

UNIVERSITY OF STRASBOURG

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**IS THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE
FOSTERING DEMOCRATISATION IN
AZERBAIJAN?**

Analysing the impact of the organization and its faith in the ballot box.

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Abstract:

This paper examines the impact of the Council of Europe (CoE) in the process of democratisation in Azerbaijan, a member state where the organization has failed to overcome the obstacles for democratic progress, legitimising a democratic façade. This case exemplifies the weakness and potential of the Council, while the political and social context in Azerbaijan illustrates how conflict, natural resources, and geopolitics can challenge the progress of democracy. Both the country's underlying conditions and the organization's internal weaknesses have been addressed in this paper, aiming to identify obstacles and opportunities. After looking at the CoE's strategy and actions, the need to move beyond the legitimisation of authoritarian practices and flawed elections, through a holistic and impactful monitoring system, has been highlighted. At a time of economic and social change in Azerbaijan, it is in the best interest of both the country and the CoE to cooperate to uphold democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

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