economy were examined. Considering the important role played by the transportation sector in all areas, it was emphasized that many projects were put forward, measures were taken and investments were attracted in Azerbaijan, as in the whole world, regarding the spread of this area, and it was emphasized that multifaceted studies were carried out mainly in the field of automobile transportation.

Mustafa Kemal Bayırbağ, and Seth Schindler (Bayırbağ & Schindler, 2022). In the study titled “Turkey between Two Worlds: EU Accession and the Middle Corridor to Central Asia”, the Modern Silk Road project, the effects of the project on Turkey's tourism, information, technological and transportation points were analyzed using the SWOT method.

In the study titled “Geographical Location of Zangezur and Geopolitics for Turkey and Azerbaijan” written by İsayeva (İsayeva, 2022), it was mentioned that the Zangezur Corridor has three dimensions of importance: local, regional and intercontinental, its importance at the local level, and its encouraging contribution to local economic development in the countries through the lands it will pass through. Inferences were made that expanding economic and commercial ties between countries will support the development of the entire region.

The study titled “Possible effects of the Zangezur Corridor on the foreign trade of Azerbaijan and Türkiye” written by Hamzatli (Hamzatli, 2022) aims to examine the possible effects of the Zangezur Corridor on the foreign trade of Azerbaijan and Türkiye. Economic, geopolitical studies, opportunity and risk analyses of Azerbaijan and Türkiye were conducted, and in line with these analyses, specific issues were examined in these two countries. In the analysis made by the two countries, the fields of information, transportation and technology were examined under one heading and the studies to be done in these areas were discussed. The positive effects of this corridor on tourism in Azerbaijan and Türkiye, the studies carried out in the field of logistics, and the studies to be done in the future were discussed.

In the study titled “Türkiye's International Trade and Azerbaijan Application” written by Bayramoğlu (Bayramoğlu, 2022), the regional effects of the partnerships between Turkey and Azerbaijan in the fields of economy, military, social, cultural and transportation were examined. In addition, the studies carried out in the fields of logistics and transportation and future predictions were also evaluated.

Gawliczek and Iskandarov (Gawliczek & Iskandarov 2023), in their study titled “The Zangezur corridor as part of the global transport route (against the backdrop of power games in the South Caucasus region)”, emphasized that Azerbaijan, located at the intersection of the North-South and East-West transportation routes, is currently considered an even more important transportation and logistics center due to the Zangezur Corridor. In addition, some scenarios were given regarding the opening of the Corridor. It was emphasized that the most realistic scenario is the opening of the Corridor, which is advantageous for the Azerbaijani government but will damage the reputation of the current Armenian government. From the Iranian perspective, it is stated that with the opening of the Corridor, Azerbaijan will no longer pay transit fees to Iran, and this situation makes the Iranian government uneasy. In addition, it is known that a direct natural gas line to be drawn from Azerbaijan to Turkey through this corridor will disrupt Iran's natural gas exports to Turkey and that this will naturally be contrary to Iran's interests. In addition, it is stated that the importance of the natural gas line from Iran to Armenia will decrease.

