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CITIZENSHIP AND NATIONALITY IN THE
CAUCASUS REGION 25 YEARS AFTER THE
FALL OF THE SOVIET UNION:
Ending statelessness in the Caucasus.

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ABSTRACT

The thesis examines statelessness using the example of the multi-ethnic region of the Caucasus, the region is composed of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and part of the Russian Federation. In December 1991 the Soviet Union collapsed, creating new states; these newly established states were faced with having to create a new legal framework for citizenship. In other words, to determine who will be included and who will be excluded, who qualifies as a full member of society with the panoply of rights and protection that citizenship entails and who falls outside the reach of citizenship protection.

By first identifying the keys to the problem of statelessness, this thesis then presents the region of the case study; the Caucasus. Later, the thesis dedicates one of its chapters to the human side of statelessness; what it means to be a stateless person. Last but not least, the thesis depicts the legal side of citizenship and statelessness in the Caucasus. The aim of the thesis is the establishment of recommendations so as to improve the situation of stateless persons and so as to end statelessness in the Caucasus.

NB: This research only deals with *de jure* stateless persons. *De jure* stateless persons have no legal bond with any country. This research excludes *de facto* stateless persons. *De facto* stateless persons have citizenship but the reality is different as the country of their citizenship fails to protect them.

NB: In this thesis, in general the term nationality refers to the ethnic origin, and the term citizenship to the legal relation one has with a country. In international law, the term nationality refers, most of the time, to the legal relation one has with a country. When a term is used for another meaning, especially when quoting international law, it is specified in a foot note.

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