

## Professor Karina Vamling at the European Commission

2012-01-05

RESEARCH/COLLABORATION. The week before Christmas the European Commission's agency for Research and Innovation held a workshop on security and democracy in the Caucasus. Participants included researchers and people from various agencies within the European Commission, as well as from think tanks and policy institutes focused on the Caucasus region. Professor Karina Vamling from Malmö University was one of the experts invited.

"The initial discussions were very broad - what do we mean when we talk about the Caucasus? How can we define the region? One thing that came up several times was how important the development in the North Caucasus is for the development in the South Caucasus, especially in Georgia. When it comes to security, it's important to look at the big picture.

I raised the issue of the ethnic and linguistic diversity in the region – whether potential new areas of conflict can be identified. For example, in southern Georgia there are groups that barely speak any Georgian at all. In order to create a stable, single state it's very important to have a common language, but that is difficult to impose from outside."



Karina Vamling

The purpose of the workshop was to create a foundation for a call for proposals by the EU's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) in 2013. The next step will be to compile the results in a longer text on which the participants will comment before it is sent on to various EU agencies. For Caucasus Studies at Malmö University this was an acknowledgement of their work and a good opportunity to make new connections:

"I'm pleased that Caucasus studies at Malmö University was recognised and that we were invited to this workshop. The mood was positive and constructive, and bringing together researchers and people who work in the field was very productive. Now we have to use the time until the call for proposals is announced to further strengthen our international ties.

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