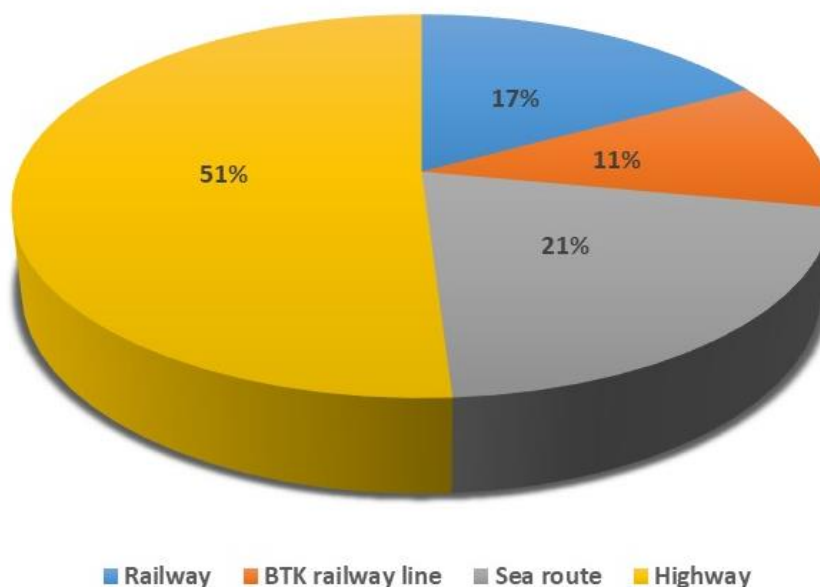
Oxford Analytica (Oxford Analytica, 2023), an international consultancy firm that provides strategic analysis of world events as well as studies conducted in Azerbaijan and Turkey, the main stakeholders of the corridor, states in a study published in an international journal that Iran perceives its isolation in the South Caucasus as a result of changing geopolitical relations in the last three years. While Israel has increased its presence, traditional ties between Russia, Armenia and Iran have weakened, while Turkey-Azerbaijan relations have strengthened through this corridor. In line with these studies, Oxford Analytica (Oxford Analytica, 2023) predicts that Iran will work to develop ties in the South Caucasus in the coming period. Another conclusion reached in the literature review is that the subject has not yet been the subject of sufficient scientific research in the countries that are stakeholders of the Zangezur Corridor. For example, while there are newspaper articles and press releases for Georgia, Armenia and Iran, there is a limited number of international scientific studies. In a study conducted in Armenia and published in Armenian, it is explained that the inclusion of neighboring countries in the Zangezur Corridor project is very important for Azerbaijan and therefore puts pressure on Armenia. It is stated that the extent to which interregional projects will provide economic benefits to Armenia depends on Armenia's ability to complete the construction of the North-South highway corridor (Michael, 2023). Another study that presents the Armenian perspective on the subject

(Poghosyan, 2021) states that Armenia should guarantee the security of transportation connections between the western regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. However, it is anticipated that the recent tensions in the Syunik region are likely to affect the success of these developments. *When reviewing the literature relevant to our research, we must also take into account scholarly works addressing the practice of economic diplomacy under the challenging conditions of geopolitical confrontation – even if in a different context (Vysotskyi et al., 2025).*

To summarize, in the relevant literature, there are studies that mainly focus on the logistics sector of Azerbaijan and investigate the local, regional, economic and geopolitical importance of the Zangezur Corridor, but there are non-empirical studies. It has also been observed that these studies have been examined in a limited way in the literature of Iran, Armenia, Georgia, and Russia, which are parties to the Corridor, and that a limited number of English publications can be accessed.

Discussion

The corridor has regional effects in terms of offering alternatives in various directions. The first and most important of these effects is the emergence of a new logistics route between Turkey and Central Asia. Turkey is interested in reducing its dependence on its regional rival, Iran, and establishing connections with Central Asia through the territories of countries with more positive diplomatic relations. The country is achieving this goal in the north via Georgia and Azerbaijan and aims to realize a similar scenario in the south via the Armenia-Azerbaijan route. It is envisaged that the Zangezur Corridor can serve this purpose. Indeed, the Zangezur Corridor will also enable Türkiye to provide alternative transportation opportunities to Central Asian countries. In addition, it is envisaged that the Corridor will end the congestion in the South Caucasus and that the movement that has been human and commercial for centuries will gain new momentum in the region. Thus, goods and services trade, freight and passenger transportation and touristic trips will be organized through a new route extending from China to Europe and the Americas.



Graph 1. Percentage display of freight transport data for 2024

Source: ARDSK 2025

In addition, the countries in the region that have been negatively affected economically by the coronavirus outbreak will have new cooperation opportunities thanks to the Zangezur Corridor. The corridor also has significant potential for global trade by contributing to the uninterrupted and more economical operation of the Middle Corridor with the North-South route.

Considering the positive contributions of logistics activities to the international trade and economy of the countries, it is anticipated that the research on the Zangezur Corridor, which is planned to be put into operation at full capacity, will make significant contributions in terms of theory and practice.

The universe of the current research consists of the possible effects of the opening of the Zangezur Corridor on Azerbaijan's foreign trade. The study addresses detailed research results on the contribution of the Zangezur Corridor to Azerbaijan's transportation and national economy. This corridor will play an important role in the construction of the Azerbaijan Nakhchivan-Turkey railway line, which is an alternative to the BTK railway.

Considering the important role played by the transportation sector all over the world, it is known that many projects have been implemented and investments have been attracted in Azerbaijan regarding the expansion of this area. In addition, the full capacity of the Corridor is also important for neighboring countries. In fact, in recent years, various studies and research have been conducted on the subject by countries that are thought to be directly affected by the corridor. One of the most recent examples is the workshop organized in Turkey in 2024 on the Strategic Importance of the Zangezur Corridor in Regional Development and Economic Growth. The workshop emphasizes the strategic importance of the corridor for both countries, as it is the subject of a new trade agreement between the two countries. Similarly, the corridor has an important global position in terms of providing transit passage to many points in the world for Russia and China. On the other hand, it is known that the corridor is not accepted by Armenia. Armenian officials have emphasized that the Zangezur Corridor is not open to discussion. The Corridor is considered a commercial barrier in terms of offering a transit passage option for Iran as well as Armenia.

The logistics sector in the Republic of Azerbaijan is developing every year. Both the public and private sectors are carrying out important work in this field and implementing many projects (ARDSK, 2025). The "Strategic Roadmap for the Development of Logistics and Trade in the Republic of Azerbaijan" approved by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan is a concrete example of these developments (Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on approval of the "Socio-economic Development Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2022-2026). In a study conducted by Aliyev in 2018, it was stated that Azerbaijan has a strategic location despite being landlocked. The country has two important trade routes from Asia to Europe, the North-South and East-West (TRACECA) transport corridors. Projects such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway and the Baku International Sea Trade Port contribute to the transport corridors. In addition, according to Aliyev (Aliyev, 2018), thanks to this, Azerbaijan has become an important transport center connecting Central Asia to the West and South Asia to the North. It has also gained political importance by taking part in international projects. Establishing and developing international logistics centers with the revenues obtained from projects such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline and the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum natural gas pipeline are among the priority agenda items.

Azerbaijan gains political priorities by participating in international projects. The current agenda is the creation and development of logistics centers at the international level with the income obtained from the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline and other similar projects around the world. Statistical data on the country's income from transportation and research conducted in this field also provide a reason to make positive predictions for the future. The importance of the Zangezur Corridor can be characterized by the existence of alternative routes in different directions. First of all, this corridor will encourage the creation of a new route between Turkey and Central Asia, weakening Türkiye's dependence on Iran in this direction, and secondly, it will reduce the influence of the Nakhchivan transit, which is an instrument of pressure for Iran, connecting Azerbaijan to the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. It will also help create a new transportation route between Russia and Turkey without entering Georgia.

With the opening of the corridor, it is expected that trade distances between countries will decrease significantly and trade will increase. The Zangezur Corridor will be approximately 40 kilometers long and is an important project that will increase the trade potential in the region. With the opening of the corridor, Turkish companies are expected to play an active role in the reconstruction of the region. In addition, thanks to the corridor, goods can be shipped directly to Azerbaijan without the need for lines passing through countries such as Iran and Georgia, and transportation to Central Asia can be carried out faster and at lower costs. This situation reveals the potential to increase the functionality of ports by increasing the number of voyages on the Caspian Sea (Baghirov, 2021, p.15). The People's Republic of China, one of the world's most important exporters, supplies goods worth 2 trillion 400 billion US dollars to the world market annually, half of which belongs to the European market. In this context, China attaches great importance to economic relations with Europe and is interested in creating new alternative transportation routes. From this point of view, China wants to offer an alternative to the existing commercial transportation network, ensuring that the goods sent from its country are transported to the eastern provinces of Türkiye and from there to Europe

via the Straits. In this sense, it can be predicted that the fully functional Zangezur Corridor will have an important position in the world trade arena. In addition to these, the Zangezur Corridor will bring political gains as well as economic gains to Azerbaijan. First, the Azerbaijan-Nakhichevan route is 344 km shorter than the BTK railway route. This factor significantly reduces the turnover time indicator, which is considered one of the main efficiency indicators of international trade. The shortening of the circulation time reduces circulation costs due to the short time the goods spend on the road, which provides great benefits to both senders and recipients (Bayramoğlu, 2022). Another important factor is the availability of alternative routes, which are of great importance in international transportation. Since transportation routes with many alternatives are considered more reliable, in case the BTK route is out of service for any reason, transportation from China to Europe can be carried out via the Azerbaijan-Nakhichevan-Turkey route. It should be noted that the Russia-Ukraine war also had an impact on the significant increase in transportation on Azerbaijani railways. According to the data of Azerbaijan Railways Inc., 636,000 tons of additional cargo was transported in January-April 2024 compared to the 4th month of 2023, and most of this was transported in transit mode (ARDSK, 2025).

As a result of Azerbaijan's victory in 2020, the liberation of Karabakh lands from occupation has opened up new opportunities for the geo-economic map of Eurasia and further strengthened Azerbaijan's position. The Zangezur corridor is being used as an alternative to the BTK railway, paving the way for the opening of the Baku-Julfa-Iğdır line. This will increase the potential for transporting goods from China to Europe via the Central Asian route and pave the way for the country to become a regional trade and logistics center. It is considered appropriate to establish two more trade and logistics centers in the liberated territories (Mammadov & Hasanoglu, 2023):

1) The Fuzuli or Zangilan economic region, which was liberated from occupation – With the opening of the Zangezur Corridor, the commissioning of various transportation infrastructures here – Fuzuli International Airport, airports under construction in Zangilan and Lachin, the Azerbaijan-Nakhichevan-Turkey railway, the construction and commissioning of 10 highways with a length of 700 km in Karabakh and East Zangezur, will be important in strengthening the investment flow in the development of this region and shaping this region as a logistics center in the future. Central Asia-Azerbaijan-Turkey-Europe, Iran-Russia, Russia-Turkey, Russia-Armenia routes are considered as the main transportation routes.

2) The Culfa district of Nakhchivan or the Sederek settlement – The Zangezur Corridor will accelerate the development of these regions of Nakhchivan. The main routes are Central Asia-Azerbaijan-Turkey-Europe, Russia-Turkey. All this shows that Azerbaijan has a great reputation as a reliable country with alternative transportation routes both in the region and in the world.

With the opening of the Zangezur Corridor, it is thought that railway and highway transportation will work together to improve the transportation of the region. The travel time between Europe and Asia will be significantly reduced to only 12 days. This will increase cooperation and economic connections between the South Caucasus and other countries in the region. At the same time, it will encourage growth in the transportation sector by providing opportunities for new companies in the field of freight and human transportation. This will increase the opportunities for cooperation with international companies in the creation of international transportation infrastructure by ensuring the integration of countries into global economies (Hamzatlı, 2022). Therefore, the development of the city and the potential for new companies to enable investments are among the strengths of the Zangezur Corridor. In addition, the Corridor offers a more reliable route compared to its alternatives connecting China to Central Asia and Europe. In this sense, the ability to provide a more seamless transfer of goods and services is one of its strengths.

The fact that Azerbaijan and Türkiye are located on this corridor ensures that the Corridor has strategic importance in terms of Europe-Asia transportation (Bayramoğlu, 2022). The fact that this corridor is on world trade routes and that the trade from Asia to Europe will shift to the middle corridor will increase the trade volume. In addition, costs will decrease with the decrease in road and air distances, it is safer in terms of security compared to alternative routes, and it is more convenient and faster compared to routes from the south and north to Europe, which are among the strengths of this corridor. With the Turkish Union reaching the level of strategic partnership, the transitions will be made easily and quickly.

A declaration was signed between the parties after the Second Karabakh War ended with the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh Ceasefire Agreement. Despite this, the activation of the Zangezur Corridor is not accepted by various countries, especially Armenia. For this reason, there are errors and deficiencies in the planning and implementation steps of the corridor, which cannot exist effectively. In addition, the inadequacy of qualified labor, expert numbers and capital for the realization of the Project, and the lack

of sufficient capital for the construction of the 43-kilometer road passing through Armenia (Hamzatli, 2022) constitute the weaknesses of the Corridor.

With the opening of the Zangezur Corridor, the Oil and Gas Pipeline System (OGPS) extending from the Caspian Sea to Europe, the "East-West Corridor", the "North-South" International Transport Corridor (ITC) and the Caspian Transport Network (CTN) will be further strengthened. This line will facilitate the operation of the OGPS and increase regional economic cooperation. In addition, it will provide an important opportunity in the future for the solution of the energy crisis in Europe. Azerbaijan's dependence on Georgia in oil and natural gas transportation lines will also decrease (Hamzatli, 2022). The world becoming a global village and therefore the development of transportation activities, especially in logistics and economic terms, play an important role in achieving these opportunities.

Beyond these, the opening of the Zangezur Corridor will provide an alternative transportation route to the excess and monopoly situation regarding the fees of the Suez Canal. This will reduce transportation costs and accelerate transportation between Europe and Asia. In addition, an alternative option will be provided against the transit processes and security problems in the Suez Canal. This can create a safer environment for commercial activities. With the opening of the corridor, the current route between the Baku-Dilucu Border Gate through Iran will be shortened by 25% and become more efficient (Hamzatli, 2022). The road distance between Turkey and Azerbaijan will decrease by up to 400 kilometers (Turgunov, 2022). With the opening of the corridor, it is expected that a strong economic connection will be formed between the countries of the region and Azerbaijan-Turkey and that transportation between Europe and Asia will be facilitated. In this way, an increase in trade, tourism and other economic activities is expected. It is stated in the study written by Hamzatlı in 2022 that the opening of the corridor will also contribute to the countries in the region becoming more attractive in their international trade and will help the regional economies grow.

The studies carried out will make the logistics infrastructure of the countries even stronger. The eastern regions will be open to new business opportunities and investments. In addition, the arrival of foreign investors to Azerbaijan can contribute to the development of local companies by providing technology and knowledge transfer. Azerbaijan's position among the leading countries in the field of logistics can also help the country gain economic and political power. This is a development that will occur depending on investment and business opportunities. Investors need to recognize and evaluate the opportunities in the countries located in this corridor (Bayramoğlu, 2022).

Azerbaijan will be able to use every branch of air, sea, highway and railway transportation due to its location. According to the study written by Aslanlı in 2021, it is expected that freight and passenger transportation will increase with the implementation of the corridor. Thanks to this corridor, the trade volume between the countries in the region will increase and the tourism sector will also be revitalized. In addition, the provision of a road and railway connection between Nakhchivan and Azerbaijan will allow the transportation network in the region to be further developed.

The economic connection that the corridor will create between the countries in the region and Azerbaijan-Türkiye is also considered an important opportunity. The increase in interdependence in the South Caucasus, the increase in the atmosphere of peace and the creation of common prosperity areas can be an important opportunity for increasing cooperation between the countries of the region (Aslanlı, 2021). It has been found that there are many opportunities for the Zangezur Corridor at the national and global levels. However, there are also some threats that may affect strategic decision-making:

Table 1

Threats

Political instability	Trust issue
Global risks and uncertainties	Problems in the Caspian Sea
Alternative routes	Political issues
Conflict environment	Armenian lobby
Possibility of war	

Source: Created by the author.

One of the most obvious threats is political problems. For example, the fact that the borders of Azerbaijan and Armenia have not been finalized in the Karabakh region is a significant threat. In addition, there are political problems behind the failure of the corridor to become operational. With the end of the Second Karabakh War with the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh Ceasefire Agreement, a declaration was signed between the parties. Despite this, the activation of the Zangezur Corridor makes stakeholders uneasy in terms of economic and political authority, and the opening of the Corridor is reported to be unacceptable (Daily Sabah, 2022).

However, Europe and especially the USA's China policy, wars and political problems in the Middle East, political problems between Azerbaijan and Armenia, Azerbaijan's inability to sufficiently advance its relations with European countries due to its long-term warm relations, and Armenia's slowing down of the opening of this corridor, which is among the political problems, include political and military issues.

Problems such as waiting times in the Caspian Sea passages and the lack of Ro-Ro ships result in trips from the Caspian Sea to only two ports and the vehicles on the ship waiting for disembarkation for long periods. This situation is stated in a study written by Hamzatlı in 2022 as being due to container and bulk carriers using separate ports. This situation is a very basic threat to the Corridor.

Azerbaijan's decrease in need of Iran to reach Nakhchivan, Iran's decrease in revenue from transit passages and Iran's opposition to the corridor due to the idea that its strategic importance will decrease are considered as significant threats. In addition, the possibility of an embargo by European states on China or a weakening of trade with China due to political problems, relations between the Turkic Republics not being at the expected level and in some cases reaching the breaking point, the failure to reach an agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia and the political tensions that may arise as a result are considered as threats. Political risk and uncertainty are a threat to the Corridor.

One of the issues that draws attention at the international level is the impact that the Corridor will have on the Russian front. It is known that the Armenian railways belong to the Russian company JSC Russian Railways, and the construction of the railway passing through Zangezur will begin in Russian rubles, as announced by a news agency closely followed in the Caucasus. Russia is also an important actor in the issue in terms of foreign trade. According to an article found in the research, it is predicted that Russia will be able to take control of a large part of Armenia thanks to the Zangezur Corridor, and the Corridor offers a great potential for commercial connections as it will create the first direct railway between Russia and Turkey (Gawliczek & Iskandarov, 2023).

Conclusions

Azerbaijan is located on central roads, despite being landlocked, and has a favorable geographical location on the two most important trade routes from Asia to Europe, the North-South and East-West (TRACECA) transport corridors. The Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, which is considered the main part of the TRACECA transport corridor (Bayramli, 2017), and the Baku International Sea Trade Port located on the North-South corridor have been built and put into use. Through this port, Azerbaijan has become a transportation hub connecting Central Asia with the West (European Union) and South Asia with the North, especially Iran and India. According to Article 9 of the Tripartite Declaration signed by Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia on November 10, 2020, it was emphasized that direct relations between Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan should be reestablished. The reconstruction of the Zangezur Corridor means the construction of the Azerbaijan-Nakhchivan-Turkey railway line, which is an alternative to the BTK railway. It is anticipated that the Project will make significant contributions to the International Trade literature, as it is accepted to be implemented in 2020 and its effects have not been discussed in detail in the literature (Bayirbag, 2022). Based on this, the study attempts to reveal the logistics and commercial effects of the opening of the Zangezur Corridor for Azerbaijan.

Based on the findings obtained from the current literature review on the Zangezur Corridor, it can be said that the restoration of the Zangezur Corridor will provide Azerbaijan with commercial, economic, logistic as well as political gains. First, the Azerbaijan-Nakhichevan route is 344 km shorter than the BTK railway route. This significantly reduces transportation time, which is considered an important efficiency indicator in international trade. Another important factor is the availability of alternative routes. With the restoration of the corridor, a new route will be created that will benefit countries and reshape the transportation network. It has been understood through the study that regional positive effects will emerge with the opening of the Zangezur Corridor, Azerbaijan will be positively affected economically, its political power in the region will increase, positive effects will be observed in logistic areas and it will help ensure

peace between societies. In the light of these findings, it is clear that applications are needed to make the best use of opportunities, further develop strengths, eliminate weaknesses and eliminate threats. In this context, we can summarize what will be done as follows:

The biggest factor affecting this project is political events. It is necessary to remove obstacles to commercial and political innovations along the corridor and to ensure security. Problems related to transit passage should be eliminated, meetings should be held with the countries on the route in this regard, and efforts should be made to turn the region into an important base.

Another issue is the necessity of border and border security research. In order to minimize the complexity of border crossings, factors such as reducing threats, ensuring security, and adjusting the number of personnel and responsibilities are important. In addition, if an agreement is reached between Azerbaijan and Armenia, the "Green Pass" service can be used in transit passages. In this way, trains and trucks passing through the corridor will be able to continue their journeys without waiting and losing time. The green pass service is a service model that promotes environmentally friendly and sustainable transportation. This service aims to reduce the environmental impact of transportation operations, reduce the carbon footprint and protect natural resources (Baghirov, 2021). The green transit service includes the selection of environmentally friendly modes of transport, energy efficiency measures, the use of renewable energy sources and environmental practices.

Azerbaijan's logistics infrastructure should be built in the most reliable way. Because Asian markets have a great impact on the global economy and the goods and services produced in these markets need to be transported to the European market in the shortest possible time and at the lowest cost. It is important to carry out logistics studies for the railway route, which is a part of the Central Silk Road, develop new projects and establish high-speed train lines. In this way, Azerbaijan can strengthen its position as the logistics center of the region and facilitate trade between Asia and Europe.

In short, the biggest factor affecting the Zangezur Corridor Project is political events. Obstacles to commercial and political innovations along the corridor should be removed and security should be ensured. Problems related to transit passage should be eliminated, consultations should be held with the countries on the route in this regard, and efforts should be made to turn the region into an important base. The country's logistics infrastructure should be developed and new projects should be prepared. In order for logistics services to be centralized worldwide, correct planning, process analysis, corporate resource planning, risk analysis and prioritization must be done and implemented correctly. In this way, logistics operations can be managed effectively, resources can be used efficiently and risks can be minimized and service quality can be increased. In future studies, various contributions can be made to international trade theory and practitioners by evaluating the effects of the Zangezur Corridor on the international logistics and trade activities of surrounding countries in a geopolitical and economic context.

Acknowledgements. None.

Conflict of Interest. None.

References:

- Aghayev, Z. (2008). Azerbaycan pazarının lojistik yönetimi açısından değerlendirilmesi [Evaluation of Azerbaijan Market in Terms of Logistics Management]: *Master's Thesis*. Izmir, Turkey: Dokuz Eylül University. [in Turkish].
- Alaca, A. I. S. (2021). Afro-Avrasya bölgesinin jeo-ekonomik açıdan önemi [The Importance of the Afro-Eurasia Region in Terms of Geo-Economics]. In: Ozgoker, U. (ed.) *Eurasia – the Territory of the Future*, 24, 19. [in Turkish].
- Aliyev, X. (2018). Azərbaycan Respublikasının logistik potensialı [Logistics Potential of the Azerbaijan Republic]. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Sustainable Development and Actual Problems of Humanitarian Sciences*. [in Azerbaijani].
- ARDSK (2025). *Nəqliyyat statistikasi* [Transport Statistics]. <https://www.stat.gov.az/source/transport/> [in Turkish].
- Asian Development Bank (2024). *North-South Corridor (Sisian–Kajaran) Road Project*. <https://www.adb.org/projects/42145-043/main>
- Aslanli, A. (2021). Zengezur Koridoru: Zaferin Taçlanması [Zangezur Corridor: The Crowning Of Victory]. *Kriter Monthly Journal of Politics, Society and Economy*, 6 (62). <https://kriterdergi.com/dosya-turkdunyasi/zengezur-koridoru-zaferin-taclanmasi> [in Azerbaijani].
- Azer, O. A., et al. (2021). Türkiye'de "Kuşak ve Yol Girişimi" bağlantısının "Orta Koridor" programıyla stratejik önemi [The Strategic Importance of the "Belt and Road Initiative" Connectivity with the "Middle Corridor" Program in Turkey]. *Güvenlik Bilimleri Dergisi* [Journal of Security Sciences], 10 (2), 543-566. [in Turkish].

- Azertac (2021). *Azərbaycan Respublikası ilə Türkiyə Respublikası arasında müttəfiqlik əlaqələri haqqında Şuşa Bəyannaməsi* [Shusha Declaration on Allied Relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey]. https://azertag.az/xeber/Azərbaycan_Respublikası_ile_Türkiyə_Respublikası_arasında_muttəfiqlik_münasibətləri_haqqında_Suşa_Beyannaməsi-1808083 [in Azerbaijani].
- Baghirov, O. (2021). Zəngəzur dəhlizinin açılmasının regional nəqliyyat və kommunikasiya xətlərinə təsiri [The Impact of the Opening of Zangezur Corridor on regional transportation and communication lines]. *AIR Center*. <https://aircenter.az/uploads/files/Zangezur%20Corridor.pdf> [in Azerbaijani].
- Bayırbağ, M. K., & Schindler, S. (2022). Turkey Between Two Worlds: EU Accession and the Middle Corridor to Central Asia. In: Schindler, S. & DiCarlo, J. (eds.), *The Rise of the Infrastructure State: How US-China Rivalry Shapes Politics and Place Worldwide*. Bristol University Press, 167-179.
- Bayramoğlu, M. (2022). Türkiye'nin uluslararası ticareti ve Azerbaycan uygulaması [Turkey's International Trade and Azerbaijan Application]: *Master's Thesis*. Istanbul, Turkey: Maltepe University. [in Turkish].
- Bayramov, A. (2021). Dağlıq Qarabağ münaqişəsinin susdurulması və dörd günlük müharibənin çətinlikləri [The Silencing of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict and the Challenges of the Four-Day War]. *Security and Human Rights*, 27(1-2), 116-127. [in Azerbaijani].
- Bayramov, V. (2022). Zəngəzur nəqliyyat dəhlizi Azərbaycana Avrasiyanın nəqliyyat və logistika mərkəzi kimi mövqeyini möhkəmləndirməyə imkan verəcək [The Zangezur Transport Corridor Will Allow Azerbaijan to Strengthen its Position as a Transport and Logistics Center of Eurasia]. <https://xalqgazeti.com/mobile/az/news/75615> [in Azerbaijani].
- Daily Sabah (2022). *Zangezur Corridor: New Transport Route to Connect Europe and Asia*. <https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/op-ed/zangezur-corridor-new-transport-route-to-connect-europe-and-asia>
- Gawliczek, P., & Iskandarov, K. (2023). The Zangezur Corridor as Part of the Global Transport Route (Against the Backdrop of Power Games in the South Caucasus Region). *Security and Defence Quarterly*, 41 (1), 36-53. <https://doi.org/10.35467/sdq/167017>
- Hamzatli, M. (2022). *Possible Effects of Zangezur Corridor on Foreign Trade of Azerbaijan and Turkey*: Master's Thesis. Kutahya, Turkey: Dumlupinar University.
- İki Sahil (2022). Zəngəzur dəhlizi: Türk dünyasının birlik və həmrəylik simvolu [Zangezur Corridor: A Symbol of Unity and Solidarity of the Turkic World]. <https://ikisahil.az/post/289502-zengezur-dehlizi-turk-dunyasinin-birlik-ve-hemreylik-remzi> [in Azerbaijani].
- İsayeva, T. (2022). Zengezur'un Coğrafi Konumu ve Türkiye-Azerbaycan İçin Jeopolitikaları [Geographical Location of Zangezur and Geopolitics for Turkey and Azerbaijan]. Elazığ. Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü [Elazığ. Fırat University Social Sciences Institute]. [in Turkish].
- Jabbarova, K., & Isgandarov, A. (2022). The Role of the Zangezur Corridor in the Transformation of Azerbaijan Into Regionally Important Trade and Logistics Centers. *Sectoral Assessment of the Economic Potential of Karabakh and East Zangezur*.
- Kocatepe, O. F. (2023). Zengezur Koridoru: Türk Dünyası'nda işbirliği ve gelecek vizyonu [Zengezur Corridor: Cooperation and Future Vision in the Turkish World]. In: Sarıkaya, Y., & Kocatepe, O. F. (eds.). *Caucasus and Turkestan: Conflict and Cooperation*. Nobel Publications, 229-244. [in Turkish].
- Mammadov, A., & Hasanoglu, M. (2023). Xəzərdən Aralıq dənizinə gedən Zəngəzur dəhlizi [Zangezur Corridor from the Caspian Sea to the Mediterranean]. *International Management Academy Journal*, 6 (2), 334-344. <https://doi.org/10.33712/mana.1305013> [in Azerbaijani].
- Oxford Analytica (2023). *Prospects – Daily Brief*. <https://dailybrief.oxan.com/Analysis/Prospects/2023/Q1>
- Poghosyan, B. (2024). How Armenia Can Make the “Crossroads of Peace” Concept More Attractive. *Armenian Weekly*. <https://armenianweekly.com/2024/01/02/how-armenia-can-make-the-crossroads-of-peace-concept-more-attractive/>
- President of The Republic of Azerbaijan (2020). *Ilham Aliyev Addressed the People*. <https://president.az/az/articles/view/45924/print>
- President of The Republic of Azerbaijan (2022). *Azərbaycan Respublikasının 2022-2026-cı illərdə sosial-iqtisadi inkişaf Strategiyası'nın təsdiq edilməsi haqqında* [Socio-Economic Development Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2022-2026]. <https://e-qanun.az/framework/50013> [in Azerbaijani].
- Quliyev, R. (2018). Problems and Analysis Solutions in the Field of Transport and Logistics. *Global Horizons*. <https://globalhorizons.wsj.co>
- Respublika News (2022). Zəngəzur dəhlizi: Türk dünyasını birləşdirən körpü [Zangezur Corridor: A Bridge Connecting the Turkic World]. <https://www.respublika-news.az/az/news/zengezur-dehlizi-turk-dunyasini-birlesdiren-korpu> [in Azerbaijani].
- Turgunov, R. (2022). *Regional Transport Corridors and Geopolitical Connectivity: The Case of the Zangezur Corridor*. Baku: Institute for Strategic Studies.
- Turkic World (2022). *Turkey Expects Implementation of Zangezur Corridor Project by 2029*. <https://turkic.world/en/articles/transport/188833>
- Vysotskyi, O., et al. (2025). Ukrainian Economic Diplomacy during the Full-Scale Russian Aggression. *Evropský Politický a Právní Diskurz* [European Political and Law Discourse], 12 (1), 5-12. <https://doi.org/10.46340/eppd.2025.12.1.1>

- Xudiyeva, P., & Aslanov, A. (2022). İşğaldan azad edilmiş ərazilərdə nəqliyyat sistemi və onun ölkə iqtisadiyyatına verəcəyi töhfələr [Transport System in the Occupied Territories and its Contributions to the National Economy]. *IV İqtisadiyyat və İdarəetmə Sahəsində Tədqiqatçıların Beynəlxalq Elmi Konfransı* [IV International Scientific Conference of Researchers in the Field of Economics and Management], 162-176. [in Azerbaijani].
- Yılmaz, B. (2022). The Belt and Road Initiative and the impacts on Turkey as a part of the Middle Corridor. *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik*.
https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/arbeitspapiere/WP02_22_FG7_Yilmaz_BRI_Turkey.pdf